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Project acronym:	EXCELSIOR
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Document Sign-off

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APPROVED	All partners			27/9/2023

Work Package 4: Human Resources

D4.22: Human Resources Accreditation /Certification (Years 1-4)

Sections to be protected	Description	Owner	Access Rights	
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Executive Summary

This deliverable focuses on the progress made regarding Eratosthenes CoE accreditation under the European Commission's "HR Excellence in Research Award" and the effort made via the accreditation process to align Eratosthenes CoE human resources policies and practices with the 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (hereinafter the "European Charter and Code"), based on a customized action plan and human resources strategy.

Eratosthenes CoE, with a strong commitment to fostering a stimulating and high-quality environment for researchers, scientists, and support staff, is determined to pursue the prestigious "HR Excellence in Research Award." Recognizing the pivotal role that Human Resources/People Management plays in shaping the research landscape, Eratosthenes has integrated the EC "HR Strategy for Researchers" into its Human Resources Strategy. As a clear demonstration of its dedication to excellence, Eratosthenes, following the implementation phase, will diligently seek external assessment every three years to retain the "HR Excellence in Research Award." This effort is not merely about accolades; rather, it underscores Eratosthenes' profound commitment to elevating organizational performance, ensuring exceptional quality, and providing steadfast support for the professional growth and career development of its valued personnel. Through this pursuit, Eratosthenes aims to set a remarkable standard in the research community, cultivating an environment that empowers its members and advances the frontiers of knowledge.

It is strongly believed that the changes that are made to Eratosthenes CoE human resources practices and policies, and relating to the obtainment of the HR Excellence in Research Award, will attract and retain international talent and make Eratosthenes an attractive employer for researchers.



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Abbreviations

CA	Confidentiality Agreement
CoE	Centre of Excellence
CUT	Cyprus University of Technology
EC	European Commission
ECoE/Eratosthenes	Eratosthenes Centre of Excellence
EXCELSIOR	Eratosthenes: Excellence Research Centre for Earth Surveillance and Space-based Monitoring of the Environment
HRS4R	HR Excellence in Research Award
OTM-R	Open Transparent Merit Based Recruitment
European Charter and Code	European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers



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1 Introduction

The European Charter and Code outlines principles and obligations for researchers, employers, and funders. Its goal is to foster a conducive relationship between researchers and their employers or funders to promote knowledge generation, sharing, and career development. The Charter also emphasizes the importance of mobility for professional growth. It applies to researchers in the European Union, regardless of career stage or research field, encompassing both public and private sectors. The European Charter and Code acknowledges the diverse roles researchers play, including research, development, supervision, mentoring, and management.

The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers is comprised of essential principles and guidelines for employers and funders during the recruitment process of researchers. It emphasizes values like transparency and equal treatment of applicants, aiming to create an appealing and equitable European job market for researchers. This code complements the European Charter for Researchers. Institutions and employers that follow this code demonstrate their commitment to responsible and ethical conduct, providing fair conditions for researchers and contributing to the European Research Area's progress.

Eratosthenes CoE was incorporated on the 27th of February 2020. However, it has experienced significant delay in commencing the recruitment process. This was due to the delays in receiving authorization for the contract amendment of the EXCELSIOR project whereby Eratosthenes CoE would be included as beneficiary on the Grant Agreement No. 857510 and thus be able to receive funds from the European Commission, the government of the Republic of Cyprus as well as the Cyprus University of Technology. Amendment 857510-10 to Grant Agreement no. 857510 – 'Eratosthenes Research Center for Earth Surveillance and Space-Based Monitoring of the Environment (Excelsior)' was entered into force on the 12th of January 2022 with retrospective effect as of the 1st of October 2022; and following entry into the aforesaid contract amendment, Eratosthenes CoE commenced recruitment of employees on the 17th of January 2022.

Up to the 30 September 2023, Eratosthenes has 54 employees comprised of: five managers, five administrators, and forty-four researchers. Other statistics regarding Eratosthenes CoE employees are as follows: recruitment has taken place with gender metrics and indicators and has achieved to a significant extent gender balance with 24 female employees and 30 male employees (44% of the entire staff count are female employees and 56% are male employees. Additionally, the nationality breakdown of our current employees is as follows: 44 Cypriot nationals, 8 Greek nationals, 1 Romanian national, 1 Italian national. Thus, efforts are made to create a diverse working environment and efforts will be made to attract international researchers of high caliber.

The goal through the certification process of the HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) and the implementation of the 40 principles of the European Charter and Code of is to create a better working environment at Eratosthenes CoE, attract and retain talent, and achieve excellence in research.



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Chapter 2 of this report details the actions undertaken during the initial phase of the HRS4R process and elaborates on the processes and actions undertaken during the initial phase, including but not limited to the formation of the Steering Committee and the HRS4R Advisory and Working Group, the preparation of the GAP analysis, OTMR checklist and the Action Plan.

Chapter 3 provides the lessons learned in undertaking the HRS4R accreditation process as an organisation wide exercise and the benefits to the organisation as a whole in delineating the areas we excel and the areas we need to improve.

Appendices A to E provides the documentation prepared and received as part of the certification process.



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2 HRS4R process

2.1 Process Flow Chart

Figure 1 shows the flow chart provided for the entire HRS4R process by the European Commission; this summarises the timeline and different phases of the HRS4R process.

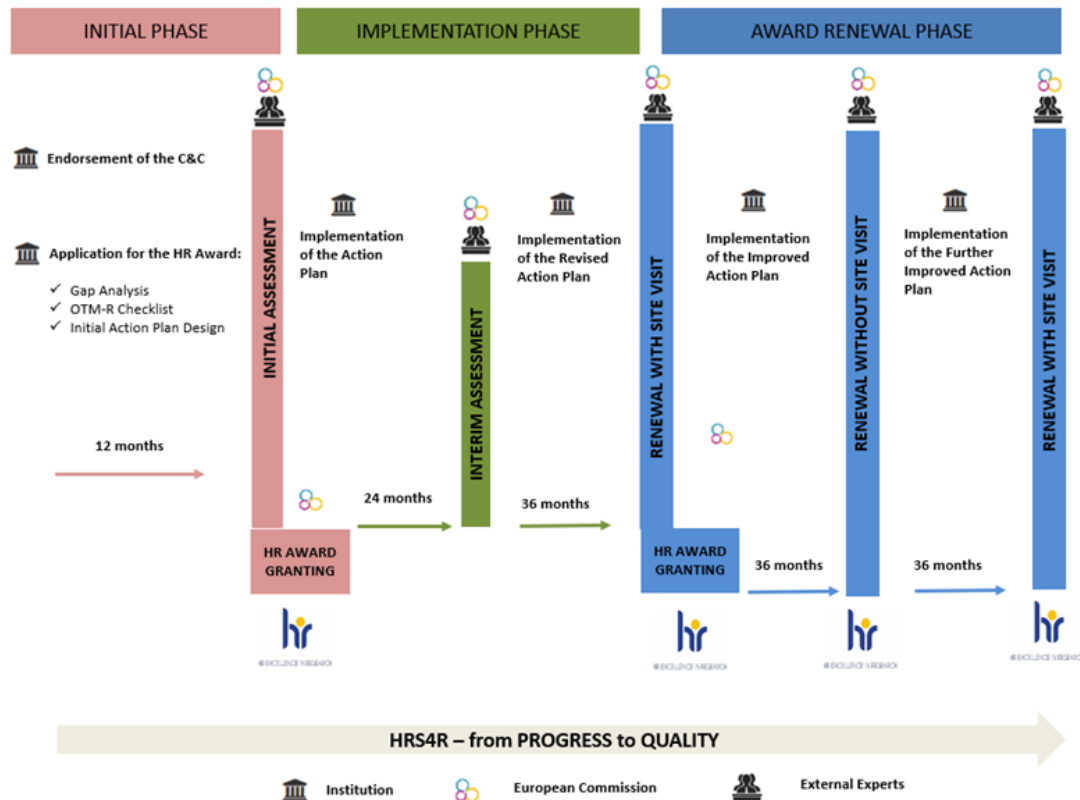


Figure 1: Flow chart for the HRS4R process (provided by the European Commission)

As shown in Figure 1, the HRS4R process comprises of three distinct phases: the Initial Phase, Implementation Phase and Renewal Phase(s)

The Initial Phase is comprised of the following steps:

- Registration with the e-tool and submission of the application for the “HR Excellence in Research Award” which is done via the Endorsement Letter.
- Within a year from the registration of the Endorsement Letter in the e-tool, submission of Gap Analysis, Action Plan and OTM-R checklist.
- Initial granting of the HR Award.

The Implementation Phase follows two years (24 months) after the initial granting of the HR Award and comprises of the following two steps:

- Assessment of implementation of the Initial Action Plan published at initial phase.



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Publication and assessment of the Revised Action Plan which will cover the upcoming three years (36 months). The Renewal Phase(s) follows three years (36 months) after the interim assessment and it consists of the following:

- Assessment of the implementation of the Revised Action Plan published at implementation phase.
- Publication and assessment of the Improved Action Plan which will cover the upcoming three years (36 months).
- The first reviewal phase will also include a Site Visit on the premises of the Institution.
- The subsequent Renewal Phases will keep implementing Improved Action Plan alternating every three years (36 months) i.e. renewal with site visit and renewals without site visit.

Eratosthenes CoE is currently at the Initial Phase having completed the submission documents mentioned above and is currently in the process of submission thereof.

2.2 Commencement of Certification Process by Eratosthenes CoE

Despite of the fact that recruitment only commenced as of the 17th of January 2022, Eratosthenes CoE was quick to commence the HRS4R process by submitting on the 18th of February 2022 a letter of commitment dated 15th of February 2022 duly signed by its Managing Director (herein "Endorsement Letter", see Appendix A). This letter confirms the Centre's unfettered commitment to implementing the 40 Principles of the EU Charter and Code in its HR policies and practices.

2.3 Acknowledgment by the European Commission

The Endorsement Letter was formally acknowledged the European Commission via a letter dated 1st March 2022 (see Appendix B). The European Commission assigned a Case Number to Eratosthenes CoE and confirmed therein the time period of 12 months for the completion and submission of the first stage of the application documents which include the Gap Analysis, the Open Transparent Merit Based Recruitment (OTM-R) checklist and the Action Plan. Relevant extension for the submission of the documents was obtained via the E-Tool.

2.4 Appointment of Committees

Following the above two steps, , i.e., the Endorsement Letter and the acknowledgement thereof, Eratosthenes CoE immediately commenced internal consultations for the preparation of the documents forming the initial submission. The intention of the management of Eratosthenes CoE was to ensure that all members of staff are represented in the process and that all voices within the organization were heard.

In view of the above the HRS4R process has been carried out using an inclusive and participatory approach, involving members from all relevant research staff and governing bodies, all management departments and administrative and services staff. The following two committees and working group



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were appointed to contribute to HRS4R process: a steering committee responsible for leading the process, an HRS4R Advisory Committee and Working Group responsible for providing advice and support in the implementation of the process.

The process aimed at inclusion of the whole research community of the Eratosthenes and this was a top priority from the start, regardless of position or seniority, with the objective to perform a fully comprehensive analysis and to better identify areas for improvement. The various groups as well as the entire staff of Eratosthenes CoE undertook this process through both meetings and surveys. With these actions, the research community became aware that HRS4R is a strategic commitment that involves all stakeholders that take part in the research activities of Eratosthenes CoE. The results of the meetings and surveys made it possible to develop the Gap Analysis, review our recruitment process via the OTM-R checklist as well as to propose the actions included in the Action Plan and prioritize these actions according to both the analysis and internal discussions.

2.5 Gap Analysis

Eratosthenes CoE's gap analysis focuses on how the Centre rates its performance with respect to the 40 principles of the EU Charter and Code and also identifies gaps thereto and address any barriers to the implementation thereof.

The 40 principles of the EU Charter and Code are listed under the four thematic headings of the EU Charter and Code, that is, Ethical and Professional Aspects, Recruitment and Selection, Working conditions and Social Security and lastly Training and Development. The document addresses each of the aforementioned principles and to which extent the organisation meets those principles. Implementation is noted in the document as fully implemented, or almost but not fully implemented, or partially implemented, or insufficiently implemented. Additionally, the document lists any implementation impediments as well as any initiatives that have already been taken to improve the situation and/or new proposals that could remedy the current situation.

Both the Steering Committee and the HRS4R Advisory and Working Group worked closely with all researchers, administrative and managerial staff to rate Eratosthenes's performance under the thematics of the EU Charter and Code. The Gap Analysis document (see Appendix C) of Eratosthenes CoE has been duly completed/prepared and is in the process of submission via the EURAXESS' E-Tool.

2.6 OTM-R Checklist

In addition to the gap analysis, the self-assessment OTM-R checklist was completed to report on Eratosthenes CoE's status of achievement in terms of the implementation of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) policies and practices, which aim at making research careers more attractive while facilitating mobility and equal opportunities for all candidates.

The OTM-R checklist document has been duly finalized and is in the process of submission via the E-Tool by Eratosthenes CoE (see Appendix D).



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2.7 Action Plan

After a series of meetings and consultations with the Steering Committee and the Working Group the Action Plan was compiled on the basis of the findings from the Gap analysis and the OTM-R checklist. The Action Plan has been finalized and is in the process of submission via the E-tool by Eratosthenes CoE (see Appendix E).

2.8 Process of Submission of Initial Phase Documents

As aforementioned, all initial phase documents (Gap Analysis, OTM-R checklist and Action Plan) have been prepared and are in the process of submission by Eratosthenes CoE via the E-tool. The European Commission normally assesses and provides comments on submission within a period of two months.



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3 Discussion and Conclusions

The process of creating the Gap Analysis based on the European Charter and Code has provided valuable insights and lessons for our organization. Through this procedure, we have learned that aligning our practices with these guidelines is not just a matter of compliance but a strategic imperative for fostering a vibrant research environment. The survey conducted as part of this analysis revealed several gaps in our current policies and practices, ranging from transparency in recruitment processes to the provision of career development opportunities. These findings have led us to recognize the importance of promoting a culture of inclusivity, fairness, and professional development within our research community. The outcomes of this survey will serve as a roadmap for us to not only meet but exceed the expectations set forth in the European Charter, ultimately enhancing the quality and impact of our research endeavors while attracting and retaining top talent in our field.



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Appendix A – Endorsement Letter dated 15.02.2022

ECOE



www.eratosthenes.org.cy
Saripolou 2-6, Achilleos 2 Building, 3036 Lemesos, Cyprus

European Commission
DG Research & Innovation
Open Innovation and Open Science
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

Eratosthenes Center of Excellence
Saripolou 2-6, Achilleos 2 Building
3036 Limassol
Cyprus

15 February 2022

Endorsement of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (hereinafter "Charter and Code")

With our vision to become a world-class Digital Innovation Hub for Earth Observation, space technology and Geospatial Information we strongly believe in attracting and retaining talent which can only be achieved through implementing the Charter and Code principles in our human resources policy.

As a result of the above and in our active pursuit of excellence in the area of human resources we hereby give you notice that we have fully endorsed the 40 principles of the European Charter and Code and we are fully committed to implementing these principles in our organization via the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R).

We, therefore, welcome the opportunity of internal analysis in the framework of the HRS4R process and aim at embedding this process in the wide array of current activities in our human resources policy.

Best regards,



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Appendix B – Acknowledgement Letter by the European Commission dated 01.03.2022

Case No:



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION
DG Research & Innovation
RTD.A.3. - Research & Innovation Actors and Research Careers
Head of Unit

Brussels, 01/03/2022
Case No:

Subject: Endorsement of the 'Charter and Code' principles and commitment to the implementation of the HRS4R

Dear Mr/Ms
Dear Mr/Ms

We hereby acknowledge your institution's endorsement of the 40 principles of the “European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”.

ERATOSTHENES CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE will be listed on the EURAXESS portal under 'Charter and Code Endorsements' <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter>.

Your institution's case number on EURAXESS regarding the HRS4R is the following: This number should be quoted in all the future correspondence with the European Commission regarding the HRS4R project.

We kindly remind you that your institution committed to complete the first step of the HRS4R within the next 12 months. Please consult the expert report 'Shaping the future of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers – HRS4R' for further information. By implementing the 'Charter and Code' principles, your institution will be joining a community of European universities, institutions and funders, including a number of international institutions, which are committed to continuously improve their HR practices. Implementing these principles is important in order to ensure the availability of motivated, highly qualified and skilled human resources in research and innovation. Your institution's declaration of commitment will send a clear signal to researchers that you are determined to make research careers in Europe more attractive and sustainable.

From now on, your institution has 12 months to prepare the application documentation. Please consult the guidelines on the EURAXESS website at <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/hrs4r> for next steps.

Should you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact our functional mailbox RTD-CHARTER@ec.europa.eu.

I wish you every success in implementing the principles of the 'Charter and Code' in your institution.

Best regards,

[Signed]

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË - Tel. +32 22991111



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Appendix C – GAP analysis

	Ethical and Professional Aspects	Implementation	GAP/Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
1	Research freedom	+/- almost but not fully implemented	Researchers at the Eratosthenes Center of Excellence (ECoE) enjoy a significant degree of research freedom. Their primary mission revolves around addressing various issues for the betterment of society, all while adhering to stringent ethical principles and practices. This freedom, however, is not without its checks and balances. ECoE researchers are expected to acknowledge the boundaries to their research autonomy by seeking guidance and oversight from management, particularly when operational constraints related to budgetary and infrastructure considerations come into play, such as within research proposals, industry projects, and intellectual property protection measures. Although there exists a regulatory framework to safeguard this research autonomy, including the Eratosthenes CoE Code of Conduct	<p>We will develop and widely disseminate clear and transparent guidelines for research freedom within ECoE. These guidelines should encompass both the extent of research autonomy researchers have and the instances where management oversight is required.</p> <p>Additionally, we will create a dedicated Research Ethics Committee with primary role to independently assess and review research proposals, industry projects, and any potential conflicts related to intellectual property protection. This committee will ensure that ethical standards are maintained and that any management</p>



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			and disciplinary procedures, the EU Charter and Code, and Cyprus Constitution, it is essential to recognize that some researchers may remain unaware of this framework. To further facilitate their research endeavors, ECoE employs mechanisms such as sending notifications of new research calls and actively encouraging researchers to assess the impact of various topics on their research areas, thereby fostering the generation of novel research ideas and proposals.	interventions in research projects are justified and in line with the organization's mission and values. This committee can act as a safeguard to protect researchers' autonomy while upholding ethical principles. Additionally, the committee can serve as a channel for researchers to seek guidance and resolution when they believe their research freedom is unduly restricted.
2	Ethical principles	+/- almost but not fully implemented	The importance of upholding ethical standards in research and innovation cannot be overstated. At Eratosthenes CoE, we take this commitment seriously, as outlined in our Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures, readily available on our website. We understand that the ethical conduct of research is paramount, and that's why we have a dedicated section within our Code of Conduct that addresses this very aspect. However, the survey results have revealed a concerning trend: a significant portion of	In order to raise awareness, a mandatory training will be organized on the Code of Conduct and Ethical Principles for all researchers, and this training will also be included in the induction period for newly hired researchers. Additionally, regular discussions on this matter will be promoted where researchers can openly discuss ethical challenges they face in their work.



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			<p>researchers appear to be unaware of these ethical principles. We believe it's imperative to bridge this knowledge gap and promote a culture of ethical research to ensure the integrity and credibility of our work in the field of research and innovation.</p>	<p>The supervisors/team leaders will conduct periodic audits of research projects to ensure adherence to ethical standards and provide feedback and recommendations for improvements.</p>
3	Professional responsibility	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>At Eratosthenes CoE, we prioritize the ethical pillars of research, giving systematic attention to issues such as plagiarism, authorship, and intellectual property. We understand the significance of these aspects in maintaining the integrity of our research endeavors. To ensure our researchers are well-informed from the start, we incorporate education on intellectual property protection and plagiarism awareness into their induction process.</p> <p>The regulations about intellectual property are included in the Code of Conduct which is uploaded on our website. However, it needs to be updated with more details.</p> <p>Also, we’ve suggested the use of ChatGPT as a valuable tool to assist</p>	<p>To enhance awareness and foster best practices in plagiarism and intellectual property protection, we are taking proactive steps. We are in the process of creating and disseminating a comprehensive "Plagiarism and Intellectual Property Rights Policy." This policy will serve as a guiding document to underscore our commitment to ethical research conduct.</p> <p>In addition, we will introduce a plagiarism detection tool, which will aid researchers in ensuring the originality and integrity of their work.</p> <p>Furthermore, to empower our researchers, we will provide training that focus on the</p>



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			<p>our researchers in avoiding plagiarism. In an ever-evolving research landscape where the utilization of ChatGPT is becoming increasingly prevalent, it's essential to stay ahead and promote ethical research practices, thereby upholding our commitment to the highest standards of integrity.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law 59/1976 on Intellectual Property Right and Related Rights. • Law 125(I)/2018 on the Protection of Natural Persons Against the Processing of Personal Data and the Free Movement of such Data. 	<p>effective utilization of ChatGPT, a valuable resource for generating original content and minimizing the risk of unintentional plagiarism. These collective efforts will strengthen our research community's dedication to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and intellectual property protection.</p>
4	Professional attitude	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Eratosthenes CoE is firmly rooted in a strategic framework that guides our endeavors, encompassing both overarching institutional goals and specific objectives in research and innovation. To ensure alignment and accountability, we've developed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which have been shared with all employees.</p>	<p>We recognize the importance of clarity in the methodology of implementing research and innovation projects. As part of our ongoing improvements, we will establish a mechanism that ensures a comprehensive understanding of our project implementation processes.</p>



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			<p>Furthermore, transparency and collaboration are vital to our mission, as demonstrated by our biannual plenary meetings where we present our strategic goals and future plans in the presence of our esteemed Strategic Partners and Advisory Committee.</p> <p>During our researchers' induction period, we emphasize the importance of obtaining necessary approvals from team leaders or designated managers and maintaining open communication regarding project status. This approach ensures that we work cohesively to achieve our strategic vision and maintain effective project management practices throughout Eratosthenes CoE.</p>	<p>Moreover, effective communication is fundamental, and we are diligently working on developing a robust mechanism for researchers, supervisors, and our management team to stay informed about the status and progress of our research projects.</p>
5	Contractual and legal obligations	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Researchers at Eratosthenes CoE are expected to uphold their contractual and legal obligations, which are outlined in their employment contracts. These contracts provide a foundation for understanding the basic responsibilities and expectations.</p>	<p>In order to ensure that our researchers are well-informed about their contractual and legal obligations from the very beginning, during the induction period, our researchers will receive thorough education on these obligations, providing them</p>



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			<p>Additionally, our regulations concerning intellectual property are included in the Code of Conduct, a document accessible on our website. However, recognizing the evolving nature of intellectual property rights, we are actively working on updating this section to include more comprehensive and detailed guidance. This will ensure that our researchers will have clear and up-to-date information on their legal and ethical responsibilities regarding intellectual property, ultimately fostering a research environment that prioritizes innovation and respect for intellectual property rights.</p>	<p>with a solid foundation for ethical research practices. Moreover, they will be introduced to the relevant documents and internal standards, which are regularly updated in accordance with applicable higher legislation to keep our research environment current and compliant.</p> <p>Furthermore, to fortify our commitment to ethical research conduct, we are currently in the process of crafting and disseminating a comprehensive "Plagiarism and Intellectual Property Rights Policy." This policy will serve as a guiding beacon, affirming our dedication to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and intellectual property protection within our institution.</p>
6	Accountability	++ fully implemented	At Eratosthenes CoE, accountability is a fundamental principle governing our research and innovation activities. We operate in strict compliance with both	To enhance the accountability of our researchers, we can take several strategic actions.



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			<p>external and internal legislation, ensuring that every aspect of our work aligns with established legal and ethical standards.</p> <p>We maintain detailed records for all our projects, encompassing research data, financial accounts, documents, and other outputs. These records are made readily accessible to both internal and external audits, reflecting our commitment to transparency.</p> <p>We actively support educational development, offering opportunities such as capacity building, secondments, and hosting visiting experts to empower our researchers.</p> <p>Furthermore, we encourage active participation in conferences and the delivery of presentations to share their valuable work, fostering a culture of accountability, continuous learning, and professional growth within our research community.</p>	<p>Firstly, it's essential to set specific goals and milestones for each researcher, aligning their objectives with the organization's overall mission. This clear direction ensures that everyone understands their role and responsibilities.</p> <p>Secondly, providing researchers with access to the necessary resources, tools, and training is pivotal for their success. This empowerment enables them to excel in their roles and meet their objectives effectively.</p> <p>Finally, fostering a culture of regular feedback and communication is key. Establishing channels for ongoing dialogue between researchers and their supervisors promotes transparency, identifies areas for improvement, and celebrates achievements.</p> <p>These actions collectively reinforce our commitment to accountability and contribute to a more productive and</p>
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				responsible research environment.
7	Good practice in research	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Eratosthenes CoE prioritizes and upholds good practices in research, particularly in the handling of data and scientific information. We provide systematic support through our dedicated IT Department, offering information and guidance on best practices. Our commitment extends to the publication of valuable resources and information on our employee intranet, ensuring that our researchers have access to the latest guidance.</p> <p>Moreover, to safeguard research data, we diligently store and regularly back up data from ongoing projects at the individual research team level. We have implemented a structured access rights system to govern the wider usage of research data, ensuring data security and integrity while promoting responsible data sharing within our organization. These measures collectively underscore our dedication to maintaining the highest standards of good practice in research.</p>	<p>To strengthen our commitment to good research practices, we will implement several strategic actions. First and foremost, we are in the process of developing a comprehensive GDPR policy and procedure, which will be readily accessible on our website. This will ensure that our researchers and staff have clear guidelines for handling personal data in accordance with regulations.</p> <p>Additionally, we recognize the importance of continuous training, and we will organize training on health and safety, first aid, GDPR compliance, and data security, which are fully subsidized by the Cyprus Human Resources Development Authority.</p>



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			<p>Finally, we strictly adhere to the Regulation (EU) 2016/679, commonly known as GDPR, since its enforcement on May 25, 2018, and the accompanying Law 125(I)/2018, which addresses the protection of personal data and the free movement of such data in 2018. These regulations guide our practices in safeguarding individuals' personal information.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures • Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (GDPR) applies as of 25 May 2018 • Law 125(I)/2018 on the Protection of Natural Persons Against the Processing of Personal Data and the Free Movement of such Data. 	
8	Dissemination, exploitation of results	+/- almost but not fully implemented	Eratosthenes CoE promotes the importance of publishing and	Eratosthenes CoE plans to establish a framework for the



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			<p>disseminating research and innovation results in the scientific community. Our researchers are evaluated based on the quality of their research and innovation work, including publication in respected journals, citation responses, and presentations at scientific conferences. ECoE employs various tools (i.e. all research results are disseminated via the KTISIS platform, which is an Open Access tool) and procedures, supported by the Library of the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT), to manage and motivate researchers in this regard.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff • Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures 	<p>dissemination and use of research and innovation results in line with the principles of "open science." This includes increasing awareness among researchers about open access and open science. However, the effectiveness of these efforts may depend on the publishing policies of individual publishers or book publishers and associated costs. Additionally, the approach to this issue varies among clusters due to differences in research and innovation outputs within various fields.</p>
9	Public engagement	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Eratosthenes CoE considers the popularization of its research and innovation activities a strategic priority for engaging with the public. The popularization efforts are carried</p>	<p>Eratosthenes CoE aims to enhance the promotion of its significant research and innovation outcomes, particularly towards the public,</p>



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			<p>out by individual clusters and are backed by the department of External Affairs, with support from various funding sources and the ECoE's development programmes.</p> <p>These efforts target diverse audiences, including schools, the general public, and governmental authorities and take various forms such as professional and popular science events, public conferences, school presentations, regional, national, or international initiatives, media outreach, and lifelong learning activities. However, there is a need for improved coordination of information flow and incentives to encourage researchers to actively participate in popularizing their research and innovation results with the public.</p>	<p>by effectively utilizing available media resources. This will involve establishing a coordinated system for popularization efforts, encompassing both center-wide and cluster-specific activities, while clearly defining the target audience and the media tools to be employed. Eratosthenes CoE also intends to support and incentivize these initiatives in a way that doesn't overburden its most productive researchers. Additionally, popularization activities will be integrated into individual career plans, though the primary focus will remain on basic or applied research.</p>
10	Non- discrimination	-/+ partially implemented	<p>Eratosthenes CoE has a robust legal framework to prevent discrimination in all its forms. This commitment to non-discrimination is embedded in the Center's foundational documents. ECoE strictly adheres to Cyprus Republic and EU laws, rejecting and not tolerating unequal treatment,</p>	<p>Eratosthenes will focus on increasing awareness of the values it upholds as a Center of Excellence, highlighting tools and procedures available to address potential discrimination, and providing assistance to individuals who may feel</p>



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			<p>harassment (including sexual harassment), persecution, or any conduct conflicting with anti-discrimination laws.</p> <p>Employees facing workplace issues can seek assistance from the HR department.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures • Article 28 of the Cypriot Constitution of 1960. • Law 58(I)/2004 on Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation. • Law 59(I)/2004 on Equal Treatment of Persons (racial or ethnic origin). • Law 205(I)/2002 on Equal Treatment for Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training. • Law 35(I)/2007 on Protection of Wages. • Law 177(I)/2002 on Equal Pay for Men and Women for the Same Work or Work of Equal Value. 	<p>insecure or vulnerable in this regard.</p> <p>We will develop a non-discrimination policy as well as a complaints policy and procedure and forms for submitting a complaint.</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law 42(I)/2004 on Anti-Racial and Certain Other Discrimination (Commissioner) 	
11	Evaluation/ appraisal systems	++ fully implemented	<p>The current evaluation system at Eratosthenes CoE is functional and considers individual researchers' performance in their primary activities. Employee evaluation is a crucial component of quality assurance. Evaluation is conducted by the Managing Director and the Chief Operations Manager of the Centre and is conducted on a yearly basis. Each researcher is required to complete a form with respect to his/her research activity throughout the relevant year and send this form prior to the evaluation meeting for review, following this step the evaluation meeting is set in with the person under review and the Managing Director and Chief of Operations. For researcher there are specific metrics/KPIs that need be met. The process, the KPIs and the relevant policy is circulated to all researchers and is available on the website of the</p>	<p>No further actions are suggested.</p> <p>We will continue implementing the evaluation process and make sure that this process is transparent.</p>



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			<p>Eratosthenes. Following the completion of the meeting the completed evaluation form is presented to the relevant researcher and is signed by both the management and the reviewers, in addition we have compiled a Performance Improvement Plan which states clearly any actions that are needed for improvement in the area where is needed. Both forms are filed with HR.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff 	
<p>Recruitment and Selection - please be aware that the items listed here correspond with the Charter and Code. In addition, your organisation also needs to complete the checklist on Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTMR) included in a separate section, which focuses on the operationalisation of these principles.</p>				
12	Recruitment	+/- almost but not fully implemented	We have developed a recruitment procedure that is uploaded on our website that clearly defines the recruitment process in accordance with the applicable legislation and the	We will make sure that the recruitment adverts will be advertised more extensively to reach additional potential applicants internationally.



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			<p>Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.</p> <p>Most of our researchers are from Cyprus and Greece, and we recognize that there is a need to attract qualified researchers from other countries as well.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment Procedure 	
13	Recruitment (Code)	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>The recruitment process commences with the identification of the need for a specific placement and the approval of the opening by the Executive Committee. Once the job is approved the relevant opening is posted on the website of ECoE, Euraxess and other local websites. The job announcement is very detailed and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General information describing the job position and the title; The purpose of the job position in the organisation; The duties, responsibilities, and authority of the job position; The essential requirements of the job position (i.e. 	<p>In order to ensure that the process is open and transparent we will provide sufficient feedback on the process as well as reasons for rejection.</p> <p>We will also give regular updates to candidates about the status of their application.</p>



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			<p>level of education, special qualifications, work experience, languages etc.); • The person specifications i.e. definition of the critical competencies of each job position based on a scientifically proven valid competency framework;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about reporting and supervision responsibility; • Information for substitution by another employee within the organisational chart, if needed. <p>Adverts give broad description of knowledge and competencies required. Time frames for application are realistic and all documents regarding the application are sent online and therefore there is no barrier for any persons applying from abroad.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Procedure 	
14	Selection (Code)	+/- almost but not fully implemented	The Executive Committee appoints an Evaluation Committee (5 members in which the Chairman is nominated by the Executive Committee) consisting of at least one member of the	We will embody the requirement for gender balance of the Evaluation Committee in the Rules of the Selection Procedure.



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			<p>Executive Committee and at least one senior member of ECoE staff at the position of Manager, Director or Coordinator, or/and external advisors, or/and Principal Investigators of the Excelsior H2020 Consortium, or/and Advisory Board members of the Excelsior & ECoE, to select/interview and suggest the hiring of ECoE staff. If any of the members of the Evaluation Committee has a personal relation with any of the candidates to be interviewed, then it should be raised to the Evaluation Committee and in this case he/she shall be replaced with another Evaluation Team member.</p> <p>The Evaluation Committee, after having studied the candidate’s dossier shall decide whether the candidate will be invited for an interview, for evaluation purposes. The decision shall be taken by majority vote. If the Evaluation Committee decides to evaluate the candidates, the evaluation committee shall invite the candidates for an interview. The interview is carried out by the Evaluation Committee. The objective</p>	
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			<p>of the interview is to obtain the necessary information from candidates, so that the interviewers can evaluate the personality and the basic skills and characteristics that are relevant to the job position. The initial interview can take any form the interviewers deem appropriate e.g. questions and answers, technical tests, etc., and can be with physical presence or remotely as considered appropriate at the time. The Evaluation Committee should decide as to which of the candidates is the most suitable based on the CVs, application documents (dossier) and interview. This recommendation to the Executive Committee should be clearly documented, and the criteria based on which the selection was made clearly explained. This recommendation will be sent to the Executive Committee for the final decision.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Procedure 	
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15	Transparency (Code)	+/- almost but not fully implemented	Candidates are not informed of the reasons behind the fact that they were not selected due to limited time however there is an appeal procedure whereby an appeal Committee is set up and includes at least one Executive Committee member that was not part of the Evaluation Committee (and was not excluded due to conflict of interest) and the HR Manager or any other ECoE staff at the position of manager, coordinator, or director. Applicants who consider that their interests have been prejudiced by any decision related to the selection procedure may submit a request for review in writing to the Managing Director or Human Resource Manager, stating the reasons for the request quoting the reference of the recruitment procedure.	<p>The following actions are suggested:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Candidates will be informed 1-2 weeks prior to the interview. 2. Candidates will be informed about the next steps in the process and an indicative timeline. 3. Recruitment software will be acquired in order for candidates to be informed of the status of their application. 4. Candidates will be updated no later than one month after the completion of the selection process.
16	Judging merit (Code)	++ fully implemented	Apart from academic qualifications attention is paid to bibliometric indices (i.e., number of publications and citations, h-index and g-index) within a wider range of evaluation criteria, such as supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer,	<p>No actions required</p> <p>Adherence to this principle of the Code will continue through ongoing monitoring and operational efforts. The</p>



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			<p>management of research and innovation and public awareness activities.</p> <p>Further we adopt the European Commission’s Framework for research careers (R1-R4) which describes four broad profiles that apply to all researchers:</p> <p>First Stage Researcher (R1) (Up to the point of PhD)</p> <p>Recognised Researcher (R2) (PhD holders or equivalent who are not yet fully independent)</p> <p>R3 - Established Researcher (Researchers who have developed a level of independence)</p> <p>R4 - Leading Researcher (Researchers leading their research area or field)</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment Procedure 	<p>members of the Evaluation Committee will continue receiving legislative, administrative, and informational support.</p>
17	Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)	++ fully implemented	Evaluation Committees set up do not consider any career interruptions or chronological variations in the	No actions required



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			<p>candidates' curriculum vitae as negative or disadvantageous during their evaluation. Additionally, candidates are requested to submit a curriculum vitae and other documented information such as a brief overview of research work, a list of publications, and representative publications, as well as evidence of their qualifications, etc.</p>	<p>Adherence to this principle of the Code will continue through ongoing monitoring and operational efforts. The members of the Evaluation Committee will continue receiving legislative, administrative, and informational support.</p>
18	Recognition of mobility experience (Code)	+/+ fully implemented	<p>There is recognition of mobility experience of applicants, and multi-disciplinary experience is encouraged, especially in diverse countries and settings. In the recruitment process mobility and international experience is considered an advantage.</p> <p>Additionally, under a number of programs in our organisation mobility is encouraged through capacity building and skills development.</p>	<p>No actions required</p> <p>Adherence to this principle of the Code will continue through ongoing monitoring and operational efforts. The members of the Evaluation Committee will continue receiving legislative, administrative, and informational support.</p>
19	Recognition of qualifications (Code)	+/+ fully implemented	<p>Academic and professional qualifications are considered as a part of professional mobility and recognition of such qualifications are explored using existing national</p>	<p>No actions required</p> <p>Adherence to this principle of the Code will continue through ongoing monitoring and operational efforts. The</p>



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			<p>standards. KY.S.A.T.S. is the competent authority of the Republic of Cyprus for the recognition of diplomas awarded by recognized higher education institutions whose courses have been evaluated/accredited by the competent authorities of the country in which they are offered. It also acts as the National Information Centre for Education. KY.S.A.T.S. has been a full member of the European National Information Centers and National Academic Recognition Information Centers (ENIC/NARIC) and the Mediterranean Recognition Information Centers (MERIC) networks since its inception in 2000. KY.S.A.T.S. operates in accordance with the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications and Provision of Relevant Information Laws.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Procedure • The 1996 Law on the Recognition of Higher and Tertiary Education Degrees and Provision of Relevant 	<p>members of the Evaluation Committee will continue receiving legislative, administrative, and informational support.</p>
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			Information (68(I)/1996)	
20	Seniority (Code)	+/+ fully implemented	<p>This parameter places emphasis on assessing candidates based on qualifications acquired at any career stage. Such qualifications include, but are not limited to: writing research proposals, disseminating research findings through publications, actively participating in conferences, etc. The primary criterion remains alignment with job position requirements, ensuring a fair and comprehensive evaluation of candidates' capabilities.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment Procedure 	<p>No actions required</p> <p>Adherence to this principle of the Code will continue through ongoing monitoring and operational efforts. The members of the Evaluation Committees will continue receiving legislative, administrative, and informational support.</p>
21	Postdoctoral appointments (Code)	-- insufficiently implemented	<p>Rules and guidelines need to be established for the recruitment of postdoctoral researchers, including a list of objectives for their contracts. We hired post-doctoral researchers in the Centre however we have no clear rules and guidelines as to their career development and professional opportunities.</p>	<p>Clear rules and guidelines should be set for the recruitment and appointment of post-doc researchers, as well as the duration of the postdoctoral status as transitional, with the provision that it should provide professional development opportunities for their research career.</p>



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	Working Conditions & Social Security			
22	Recognition of the profession	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>At Eratosthenes CoE, all employees, regardless of their level or position, are given equal recognition and respect. Ensuring equal status and access to professional opportunities within the realm of research, including newly hired researchers and actively engaged PhD students, aligns with the Center's vision and mission. These principles are upheld through adherence to both external and internal standards.</p> <p>We foster an inclusive and collaborative research culture where all researchers are encouraged to share ideas, collaborate, and participate in interdisciplinary research projects.</p> <p>We also encourage researchers to engage with the local community through outreach programs, science communication, and lectures, enhancing their visibility and impact.</p>	<p>We will proceed with professional development plans for each employee focusing on enhancing their skills, competences and career development through targeted workshops, seminars, and training sessions. This plan will also include a transparent and well-defined career pathways for researchers, outlining expectations, responsibilities, and opportunities for advancement. Resources and guidance on career progression will be provided, including information on potential roles and positions within the organization.</p> <p>We already started implementing performance evaluations, providing constructive feedback and recognizing their accomplishments. Also, these</p>



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			<p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment Procedure 	<p>evaluations will be used as a “platform” to discuss career goals and development plans.</p> <p>We will establish open lines of communication between researchers and supervisors/team leaders, allowing for the exchange of ideas and concerns. This way the researchers will be encouraged to provide feedback on organizational policies and practices related to research recognition.</p>
23	Research environment	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>As a newly established Centre, a great deal of effort has been applied to provide an adequate research environment for all researchers to ensure a stimulating environment that offers the appropriate equipment, facilities, opportunities and capacity building.</p> <p>Relevant regulations:</p> <p>The Occupational Safety and Health Law of the Republic of Cyprus applies.</p>	<p>A new state-of-the-art research facility is currently under design and will soon be under construction, which will consist of an enhanced research environment.</p> <p>We will establish an Equipment and Facilities Request Form designed to systematically reinforce the growth of our scientific infrastructure and gather feedback on the practical implementation of this Charter</p>



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				principle via operational, managerial, and oversight mechanisms.
24	Working conditions	++ fully implemented	<p>Eratosthenes CoE has comprehensive coverage of various aspects related to working conditions and labor relations. This coverage includes the establishment of a fundamental framework governing working conditions and employment agreements with employees. The framework addresses matters such as flexible working hours, part-time employment, tele-working, as well as provisions to work from home or flexible hours if necessary due to family issues, pregnancy or maternity leave. These conditions allow all employees to combine professional and family life.</p> <p>Furthermore, Eratosthenes CoE offers a range of services and benefits to its employees, ensuring equal access to these resources for all staff members, tailored to individual needs.</p>	<p>Eratosthenes CoE will persist in its commitment to improve and actively strengthen the working conditions of its staff members. This will be achieved through its operational, managerial, and oversight mechanisms while also seeking feedback from employees to ensure the fulfillment of this Charter.</p> <p>A questionnaire will be created to get feedback including a section for suggestions for further improvements and/or updates where necessary.</p>



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			Reference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures 	
25	Stability and permanence of employment	-/+ partially implemented	Per the decision of the Board of Directors, all contracts are for a fixed duration of one to two years, subject to renewal for the same period as the original contract. The contracts are not provided on a project basis and all employees are hired on the same terms and conditions with no discrimination. This arrangement provides uncertainty and instability for long-term employment to researchers, especially when they have to relocate from another country, including their families.	We will establish a system for individual employee development plans, enhancing the effectiveness and motivational aspects of fixed-term employment contracts. This will primarily benefit individuals in the early stages of their scientific careers by supporting their professional growth. During the adaptation phase, researchers will receive clear information regarding the rationale behind entering into a fixed-term employment agreement.
26	Funding and salaries	+/- almost but not fully implemented	All researchers are paid above the national average monthly remuneration and receive social insurance coverage according to the Social Insurance (SI) Law of 2010. The contributions to the SI funds are paid	The Center will raise awareness of the salary structure, remuneration criteria, and incentive mechanisms. Utilizing existing resources, the Center will systematically elevate wage



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			<p>partly by the Employee and partly by the Employer. These contributions fund various social insurance programs, such as pensions, healthcare services, sickness benefits, maternity benefits, unemployment benefits.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the Center recognizes that it is not as competitive in terms of compensation when compared to foreign institutions in the EU region. This disparity is noticeable in the context of recently established research centers in Cyprus, where salaries have seen substantial increases. This primarily impacts new researchers and their prospects for building a sustainable long-term research career within research centers.</p> <p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law 59(I)/2010 on Social Insurance. • Law 100(I)/1997 on Maternity Protection. • Law 117(I)/2017 on Protection of 	<p>levels, with a strong focus on qualitative remuneration standards. This is intended to foster competitiveness among researchers from both the EU and economically advanced non-European countries. Additionally, the Center will enhance the financial evaluation system for highly productive young researchers.</p>
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			<p>Paternity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law 47(I)/2012 on Parental Leave and Force Majeure Leave. • Law 8/1967 on Annual Leave with Benefits 	
27	Gender balance	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>The Center places considerable emphasis on maintaining a gender-balanced environment. It routinely monitors and assesses the representation of both women and men across all employment levels and management structures. In certain departments and their organizational units, gender representation naturally varies, with some departments having a predominance of men (e.g., the Department of Big Earth Data Analytics and the Management Team) across all levels.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Equality Plan 	<p>The findings from this evaluation survey will be considered for the formulation of a long-term strategic plan to sustain gender balance across all departments, units, and hierarchical levels.</p> <p>Data on gender balance trends within the Center and its departments will be consistently tracked and analyzed annually as part of the overall evaluation of activities and annual reports. This assessment will encompass managerial roles, the Center's governing bodies, as well as the staff composition and age distribution among various employee categories.</p>
28	Career development	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Promoting career advancement and elevating the professional expertise of our employees stands as a primary</p>	<p>Establishing a system for individual employee development plans will enhance the effectiveness and motivation</p>



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			<p>focus in the Center's development of research and innovation activities. At present, the identification of additional vocational education needs for researchers takes place within each cluster, lacking a standardized individual approach. Continual capacity building activities promote the career development of researchers. However, the absence of a comprehensive methodological framework leaves employees of all levels without adequate guidance and support. Recently, the Center developed a Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff that includes the development of individual plans or needs for special training/professional development.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff 	<p>of fixed-term employment contracts, particularly during the early stages of research career. This will provide researchers with clear insights into the reasons for their fixed-term contracts during the initial adaptation period.</p> <p>Additionally, there will be a heightened focus on aligning the education system with the training topics for staff in key competencies, in accordance with their individual development plans.</p>
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29	Value of mobility	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Within the Eratosthenes Centre of Excellence, geographical, intersectoral, inter- and trans-disciplinary and virtual mobility as well as mobility between the public and private sector are valued as enhancing scientific knowledge and professional development in a researcher’s career.</p> <p>While the analysis in this area doesn't show significant weakness, the Center believes it's crucial to considerably emphasize international scientific mobilities, particularly longer-term ones. This represents a significant component of the individual development plans for staff.</p>	<p>A mobility plan will be developed based on the needs of each cluster, as well as on individual needs, aiming at the development of new skills and competences.</p> <p>Additionally, we will develop mobility procedures and clearer administrative tools for this purpose.</p>
30	Access to career advice	-- insufficiently implemented	<p>As a new organization, the Centre of Excellence needs to develop a program to offer profession guidance, career advice for researchers at various stages of their career on a formal basis. Currently, career guidance is provided on an informal basis.</p>	<p>A career advice program will be developed that will provide professional guidance and career advice to researchers at all stages of their careers.</p> <p>We will share awareness about the counseling services offered to its employees. Additionally, we will expand the availability of career counseling and support</p>



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				provided to potential applicants and early-stage researchers.
31	Intellectual Property Rights	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Eratosthenes CoE has a longstanding commitment to safeguarding intellectual property rights. The Office of Innovation and Technology Transfer is responsible for matters pertaining to the protection of IP rights to guarantee the appropriate protection of the intellectual rights of research and development results. This office offers services and education related to intellectual property protection and technology transfer since the Center's inception. These services include providing guidance, sharing information, and making announcements to inform researchers and administrative staff about intellectual property protection and the commercialization of research findings. These efforts are tailored to address specific needs identified by the Center.</p> <p>Even though the Center recognizes the significance of this topic, the results</p>	<p>A specific policy about Intellectual Property Rights and copyrights will be developed.</p> <p>The Center will enhance awareness among all staff, with a particular focus on PhD students and newly hired researchers, regarding research ethics and legal safeguards. Furthermore, the Center will reinforce fundamental values and ethical principles within the realm of research and innovation, encompassing the protection of intellectual property rights and copyrights. These efforts will be complemented by ongoing support and advisory services from the Office of Innovation and Technology Transfer for researchers in this domain.</p>



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			<p>showed that further attention should be given on this matter.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures 	
32	Co-authorship	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Proper and suitable co-authorship practices are inherently encouraged by Eratosthenes CoE at all levels, in alignment with the scholarly norms of publishing and presenting findings, taking into account the unique characteristics of the specific scientific field. Researchers receive guidance from their supervisor/team leader to actively publish their work.</p> <p>However, the survey results showed a weakness in this topic and further attention should be given.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff Code of Conduct and Disciplinary 	<p>Eratosthenes CoE will update the Code Conduct and include a section about co-authorship practices.</p> <p>We will enhance the understanding and expertise of researchers, with a particular focus on PhD students and new researchers, regarding research ethics and co-authorship norms. This will also be incorporated into the orientation process for newly hired researchers.</p>



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			Procedures	
33	Teaching	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Eratosthenes CoE encourages researchers to teach classes relative to their area of expertise at the Cyprus University of Technology.</p> <p>It is very important for them to achieve a balance between research and teaching activities, and this is also essential for both job performance and career development. Is it the role of their supervisor/team leader to assist them and make sure they have the right balance.</p> <p>Teaching activities also factor into employee evaluations and compensation, supporting their acquisition of additional knowledge, experience, and skills. However, an excessive focus on teaching responsibilities can hinder research development, particularly for newly hired researchers.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Evaluation Policy and 	<p>The Center will increase its effort to maintain a balance in the researchers' teaching and research activities based on their individual roles. Additionally, newly hired researchers will receive training to develop necessary skills as part of their adaptation process. To improve teaching and research balance, the Center will establish a regular system for training in new methods, tools, and procedures.</p>



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			Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff	
34	Complains/ appeals	-/+ partially implemented	<p>The Centre needs to establish a channel for addressing different types of complaints and assist researchers to resolve conflicts and complaints between each other or between supervisor(s) and researchers and establish clear procedures in this respect.</p> <p>Gender related complaints are heard by the Gender Equality Committee which is appointed according to the Gender Equality Plan on an annual basis.</p> <p>Any breach of the Code of Conduct of Eratosthenes CoE, depending on the kind of breach, instigates a formal investigation for which an investigation board is appointed.</p>	The Center will establish procedures for the submission and management of complaints and endeavor to promote employee awareness regarding these processes and the designated channels for complaint submission.
35	Participation in decision-making bodies	+/- almost but not fully implemented	All researchers are encouraged to participate and be represented at all relevant information, consultation and decision-making working groups. This practice ensures to promote their	Eratosthenes CoE will invest in further improvement of the internal communication and implementing tools that will inform and encourage



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			research interest as professionals and actively contribute to the Centre. The Executive Committee frequently invites researchers to state their opinion and give their professional advice.	employees to provide feedback and actively participate in the management and development of the Center’s activities and practices.
	Training and Development			
36	Relation with supervisors	+/- almost but not fully implemented	Regular communication and professional feedback within Eratosthenes CoE are currently informal and vary depending on specific teams and workplaces. PhD students are primarily supervised by their academic supervisors, with their professional development monitored in accordance with their regulations and standards. These students are actively engaged in teaching, research, and projects to gain expertise in their academic areas. However, there hasn't been a formal mentoring system in place to support them systematically. In the adaptation process for new employees, evaluations are conducted to enhance communication between	Eratosthenes CoE is planning to establish structured methodological support for regular communication between manager-supervisors and employees. Additionally, it will introduce a mentoring system specifically for PhD students and postdoctoral staff to provide them with guidance and support. Furthermore, ECoE aims to involve and support the Professional and Personal Development and Human Resources managers significantly in adaptation processes and career planning. Their involvement will assist manager-supervisors and employees in



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			<p>employees and their supervisors. This process aims to improve the quality of onboarding new staff and provides a mechanism for addressing any issues that may arise before the end of the probationary period.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff • Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures 	<p>navigating these areas effectively.</p>
37	Supervision and managerial duties	-/+ partially implemented	<p>The foundational structure governing the dynamics of relationships, rights, responsibilities, and communication among employees their supervisors is detailed within the Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff • Code of Conduct and Disciplinary 	<p>We will offer support for supervisors, including additional training in managerial and supervisory skills and team leadership competencies.</p> <p>We will introduce a mentoring system specifically for PhD students and postdoctoral staff to provide them with guidance and support.</p>



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			Procedures	
38	Continuing Professional Development	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Eratosthenes CoE is committed to enhancing systematic conditions for the professional development and qualification growth of its employees. Additionally, it aims to continually enhance the qualifications and competencies of all other employees, including those involved in supervisory, managerial, and administrative roles. While training for employees is provided sufficiently, it is noted that there is room for improvement in terms of organizing training in alignment with career planning.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff • Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures 	<p>Eratosthenes CoE is planning to establish a systematic approach to developing essential competencies among its employees, aligning this with individual employee development plans, and focusing on providing greater support for new researchers. It also intends to devise a plan for enhancing supervisory skills among those taking on leadership roles, considering the unique requirements at various management/supervisory levels within the Center.</p> <p>Furthermore, ECoE aims to provide individual development opportunities for managers and employees who have supervisory roles. These programs will be tailored to the individuals' existing skills and abilities and will account for the specific</p>



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				demands of their professional roles.
39	Access to research training and continuous development	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>Eratosthenes CoE is dedicated to facilitating the career advancement and professional growth of its employees. This is achieved by enhancing their professional expertise, skill development, and capabilities that are valuable both in the broader science market and in their specific roles. Employees have opportunities to enhance their professional skills and knowledge through participation in training programs offered in collaboration with the Strategic Partners. Additionally, Eratosthenes CoE offers professional courses on-site and supports on-the-job learning and internships as part of its commitment to employee development.</p> <p>Also, ECoE encourages employees to participate in vocational courses for professional development as well as digital skills development offered by the Cyprus Human Resources Development Authority.</p>	<p>The Gantt chart will be uploaded in a shared file in MS Teams where all employees will have access and always be updated on the trainings’ timelines and/or updates.</p> <p>Also, an individual development plan will be developed for each employee identifying and providing education and training in areas essential for professional growth. This initiative will also accommodate their specific developmental needs as recommended by their supervisors/team leaders.</p> <p>Furthermore, ECoE will offer relevant training programs for supervisors and team leaders to equip them with the necessary skills for supporting their staff effectively.</p> <p>In the onboarding process for new employees, educational</p>



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			<p>Based on the above, a Gantt chart is developed with specific timeline for implementation of those trainings.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff • Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures 	<p>activities will be integrated to help them quickly integrate into the work environment. These activities will be tailored to the specific needs of each role and will be completed during the probationary period. The progress of these activities will be assessed in consultation with the immediate supervisor overseeing the adaptation process.</p>
40	Supervision	+/- almost but not fully implemented	<p>In the context of work duties, each employee at Eratosthenes CoE has a designated supervisor or team leader, based on the organizational structure or cluster/department within it. PhD students are overseen by their PhD study supervisor, with specific appointment procedures. These supervisors/team leaders are always experienced members competent in supervision. The supervision duties are integrated into the evaluation processes for individuals as well.</p>	<p>Eratosthenes CoE will introduce a mentoring system specifically for PhD students and postdoctoral staff to provide them with guidance and support.</p> <p>ECoE is committed to enhancing support for team leaders in fulfilling their supervisory responsibilities. We will devise a comprehensive plan aimed at developing their supervisory skills, encompassing effective leadership of scientific teams and</p>



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			<p>Furthermore, the transfer of knowledge and mentoring relationships occur naturally among experienced members, including scientific team leaders, and young researchers. These interactions take into account the specific needs and characteristics of individual faculties and fields of study.</p> <p>Reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff • Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures 	<p>proficient departmental management.</p>
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Appendix D - OTM-R checklist

	Open	Transparent	Merit-Based	Answer: (++)Yes completely / +- Yes substantially / -+ Yes partially / -- no)	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
OTM-R system					
Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?	x	x	x	-- (yes partially)	Currently the recruitment procedure is available online on ECoE’s website. However, we expect that following the HRS4R process an OTM-R Policy will be reviewed on the basis of the Checklist and published on the website replacing the one currently available to the public. Additionally, some elements of OTM-R will be incorporated more consistently into the Recruitment Procedure and re-published on the website.
Do we have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?	x	x	x	-- (yes partially)	We need to incorporate in our recruitment procedure separate procedures / rules / regulations for research staff as opposed to administrative staff. Different actions (based on the action plan) regarding changes in existing procedures or additional practices



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	Open	Transparent	Merit-Based	Answer: (++)Yes completely / +- Yes substantially / -+ Yes partially / -- no)	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
					will be incorporated into the existing procedures.
Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R?	x	x	x	-+ (yes partially)	Everybody who is granted a role in the OTM-R procedure (HR administrators, evaluation committee members, Presidents of Evaluation Committees) is informed of the Regulations/Policies. Members of the Evaluation Committee will be reminded of the revised policies which will incorporate OTM-R issues before each recruitment. Trainings will be held for HR/management/research staff involved in recruitment and promotion procedures. All policies/guidelines will be published, and all participants in the interviews and the recruitment process in general will be trained accordingly.
Do we make (sufficient) use of e recruitment tools?	x	x		-+ (yes partially)	With the exception of advertising for new positions, currently the whole recruitment process is done



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	Open	Transparent	Merit-Based	Answer: (++)Yes completely / +- Yes substantially / -+ Yes partially / -- no)	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
					manually and without the use of any E- recruiting tools. It is something we will look into following the action plan.
Do we have a quality control system for OTM-R in place?	x	x	x	-- (no)	The control mechanism is derived from the Recruitment Procedure and various internal standards. Detailed records of selection procedures are created and maintained. Among the responsibilities of the HR Department's staff involved in selection procedures is to oversee adherence to the OTM-R policy throughout the recruitment process. Compliance with the OTM-R policy, which guarantees transparency for all candidates, will be assigned to the QA Department as mandated.
Does our current OTM-R policy encourage external candidates to apply?	x	x	x	+- (yes substantially)	Even though all advertisements are published on our website as well as on EURAXESS, ECoE and Excelsior project, and LinkedIn websites,



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	Open	Transparent	Merit-Based	Answer: (++)Yes completely / +- Yes substantially / -+ Yes partially / -- no)	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
					additional options and portals will be selected to attract and approach qualified researchers.
Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?	x	x	x	+ - (yes substantially)	All job advertisements are published in English and are always published on our website and EURAXESS. We will explore further advertising opportunities on relevant portals that cater to qualified research personnel, with a particular focus on attracting researchers from abroad.
Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract underrepresented groups?	x	x	x	-+ (yes partially)	Yes, the advertisements mention that there is no discrimination in candidates and that ECoE is an equal opportunity employer. All advertisements have been modified to use inclusive language. We will be adding our non-discrimination policy on our website with a link to all of our job ads.



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	Open	Transparent	Merit-Based	Answer: (++)Yes completely / +- Yes substantially / -+ Yes partially / -- no)	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
					Currently we have a high percentage of women applicants per position.
Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?	x	x	x	+- (yes substantially)	ECoE is fully compliant with all provisions of Cyprus Law regarding employment as well as EU legislation incorporated into local law. Attractive salaries for all levels of researchers are given as well as facilities for work-life balance.
Do we have means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?				-+ (yes partially)	Evaluation committees utilise research excellence metrics, such as h-index, publication record. With the establishment of an HR software with a recruitment module, we will have the option to filter and monitor the suitability of the applicants for each position.
advertising and application phase					
Do we have clear guidelines or templates (e.g., EURAXESS) for advertising positions?	x	x		++ (yes completely)	Yes, we have templates for all positions based on internal regulations.



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	Open	Transparent	Merit-Based	Answer: (++)Yes completely / +- Yes substantially / -+ Yes partially / -- no)	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
Do we include in the job advertisement references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit?	x	x		+- (yes substantially)	Advertisements are kept as concise as possible. There is always the link for our webpage which includes major information of the elements included in the toolkit but more specific links will be added for specific issues identified.
Do we make full use of EURAXESS to ensure our research vacancies reach a wider audience?	x	x		++ (yes completely)	All research positions are advertised on Euraxess/paideia news/Cyprus University of Technology website and our social media. Alternative online platforms are used such as carierista.com for administration positions and research support positions.
Do we make use of other job advertising tools?	x	x		++ (yes completely)	Alternative online platforms are used such as Carierista.com /paideia news/ recruitment platform CUT/CUT Website and our social media. We will explore further advertising opportunities on relevant portals that cater to qualified research personnel.



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	Open	Transparent	Merit-Based	Answer: (++)Yes completely / +- Yes substantially / -+ Yes partially / -- no)	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate?	x			++ (yes completely)	Throughout the entire selection process, we streamline administrative requirements for candidates to include only the legally mandated documentation necessary for the commencement of employment, in full compliance with GDPR regulations.
selection and evaluation phase					
Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees?		x	x	+- (yes substantially)	The fundamental principles governing the recruitment and formation of evaluation committees are rooted in the Recruitment Procedure. When these rules will be updated, there will be a focus on providing more detailed specifications regarding the appointment of evaluation committees.
Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees?		x	x	+- (yes substantially)	The Recruitment Procedure contains the overarching definition of the rules. When these rules will be updated, particular attention will be given to specifying provisions related to the appointment of evaluation committees.



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	Open	Transparent	Merit-Based	Answer: (++)Yes completely / +- Yes substantially / -+ Yes partially / -- no)	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
Are the committees sufficiently gender-balanced?		x	x	-+ (yes partially)	A recommendation will be made for gender balance in evaluation committees. Also, our recruitment policy regarding the composition of committees will be modified to ensure that gender balance is taken into account.
Do we have clear guidelines for selection committees, which help to judge ‘merit’ in a way that leads to the best candidate being selected?			x	+- (yes substantially)	For research staff on a fixed-term contract, the criteria are indicated in advertisements and selection is made to choose the most suitable candidate.
appointment phase					
Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process		x		++ (yes completely)	All candidates are informed about the results when the procedure is completed.
Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?				-+ (yes partially)	All candidates are informed about the outcome of the interview and feedback is given upon request.
Do we have an appropriate complaints mechanism in place?		x		-+ (yes partially)	All complaints that come to the HR department receive a written response from the HR department



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	Open	Transparent	Merit-Based	Answer: (++)Yes completely / +- Yes substantially / -+ Yes partially / -- no)	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
					following relevant internal discussion with the appropriate department. We will establish procedures for the submission and management of complaints.
Overall assessment					
Do we have a system in place to assess whether OTM-R delivers on its objectives?				-+ (yes partially)	Being a relatively new organisation, we have yet to review whether OTM-R delivers its objectives. We are currently in the process of reviewing our staff which will indicate if the recruitment process was successful. Compliance with the OTM-R policy stands as a fundamental prerequisite for advancing the human resources within ECoE for research, which in turn shapes the progress and quality of all creative endeavours. The primary objectives aimed at fostering high-quality research and innovation are outlined in the Centre’s Strategic Development Plan, subject to annual assessments.



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	Open	Transparent	Merit-Based	Answer: (++)Yes completely / +- Yes substantially / -+ Yes partially / -- no)	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
					The findings from these evaluation surveys will be factored into the formulation of the Centre’s strategic development initiatives for the 2024+ period. The execution of these strategies will undergo a comprehensive assessment as part of the Centre’s upcoming 2-year evaluation cycle, focusing on research and innovation activities.



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Appendix E – Action Plan

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year’s quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)
Develop and widely disseminate clear and transparent guidelines for research freedom.	1	Q1 2024	QA Manager and Heads of Research Departments	Creation of an internal document and upload it on our website. Share the document via internal e-communication and intranet. Number of employees educated on this matter.
Create a dedicated Research Ethics Committee aiming to safeguard ethical issue, protect researchers' autonomy and promote research freedom.	1	Q1 2024	Heads of Research Departments and Executive Committee	Establishment of Research Ethics Committee.
Develop an individual development plan for research staff including their individual and professional needs.	2, 6, 9, 22, 25, 28, 29, 33, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40	Q1-Q3 2024	HR Department and Heads of Research Departments	Creation of an internal document and supporting forms to monitor the progress of the research staff



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				on their training and development.
Implementation of the individual development plans and their use in the evaluation of the staff and regular feedback by the supervisors/team leaders.	2, 6, 9, 22, 25, 28, 29, 33, 36, 38, 37, 39, 40	Q4 2024 – 2026	HR Department and Heads of Research Departments	Organized trainings and regular meetings between supervisors/teams leaders and staff. Number of implemented trainings.
Develop and disseminate a Plagiarism and Intellectual Property Rights Policy.	3, 5, 31	Q1-Q2 2024	HR Department, QA Manager and Executive Committee	Creation of an internal document and upload it on our website. Installation of a plagiarism detection tool. Organized training on ChatGPT for all staff members.
Develop a communication mechanism and facilitate communication tools for researchers, supervisors/team leaders, and management team to stay informed about the status and progress of research projects, as well as	4, 6, 22, 36, 37	Q1-Q2 2024	HR Department, QA Manager and Executive Committee	Improvement of internal e-communication and intranet tools.



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structured methodological support for regular communication between manager-supervisors and employees.				Existence of HR software with a module for communication and coordination of assigned projects/tasks. Number of announcements.
Development of induction/onboarding plan for thorough education of new hired staff on their obligations, responsibilities and ECoE’s standards and procedures.	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 25, 28, 31, 32, 39	Q1 2024	HR Department and Heads of Research Departments	Creation of an internal document with detailed onboarding topics and timeframe.
Develop and disseminate a GDPR policy and procedure.	3, 7	Q1-Q2 2024	HR Department, QA Manager and Executive Committee	Creation of an internal document and upload it on our website. Organized training on GDPR for all staff members.
Develop a general annual training plan with necessary key topics (i.e. health and safety at workplace, first aid, data security, communication skills, supervisory skills, etc.).	3, 4, 7, 9, 25, 28, 31, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40	Q1 2024	Educational Development Support Officer and Heads of Research Departments	Creation of an internal document and share it via intranet tools.



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Implementation of the general annual training plan.	3, 4, 7, 9, 25, 28, 31, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40	Q2 2024	Educational Development Support Officer and Heads of Research Departments	Number of implemented trainings.
Develop a comprehensive framework, strategy, and tools to effectively implement the principles of open science across all clusters within ECoE.	8	Q1-Q3 2024	Heads of Research Departments and Executive Committee	Creation of an internal document to be published on the Center's website and Intranet, with the purpose of openly communicating the established standards in this field to all research personnel at ECoE. Number of open access awareness events organized by ECoE.
Establish a methodology for assessing the percentage of research results published in open access, tailored to the publication type and prevailing practices within specific scientific areas, with the objective of augmenting the overall share of research outcomes made available through open access channels.	8	Q3 2024 – 2026	Heads of Research Departments and QA Manager	Creation of a methodology to enhance the organization, promotion, and facilitation of open-access publication of research findings.



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				<p>Number of research results published in open access format, including both the total count and the corresponding percentage.</p> <p>Number of digitized documents made publicly accessible.</p>
Promote and motivate researchers for dissemination activities.	9	Q1-Q2 2024	Heads of Research Departments	<p>Overview of the communication methods and tools used.</p> <p>Develop a dissemination plan with the involvement of the researchers to establish a systematically coordinated approach that aligns with the research qualities of the research staff.</p>



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				Number of dissemination events.
Develop a Non-discrimination policy and raise awareness to all ECoE’s staff.	10	Q1-Q2 2024	HR Department and Executive Committee	Creation of an internal document and upload it on our website. Number of employees educated on this matter.
Develop Equipment and Facilities Request Form to gather feedback and suggestions for our scientific infrastructure improvement.	23	Q1 2024	Facilities, Building Infrastructure and Procurement Officer	Creation of an internal document.
Develop a questionnaire to get feedback and suggestions for further improvements and/or updates on current practices.	24	Q1 2024	HR Department	Creation of an internal document.
Utilize financial resources to gradually increase staff salaries, with a particular focus on qualitative compensation criteria, with the objective of fostering a competitive environment and strengthening the internationalization of the research and development environment at ECoE.	26	2024-2026 Annually in Q4	HR Department, Accounting Department, Chief Operating Manager and Executive Committee	Assessment of salary resources and its annual growth rate (%). Publication of the Annual Management Report. Make salary adjustments during the Center's budget planning. Percentage



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				increase in salary levels.
Consistent tracking of gender diversity across all employment levels and management structures.	27, 13, 14, 16	Annually in Q3	HR Department	Annually releasing data for the previous year, including the breakdown of staff composition by gender across various criteria such as position, age, supervision, research teams, etc.
Incorporate the necessity for gender balance in the constitution of the recruitment selection committee, in accordance with OTM-R policies, within the Rules of Selection Procedure.	27, 13, 14, 16	Q1-Q3 2024	HR Department	Update the internal document “Recruitment Procedure” and replace it on the website.
Develop an annual mobility plan based on the needs of each cluster, as well as on individual needs.	29	Annually in Q3	Educational Development Support Officer and Heads of Research Departments	Creation of an internal document. Number of implemented mobilities.
Develop mobility procedures and supported administrative tools.	29	Q1-Q2 2024	Educational Development Support Officer, Heads of	Creation of an internal documents and upload



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			Research Departments and Executive Committee	them on the website and intranet.
Develop a career advice program and raise awareness about the counseling services offered by ECoE.	30	Q1-Q2 2024	HR Department and Executive Committee	Establishment of a Career’s Office.
Update (where necessary) and raise awareness of the following matters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures 2. Recruitment Procedure 3. Performance Evaluation Policy and Procedure for Research and Administrative Staff 4. Gender Equality Plan 	32	Annually in Q1	HR Department, QA Manager and Executive Committee	Number of information events (including the use of internal communication tools and intranet). Number of implemented training/workshops. Number of educated staff.
Develop a complaints procedure and raise awareness to all employees.	34	Q1 2024	HR Department and Executive Committee	Creation of an internal document and upload it on the website. Share the procedure via internal communication tools and intranet.



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Promote internal communication and implementing tools to enhance awareness of all staff about opportunities to participate in the management and development activities/meetings and provide their feedback/suggestions.	35	Annually in Q1	HR Department and QA Manager	Number of researchers and/or representatives attended the events. Number of published information and/or questionnaire to get feedback.
Design and implementation of a mentoring system	36, 37, 40	Design Q1 2024 Implementation as from Q2 2024	HR Department, Heads of Research Departments and Executive Committee	Create an internal document on the mentoring system and communicate it via internal communication tools and intranet. Number of assigned mentors.
Acquire a modern/technological tool for recruitment- incorporate modern tool in the recruitment process, use of technology, automation.	12-20	Q1 2024	HR Department and Quality Assurance Manager	Existence of HR software with a module for recruitment.
Develop guidelines and rules for post-doctoral researchers and raise awareness for staff	21	Q1 2024	HR Department and Heads of Research Departments	Creation of an internal document and upload it on the website.



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				Share the guidelines via intranet and internal e-communication
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