



EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION

European  
Research Area

# Recent developments in HR policies in Europe

Helsinki, 30 September 2008

Massimo Serpieri  
Directorate C

“ERA-Knowledge-based economy”  
DG Research -European Commission

**This presentation will focus on:**

- **The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their Recruitment – the « Charter and Code »**
- **The “HR Strategy” i.e. a draft proposal for a Charter and Code implementation mechanism**
- **Human Resources Strategies at EU and national level: the “Partnership for Researchers”**



EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION

European  
Research Area

## A 'bill of rights and duties' for all researchers working in the EU



*The European  
Charter  
for Researchers*

**To recognise  
researchers as  
professionals**



*The Code  
of Conduct for  
the Recruitment*

# The Charter

## Addressing researchers

- *Research freedom, professional responsibility*
- *Accountability*
- *Dissemination, exploitation of results*
- *Relation with supervisors*
- *Supervision/managerial duties*
- *Continuing professional development*

## Addressing funders, employers-HE institutions

- *Working conditions*
- *Value of mobility*
- *Career development*
- *Gender issues*
- *Co-authorship*
- *Supervision/teaching*
- *Appraisal systems*



EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION

European  
Research Area

# The Code

## A framework for

- *Transparency in the recruitment process*
- *Judging merit (non chronological CV)*
- *Recognition of any type of mobility experience*
- *Postdoctoral appointment*

# The Charter & Code implementation

## Successful results

- Around 100 signed declarations received representing nearly 900 research organisations spread over 24 countries
- C&C recognised policy tool
- Raising awareness initiatives (e.g. EURAXESS), web-tools
- Monitoring implementation C&C
- Working groups

# The Charter & Code implementation Difficulties

- Lack of information
- Fear of administrative burden
- Lack of institutional strategies
- Low support by senior management
- Legal/administrative problems

## 2) The Charter & Code implementation: A new phase

Outcomes **Vienna Conference on Charter & Code**,  
June 2006 : ..."*C&C as a useful labelling mechanism for  
the enhancement of quality in European HR  
management*"

A "**Label Working Group**" mandated by the  
Commission to discuss a C&C implementation mechanism  
to increase **effectiveness & transparency** of HR  
policies, which resulted in...

# A draft proposal for a HR Strategy: version 30/09/2008: NB still a draft!

- A) The Research Institution publishes on its website as well as on the EURAXESS Rights a **Human Resources Strategy (HRS)** based on an **internal analysis** including the actions required to implement the C&C.
- B) The EC "recognises" that the undersigning R.I. has a Human Resources Strategy to put in practice the C&C principles
- C) Periodically (2 y.) the R.I. conducts a self-assessment within the context of its internal Quality Assurance mechanisms.
- D) External evaluation: every 4 years, a short report shows the progress made towards the objectives of its HR Strategy.

# HR Strategy

## The mechanism

Below, an example of a possible standard template for the internal analysis and implementation of the HR Strategy (other examples may be proposed)

### "Research Freedom"

*Example of a standard template for the internal analysis and implementation of the HR Strategy*

Researchers should focus their research for the good of mankind and for expanding the frontiers of scientific knowledge, while enjoying the freedom of thought and expression, and the freedom to identify methods by which problems are solved, according to recognised ethical principles and practices.

Researchers should, however, recognise the limitations to this freedom that could arise as a result of particular research circumstances (including supervision/guidance/management) or operational constraints, e.g. for budgetary or infrastructural reasons or, especially in the industrial sector, for reasons of intellectual property protection. Such limitations should not, however, contravene recognised ethical principles and practices, to which researchers have to adhere.

Relevant legislation (permitting or impeding the implementation of this principle)	Existing Institutional rules and/or practices	Actions required	When/Who

### 3) HR policies in Europe

- **2007 ERA Green Paper (public consultation):** to set up a vision on a "*fifth freedom of knowledge*" with questions posed on six axes, including  
"A single labour market for researchers"
- **ERA - Expert Group Researchers:**  
Attraction & retention of researchers,  
mobility, social security, Charter & Code.

# ERA - Expert Group Researchers

## 4 Cornerstones

- 1) Attraction, ethical recruitment and retention of researcher
- 2) mobility in all its facets (geographical, sector, disciplinary, virtual and 'demographic')
- 3) research-friendly social security and supplementary pension systems
- 4) *The European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for their Recruitment* promoted as a dynamic goal

## Follow up - 5 areas envisaged for action in 2008

- 1) A partnership focussing on key issues to improve **researchers' career prospects and mobility**
- 2) Promote **joint programming** process to increase pooling of public efforts in relevant areas
- 3) Community legal framework to facilitate the construction and operation of **new pan-European infrastructures**
- 4) A European strategy for enhanced and coherent **international S&T co-operation**
- 5) Recommendation and code of conduct for enhancing **knowledge transfer between universities and industry** (IP charter)

## The partnership for Researchers

Framework for MS to direct their efforts at national level (National Action Plans), based on common, agreed objectives in 4 key areas:

- ***Open recruitment and portability of grants***
- ***Meeting social security and supplementary pension needs of mobile researchers***
- ***Attractive employment and working conditions***
- ***Enhancing training, skills and experience of researchers***

# 1. open recruitment and portability of grants

## Actions

- MS to ensure open, transparent and competition-based **recruitment** by giving institutions greater **autonomy** over hiring
- MS and COM to ensure that all publicly funded positions are openly **advertised** online and improve practical support for mobile researchers
- MS and COM to allow **portability** of individual research grants by national funding agencies and Community programmes, where this enables funders to better meet their research needs and researchers to better manage their careers

## 2. Social security and suppl. pension rights

### Actions

- Ensure access to **information** on trans-national social security and supplementary pension entitlements
- **Better utilise** the existing legal framework and use derogations foreseen in current social security rules
- Include rules easing international mobility of researchers when concluding bi- and multi-lateral social security **agreements** with third countries
- Assess the need for a Recommendation on easing transfer of **supplementary pension rights** and to encourage **pan-EU pension schemes** targeted at researchers



EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION

European  
Research Area

## 3. employment and working conditions

### Actions

- Improve career opportunities for **early-stage researchers** by using « flexicurity principles », regular evaluation, wider autonomy and better training
- More flexibility in contractual and admin. arrangements and national legislation for **senior and end-of-career** researchers
- Ensure that all publicly funded researchers can receive adequate **social security coverage**
- Achieve adequate **gender** representation in selection and funding bodies, and adopt policies (e.g. dual careers), to enable men and women to pursue a research career with an adequate work-life balance

## 4. training and skills development

### Actions

- Develop and support consistent « **national skills agendas** » to ensure that researchers are equipped with the necessary skills to contribute fully to a knowledge-based economy and society throughout their careers
- Ensure better **links between academia and industry** by supporting the placement of researchers in industry during their training and promoting industry financing of PhDs and involvement in curriculum

# CONCLUSION

## EU and national HR policies vs. Charter & Code

High convergence between HR policies  
at national level (Partnership)

**AND**

HR strategy at institutional level (C&C)

This requires a political dialogue and  
close co-operation between all players:  
authorities, stakeholders, researchers!



EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION

European  
Research Area



European Research Area

**Thank you for your attention!**

[massimo.serpieri@ec.europa.eu](mailto:massimo.serpieri@ec.europa.eu)