

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

# THE PRINCIPLES OF OTM-R:

from European Policy to Ghent University

Practice

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# WHO AM I?

Senior policy Advisor Research

## **Focus:**

- Link Human Resources & Research  
(Researcher mobility, HR strategy, career development & open recruitment)
- Quality Assurance in Research (doctoral training, research evaluation, institutional monitoring, rankings)
- Number crunching, policy analyses



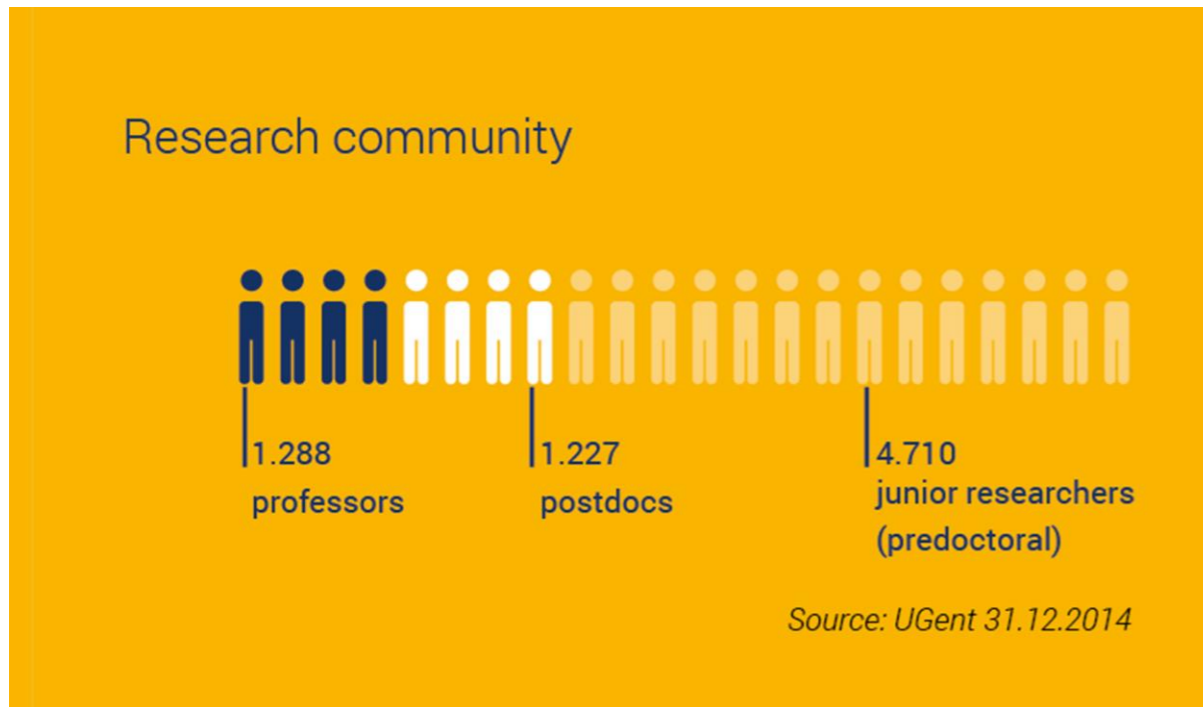
## **Activities:**

Ghent University

ECOOM – Ghent University

European Commission – working groups

# GHENT UNIVERSITY IN A NUTSHELL



674  
PhD degrees awarded in  
2016  
1/3 international



Ghent University  
Postdoc Community

## PhD students in 5 Doctoral Schools

(Bioscience) Engineering	33%
Life Sciences & Medicine	26%
Arts, Humanities & Law	14%
Natural Sciences	14%
Social & Behavioural Sciences	13%

5,760 WoS research publications in 2015

> 30% in Open Access

52 ERC grants

17 Highly Cited Researchers

316.56 M€ research expenditure

#62 in Shanghai Ranking



DARE  
TO THINK



## EUROPEAN POLICY

“An open labour market for researchers”

# EC: “AN OPEN LABOUR MARKET FOR RESEARCHERS”



European Research Area

European  
Research Area  
(2000)

Strategic agenda:  
dynamic knowledge  
economy

Focus: Open labour  
market for researchers

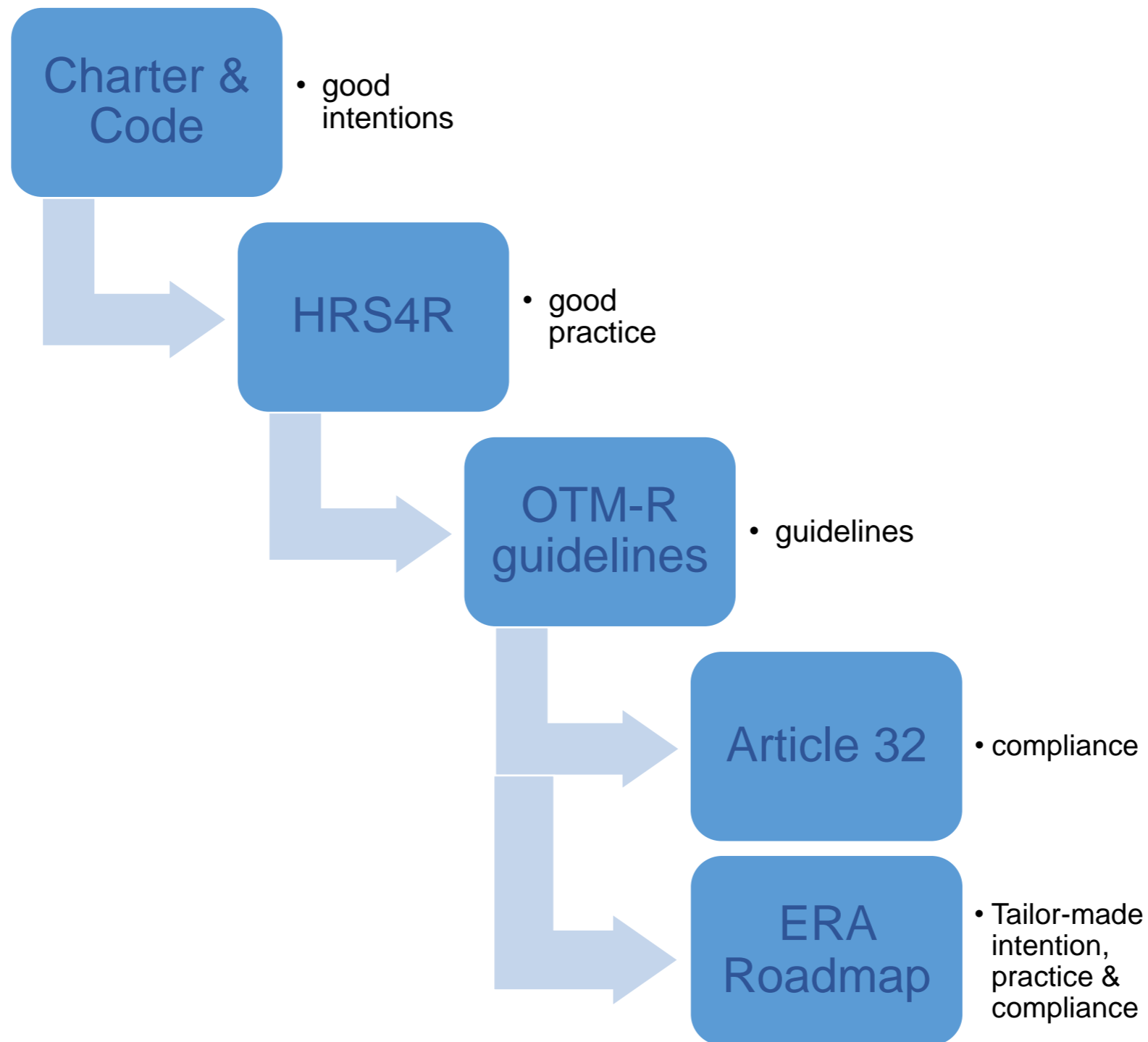
# EC: “AN OPEN LABOUR MARKET FOR RESEARCHERS”

Why focus on open recruitment of researchers?



# EC: “AN OPEN LABOUR MARKET FOR RESEARCHERS”

From “soft” to “hard” measures



# EC: “AN OPEN LABOUR MARKET FOR RESEARCHERS”



## **OTM-R report**

= recommendations on implementing principles of Charter & Code regarding recruitment of researchers

**OPEN** = reach the widest possible range of candidates

**TRANSPARENT** = use clear criteria, use clear procedures

**MERIT-BASED** = judge candidates objectively and adequately: fair criteria, fair selection committee, fair procedure

>< **nepotism, obscure procedures, unfair treatment**

- Checklist for institutions: “do we do what we say we do?”
- detailed recommendations on how to implement these principles
- good practices from across Europe

**DID YOU KNOW? OTM-R = within 1 year after publication, it already featured in European Roadmap & revised HRS4R strategy!**



# EC: “AN OPEN LABOUR MARKET FOR RESEARCHERS”

## What’s in Article 32? (Applies to all multi-beneficiary projects)



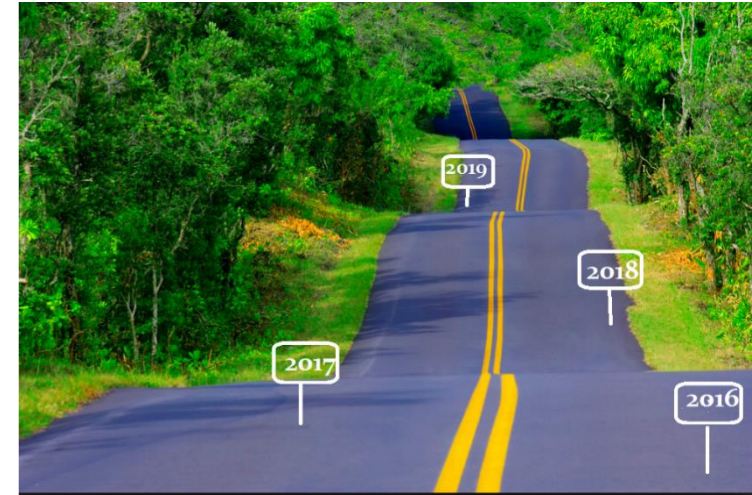
= Obligation to take measures to implement C&C

- Working conditions
- Open, Transparent, Merit-based recruitment
- Career development

= **“BEST EFFORT OBLIGATION”**

- Be proactive
- Take specific steps to implement C&C, to address conflicts between theory & practice
- Document these efforts

# EC: “AN OPEN LABOUR MARKET FOR RESEARCHERS”



## What's the ERA Roadmap?

A tool for progress at *national* level within a *European* context

- identifies a limited number of **key implementation priorities**
- focuses on what is likely to have the **biggest impact** on Europe's science, research and innovation systems
  1. effective national research systems
  2. a) jointly addressing grand challenges  
b) make optimal use of public investments in research infrastructures
  - 3. an open labour market for researchers**
  4. gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research
  5. optimal circulation and transfer of scientific knowledge
  6. international cooperation
- **European roadmap AND national roadmaps**

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TO THINK



OTM-R

@ GHENT UNIVERSITY”

# OTM-R @ GHENT UNIVERSITY



## Activities at Ghent University

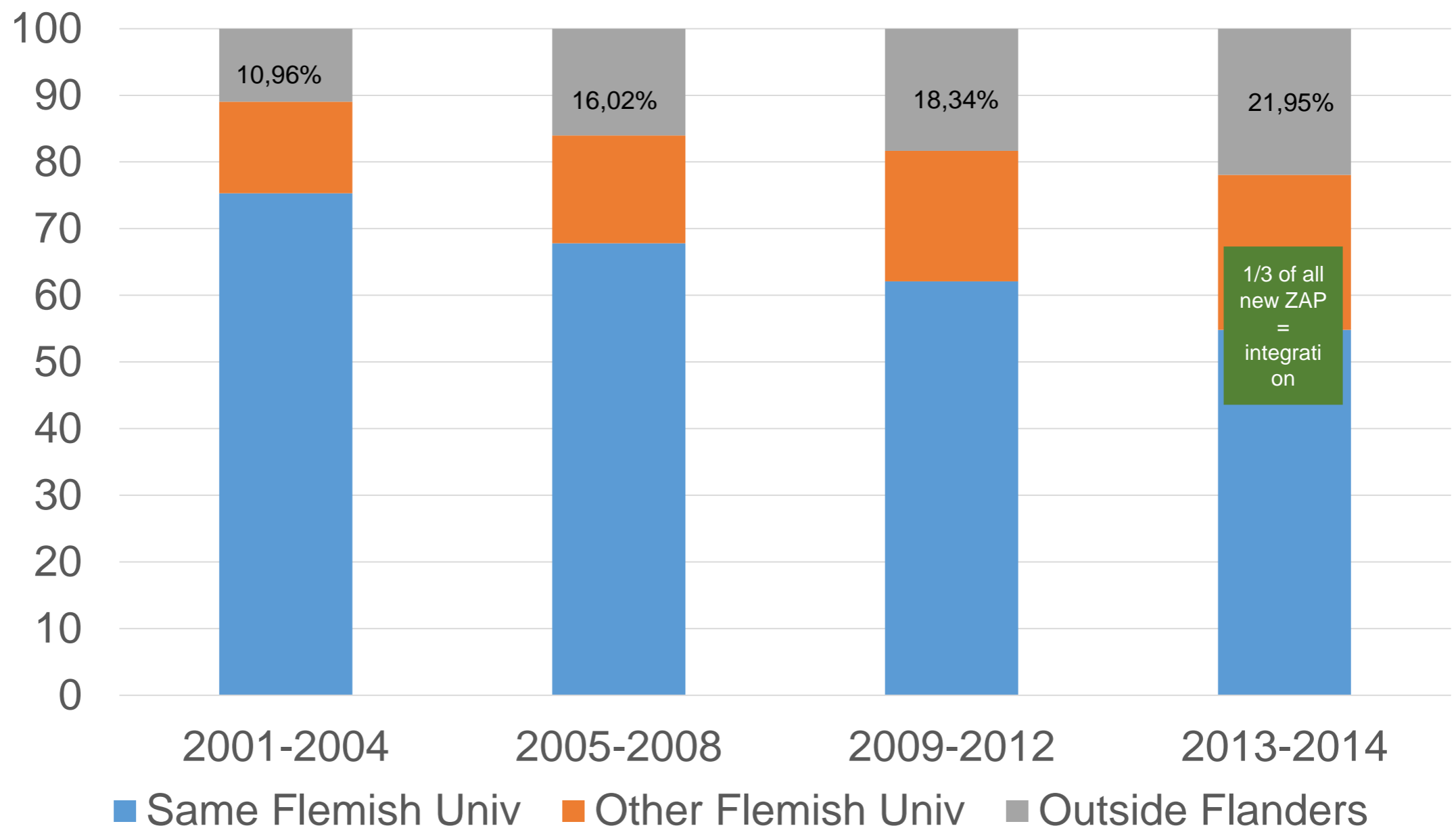
European policy pressure helps to set the agenda

1. **Awareness raising:** internal recruitment traditions / quality culture / beneficial effects of good hiring practices
2. **Campaign** to promote OTM-R in H2020 & other projects
3. **New recruitment guidelines** for professorial staff currently being implemented

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## 1. Awareness raising: internal recruitment traditions

Institution of origin (PhD) for professors appointed at Flemish universities  
(born post-1964, by year of prof appointment)



# OTM-R @ GHEENT UNIVERSITY

## 1. Awareness raising:

- Target all stakeholders
  1. PhD students
  2. Postdocs
  3. Leading academics
  4. Deans
  5. University management
- Engage in discussion: “show” – “don’t tell”
- Highlight the benefits
  - Culture of trust, fairness, equity, quality
  - Institutional reputation
  - Emphasize “resources” in “human resources”
- No accusations

# OTM-R @ GHEENT UNIVERSITY

## 2. Campaign:

- Key elements from OTM-R report condensed into one flyer, Dutch & English version
- Sent to all professors
- Including in welcome pack for all newly appointed professors
- Highlighted in newsletter & available as pdf-download



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## 3. New recruitment guidelines :

Our approach:

- Self-evaluation: **checklist** in OTM-R report
- **Focus groups & informal discussions** with key people: problems & good practices
  - Admin staff
  - Deans
  - University leadership
  - Members of the Board of Governors
- **Draft new approach**, discussed formally in:
  - Deans' meeting
  - Professorial HR committee
  - University leadership
- Preparation of (1) **vision document** for University Board, (2) change in **regulations**, (3) change in **administrative procedures**
- **Operational impact analysis**: extra staff investment
- Scheduled to be **endorsed** by July 2017



## 3. New recruitment guidelines :

### Key changes:

- More focus on **welcoming** researchers, less on restrictive formal requirements
- Easier, shorter **application form**
- **Equal access to information** for internal and external candidates, e.g.:
  - Composition selection panel
  - Scheduled interview dates
  - Faculty / department medium-term policy
- **Quality control & support** throughout entire process
- Stricter rules on **selection panel composition**
- Better **prevention** of bias, of conflict of interest
- **Sharing good practices**
- Providing **feedback** to shortlisted candidates

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## Take-home messages?

- H2020 can be your leverage but should not be your focus
- Use OTM-R checklist to discover your growth potential
- Focus on trust, support & empowerment where desirable
- Limit control to where absolutely necessary
- Collect good practices
  - Especially within your own institution!
- Embed changes within an overall quality culture
- Take time, give time

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