

UNIVERSITY OF KRAGUJEVAC
SERBIA



Human Resources Strategy
for Researchers

(Incorporating European Charter for Researchers and
Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	2
2. About the University of Kragujevac	3
3. European Charter & Code	4
4. Methodology	5
5. Activities review	6

1. Introduction

Through adoption of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) University of Kragujevac confirm its position and commitment towards the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers (European Charter & Code).

The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers, represents the most important elements of a European framework for defining the status of researchers, through the provision of equal rights and obligations, regardless of where they work. They include 40 basic principles and requirements divided into four areas (ethical and professional aspects, recruitment, working conditions and social security, training) and are of great importance for all researchers as well as for the University and the faculties as institutions. Charter for Researchers define the roles and responsibilities of researchers and organizations in which they work in order to ensure successfully creating and dissemination of knowledge. Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers is directed towards improving quality and transparency of the selection and employing process of researchers and their career development.

Human Resources Strategy for Researchers combines analysis of the current situation and aspects of human resources in research at the University of Kragujevac, seen in scope of principles and requirements of the Charter and Code (Internal Analysis), and a list of planned activities which should be implemented in future, in order to ensure improvement of the current condition in those segments (Action Plan).

Human Resources Strategy for Researchers is a document that defines starting point for the process of implementing of the Charter and Code principles, applied methodology and structured review of planned activities, grouped according to similarities and the planned method of implementation.

The following documents represent integral parts or supporting documents of the Strategy:

- 1. Internal Analysis - Report on mapping the research human potential and issues at University of Kragujevac**
- 2. Action Plan for implementation**
- 3. Timetable for realization of Action Plan activities**
- 4. Declaration of Commitment to the principles of the European Charter and Code**

2. About the University of Kragujevac

University of Kragujevac rose from the foundations of the Lyceum of the Principality of Serbia, the first higher education institution in modern Serbia, established in Kragujevac by the decree of Prince Milos Obrenović on July 1st, 1838. Its first rector was Atanasije Nikolic (1803 – 1882). The Lyceum of the Principality of Serbia planted the seed of higher education from which first modern higher education institutions originated in the beginning of the 1960s.

University of Kragujevac was founded in May 21, 1976. At that time, the University incorporated five faculties: Mechanical Engineering, Economics, Law, Natural Sciences & Mathematics, Medicine and College of Mechanical Engineering in Kraljevo along with two research institutes: Small Grains Research Institute in Kragujevac and Fruit Research Institute in Čačak.

The University was established and developed based on the concept of dispersed university, comprising 12 faculties in six towns of the Central Serbia region: Kragujevac, Čačak, Jagodina, Kraljevo, Užice and Vrnjačka Banja. However, the University managed to turn this into one of its most distinctive advantages which allows it to use economic and geographical potentials and human resources from the territory which spreads over an area of 5000 square meters and has about 2.5 million citizens.

Today the University of Kragujevac is a modern education and research center embracing almost all major areas of teaching and research, with a student population of 20,000 and 1,200 academic staff.

The University integrates the functions of all faculties and its organizational units by carrying out the unique policy with the aim to constantly promote higher education activities, improve the quality of teaching process and educate scientific, research and art offspring.

By realizing international activities, the University will strive to provide its teachers and researchers with the most favorable research environment, and its students with opportunities to gain knowledge, skills and competences that will raise their competitiveness not only at national level, but also at European and global labor market, and within the academic community at the same time.

Through mutual cooperation among faculties within the University, their students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff in the area of international cooperation, the University of Kragujevac tends to provide best conditions, mechanisms and procedures that will encourage and support the realization of activities necessary for the process of internationalization.

3. European Charter & Code

The European Commission adopted in 2005 the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

The European Charter for Researchers is a set of general principles and requirements which specifies the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers as well as of employers and/or funders of researchers. The aim of the Charter is to ensure that the nature of the relationship between researchers and employers or funders is conducive to successful performance in generating, transferring, sharing and disseminating knowledge and technological development, and to the career development of researchers. The Charter also recognizes the value of all forms of mobility as a means for enhancing the professional development of researchers. In this sense, the Charter constitutes a framework for researchers, employers and funders which invites them to act responsibly and as professionals within their working environment, and to recognize each other as such.

The Charter addresses all researchers in the European Union at all stages of their career and covers all fields of research in the public and private sectors, irrespective of the nature of the appointment or employment, the legal status of their employer or the type of organization or establishment in which the work is carried out. It takes into account the multiple roles of researchers, who are appointed not only to conduct research and/or to carry out development activities but are also involved in supervision, mentoring, management or administrative tasks. This Charter takes as its premise that researchers as well as employers and/or funders of researchers have an overriding obligation to ensure that they meet the requirements of the respective national or regional legislation. Where researchers enjoy a status and rights which are, in certain respects, more favorable than those provided for in this Charter, its terms should not be invoked to diminish the status and rights already acquired. Researchers, as well as employers and funders, who adhere to this Charter will also be respecting the fundamental rights and observe the principles recognized by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers consists of a set of general principles and requirements that should be followed by employers and/or funders when appointing or recruiting researchers. These principles and requirements should ensure observance of values such as transparency of the recruitment process and equal treatment of all applicants, in particular with regard to the development of an attractive, open and sustainable European labour market for researchers, and are complementary to those outlined in the European Charter for Researchers. Institutions and employers adhering to the Code of Conduct will openly demonstrate their commitment to act in a responsible and respectable way and to provide fair framework conditions to researchers, with a clear intention to contribute to the advancement of the European Research Area.

Through implementation of the Charter and Code principles in the HRS4R, University of Kragujevac acquire conditions for entering into the evaluation procedure and obtaining the European Certificate of Excellence in research of human resources (HR Excellence in Research), as a very important step for the University in terms of better positioning and ranking in the international context, improving the quality of work in the research sector and networking with leading research organizations in Europe.

4. Methodology

First step in implementation of the European Charter and Code principles represents conducting of internal analysis or mapping of human resources potential for research at the University of Kragujevac, as well as record the current state of university norms and established practice in the four main areas of Charter & Code principles application. Mapping was conducted during April 2016 by completing the appropriate questionnaire, of all the faculties of the University of Kragujevac. The data were integrated into a single document at the university level, which was the basis for the next activities.

In addition to this institutional questionnaires, which were completed by the faculties, on-line questionnaire was prepared to be directly filled in personally by researchers from the University of Kragujevac. In period June - July 2016., total of 168 researchers from the University filled in this questionnaire.

Results obtained from the institutional and individual questionnaires were merged into a unified document **Internal Analysis - Report on mapping of the research potential at the University of Kragujevac**. This document presents an overview of the current situation at the University, in the field of human resources for research, with the established shortcomings and proposed measures framework that will be defined in detail within Action Plan for the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers through incorporation of the European Charter & Code principles.

University of Kragujevac formalized his decision to support the European Charter and Code principles on 20th September 2016., with signing of the **Declaration of Commitment to the Principles of the European Charter and Code**.

By the Rector of the University of Kragujevac decision (No. VI - 03 to 586 from 20th September 2016.), the Working group were defined, for preparation of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers through the incorporation of the principles of the European Charter and Code.

Working group has prepared a draft text of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers submitted to the Senate of the University of Kragujevac for adoption.

Finally on its session held on 27th October 2016., Senate of the University of Kragujevac adopted proposed Human Resources Strategy for Researchers and Action Plan for its implementation.

5. Activities review

Coming from results of Internal analysis total of 85 activities are proposed in Action Plan for implementation of Human Resources Strategy for Researchers. For each of the 40 principles defined in the European Charter and Code at least one activity is proposed.

Proposed activities, according to their characteristics, could be classified into four following categories:

1) ANALYSIS - Involve all activities on collecting and analyzing of data on the state of certain areas or matters at the University, mostly in the form of documents prepared by the faculties and submitted to the University with the aim of unifying, analyzing and making appropriate conclusions and measures.

2) TRAINING - These activities include all forms of training, seminars and workshops that are organized for the training of researchers, professors, mentors, administration, etc.

3) INFORMATION - Activities at transferring information to researchers and professors on certain important topics using all available resources. These activities could be combined with training and can be implemented using University or faculties web pages, e-mails, etc.

4) MEASURES - Represents all activities where it is necessary to adopt appropriate act or document (regulations, instructions, interpretation, guide) at the University level or amend an existing one. Also here are other activities that involve taking specific steps and actions that do not belong to the three pre-defined groups.

For the implementation of the proposed activities, use of all available resources is planned and the involvement of authorities, bodies and individuals at the university and faculties:

- Rector and Vice-Rectors of the University of Kragujevac
- Deans of faculties
- The Senate of the University of Kragujevac
- Faculty Councils
- Scientific and teaching Councils of faculties
- Departments and Councils of study programs at faculties
- Secretary General of the University of Kragujevac
- Court of Honor of the University of Kragujevac
- University Secretariat and administration
- Faculties secretariats and administration
- Centers and offices of the University of Kragujevac
- University Library
- Working groups and coordinators of international projects that are being implemented at the University or faculties.

Time framework for implementation of all planned activities is defined for the period October 2016 - December 2018. Certain activities have precisely defined term until the scheduled completion while other activities will be carried out continuously starting from defined term which is usually identified and linked to the beginning of the school year.

All proposed activities can be divided into five basic groups that primarily define their focus, target groups and methods of implementation.

A1. Activities on promotion of strategic and developmental elements of science and research at national level

This group contains activities that will be implemented through a joint, harmonized and synchronized work with other state universities in the country. These activities are aimed at promoting the important elements and ideas that define the national framework of scientific research in higher education institutions. Ideas and concepts promoting will be carried out through the participation of the University in the work of the various inter-university and national bodies and organizations.

- Encouraging the increase of funds allocations for science and research at national level.
- Promoting the need for adequate recognition of scientific & research profession and its protection at national level.
- Initiatives, activities and proposals for defining and improving of national legislation, in terms of providing a stabile and uninterrupted work of researchers.
- Defining the status of researchers at faculties and ensuring of stabile and stimulating financing of their activities.
- Defining status and funding options for employment of post-doctoral students through the national program for post-doctoral research.
- Initiative for creating and enabling adequate national and institutional framework, as well as creating conditions and incentives for mobilities of post-doctoral students.
- Emphasizing on the need to adopt a national framework for ensuring conditions for employment of researchers after career break, their further development and improvement.
- Clarifying issues related to the employment of foreign researchers.
- Identifying different forms and recognition of skills acquired through informal education.

A2. Activities to improve university infrastructure and modes of university services and systems to support the work of researchers

This group of activities is aimed at improving University infrastructure and raising the efficiency and effectiveness of University services that provides support to the work of researchers at different stages of their careers.

- Improving of system for publication of PhD dissertations.
- Improving the ways of project management related to reporting and financial management.
- Provision of project management at appropriate platform.
- Improving of IT support for information transfer to researchers.
- Strengthening and/or improvement of an system and education of users on the data/information safety and protection.
- Establishing a system of rewarding researchers and research teams from different areas (annually)
- Publication of results of completed projects and examples of good practice in dissemination and commercialization of results achieved.
- Establishing a system for notification of researchers through a newsletter.
- Presentation of scientific results to the general public with special approach for the promotion of various scientific achievements.
- Intensive involvement of the Centre for Career Development and Student Counseling for work with PhD students and post-doctoral students.
- Periodic analysis of situation and control in respect to the principle of legal and ethical norms and standards of research.
- Defining the measures in case of determining discrepancies in respect of ethical principles and norms.
- Defining the model for the transformation of the Court of Honor of the University of the Ethics Committee.
- Adoption of the regulation at University level which would define the principles of determining disciplinary liability and enforcement proceedings in cases of violations of the Code of Ethics, plagiarism, infringement of intellectual property rights etc.
- Continuous activities of different forms in order to prevent plagiarism at all levels.
- Analysis of viability and possibility for introducing the Ombudsman in order to protect rights of researchers at the University level.

A3. Educational, promotional and informative activities aimed at teachers and researchers in all faculties of the University of Kragujevac

Within this group there are activities that aim to raise level of awareness of researchers and professors at University, through implementation of various educational and training programs, debates, meetings, workshops and seminars. This group of activities also aims to promote the values and principles which are widely accepted in scientific research community.

- Informative seminar with topics of University Code of Ethics and the European Charter and Code for newly employed researchers.
- Encouraging the development of new knowledge, skills and competences of young researchers.
- Development and implementation of thematic seminars for researchers (career management, communication skills, project management, innovation, etc.).
- Stimulating involvement of researchers in public life and external promotion of scientific results.
- Introduction of researchers with national legislation and rules of the institution (University/faculties) related to aspects of intellectual property, plagiarism, etc.
- Realization of training program for preparation of applications and management of projects financed from EU funds.
- Encouraging mobility of researchers and stimulating development of post-doctoral students in the country and abroad.
- Continued work on stimulating applications and raising number of projects run by female researchers and young researchers.
- Informing and raising awareness about the importance of lifelong learning and professional development.
- Encouraging formation of researchers associations and organizations.
- Encourage cooperation with international research groups (projects, scientific papers, etc.).
- Promotion of research results dissemination importance.

A4. Activities to improve procedures for selection and employment of researchers and professors

Activities whose implementation is related to adoption of amendments of faculties regulations for selection of researchers and professors as well as for Act and regulations on procedure for employment and acquisition in professors positions at University of Kragujevac.

- Continuous monitoring of the efficiency and system improving for evaluation and assessment process defined by the University and faculties regulations.
- Developing a system for advertising of open research and teaching jobs.

- Introduce the ability to search in ads published on University web page UNIKG.
- Continuous evaluation of candidates selection and election process.
- Introduction of abroad members in election commissions for election to the position of full professor.
- Defining conditions for membership in election commissions.
- Defining procedures, instructions and additional criteria to be used by election commissions in selection of candidates (encompassing the entire professional career of the candidate, accepting interruption in the scientific career, mobility recognition and evaluation, evaluation of all results not just bibliometric ones, etc.).

A5. Development, promotion and information activities directed at schools

This group aims to contribute to the work of faculties, in certain segments, through adoption of appropriate decisions and amendments to regulations and introduction of changes and improvements in established practice and methods of work.

- Development and improvement of institutional mechanisms for commercialization of research.
- Improvement of procedure for selection and re-election of researchers in research positions.
- Introduction of a system for evaluation and ranking of scientific and research achievements.
- Promotion of different modalities of non-formal education and lifelong learning.
- Encouraging flexibility of working conditions for researchers.
- Further strengthening of awareness at faculties on gender balance importance.
- Further strengthening of awareness at faculties on issue of any type of discrimination.
- Analysis of opportunities and promotion of employment of researchers at half-time work.
- Monitoring of engaging young researchers in teaching and other activities in order to achieve balance with researching activities.
- Promotion of researchers participation in work of faculties councils and bodies.
- Monitoring and analysis of mentors engagement in lecturing in order to achieve an optimal balance between educational activities and work with PhD students.
- Periodic analysis of situation and control in respect to principles of legal and ethical norms and standards of research.
- Monitoring of potential problems of discrimination.
- Promotion and improving quality of relationship between mentors and PhD students.