EU Report on the Implementation of the European Charter for Researchers at the University of Potsdam

Internal analysis and action plan for the
„Human Resources Strategy for Researchers"

September 2015

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1 Introduction

The University of Potsdam, with its 20,000 students and over 2,500 staff members, is the largest institution of higher education in Brandenburg. It is comprised of five faculties at three campuses, numerous scientific institutions, and a central administrative level as well as central operating units. Cooperation with multiple on-site extramural research institutions in the natural sciences, human sciences, the humanities, and the social sciences has created a dense network for interdisciplinary research. The current University Development Plan (2014 – 2018) includes the profile development of specific research areas, which is meant to increase the University's national and international visibility. In addition, the University of Potsdam qualifies as an extraordinarily family-friendly university thanks to its well-developed support and advising services, which focus on the compatibility of studies, work, and family. The University views internationalization as another cross-sectional objective that is an integral component to the University of Potsdam's overall strategic positioning as a research institution that is open to the world. In its efforts to attract the best scientific minds to Potsdam, the University is aware of the importance of Berlin-Brandenburg's attractiveness as a place to perform research, an agreeable work culture, material and immaterial support, and a strategy for promising career developments. The purposeful reflection on, and critical examination of, existing conditions and processes should address this concern in the framework of implementing the European Charter for Researchers.

It was in this context that the Executive Board of the University of Potsdam approved a declaration of interest for joining the fourth cohort of the "Institutional Human Resources Strategy Group" in September 2012. The Executive Board's decision of November 14, 2012, expressed the University of Potsdam's support for the Charter and Code for Researchers. The University thereby articulated its intent to implement the European Charter for Researchers in a strategic process and to participate actively in the process, which is conducted at the European level. The University is therefore applying for the EU Commission's "Human Resources Excellence in Research" award.

2 HRS4R implementation process and research design

The responsibility for this project lies with the Vice President for International Affairs, Alumni, and Fundraising, with support from the Department of the Vice President for Research and Young Researchers, as well as the Division for Human Resources and Legal Affairs. The entire University is involved in the practical aspects of implementation, especially the Division for Planning, Statistics, and Research Affairs, the Division for Student Affairs with the International Relations Office and the Welcome Center, and the Division for Human Resources and Legal Affairs, the respective faculty administrations, the Appointment Management committee, Career Services, the Potsdam Graduate School, and the Equal Opportunity Coordination Office.

The Vice President for International Affairs, Alumni, and Fundraising initiated this process at the University of Potsdam in early 2013, which began with defining, planning, and implementing workflows and responsibilities. An HRS4R Working Group was established in July 2013. Within two years, an analysis of the status quo was created in close cooperation with the European Commission, along with a strategic action plan. During this process, the Commissioners for Internationalization on the faculties were informed about the project and asked to provide support.

The Commissioners for Internationalization in the five faculties were each given a research assistant who worked on the HRS4R project and prepared an analysis for their respective faculty. Furthermore, a certified administrative scientist with several years of work and project experience was hired as an additional staff member to conduct an analysis of the central administration. The HRS4R Working Group has discussed topics relevant to implementation in several workshops and developed a research design.

2.1 Survey target group

To carry out the internal analysis process, the survey focused on researchers as its target group, which included professors, postdoctoral research fellows, and doctoral students at the University of Potsdam.

In addition to surveys of researchers at the faculty level, surveys were also conducted with experts in the areas of central administration, in the Executive Board, in the Service Centers, University institutions and committees who qualified as relevant to the analysis of recruiting processes and further education services for researchers.

Because all of these areas are not mirrored in faculty structures, the surveys also included experts on each faculty – such as Commissioners for Internationalization, Equal Opportunity Commissioners, Quality Management Commissioners, faculty chairpersons, and coordinators for young researchers – who have faculty- and subject-specific knowledge.

2.2 Methodological implementation

In the course of a methodological implementation process, the HRS4R Working Group agreed on a qualitative approach for analyzing the human resources management of researchers. The

decision to pursue a qualitative line was based on an open approach so that detailed, comprehensive information could be gathered on individual "Charter & Code" analysis priorities. On the other hand, complex correlations, as well as previously unseen problems, can be uncovered, and possible suggestions for improvement can be gathered for the campaign, whereas representativeness in a statistical sense is not required.

The survey was conducted using the oral survey method in the form of a guided conversation. The guided conversation is based on 40 analytical criteria from the European Charter for Researchers; however, they were not chronologically thematized according to the organization of the "Charter & Code," but were instead integrated into a guideline that the survey respondents could follow. It is organized as follows:

- General questions and the recruitment procedure
  (demographic data, appointment procedure, welcome culture)
- Activity as researcher
  (ethical and professional aspects, working conditions, and social security)
- Other activities in teaching, supervising, mentoring, project management
  (supervision situation, support for young researchers)
- Career development and prospects
  (creating opportunities and further education)

Interview guidelines were designed for specific status groups, and the guidelines for each group only differ slightly. Additional topic-centered guidelines were developed for experts at the faculty and central administrative levels.

Participation in the surveys was voluntary. When selecting the survey respondents, special attention was paid to the following aspects of diversity: different academic disciplines, the presence of new hires among the status group of professors, and balanced gender proportions. Potential interview partners were contacted via an e-mail that included an information sheet with data privacy information.

We sought to familiarize the staff at the University of Potsdam with the HRS4R project by developing an internal information strategy in order to attain a higher response rate among researchers. Furthermore, with regard to the action plan to be developed, this also raised awareness among the staff who would eventually implement the upcoming measures.

The communication strategy for the HRS4R project has included the following measures up to now:
- General informational e-mail to the professorate
- Internet presence at: http://www.uni-potsdam.de/campus-international/projekte-international/human-resources-strategy-for-researchers-hrs4r.html
- Introduction of the project in the Research Commission and the Advisory Board for Internationalization
- Public relations

- University-internal interim evaluation of the results

2.3 Survey scope

The HRS4R project included a total of 171 surveys with researchers (131) as well as experts (40) on the faculties and at the central administrative level of the University of Potsdam.
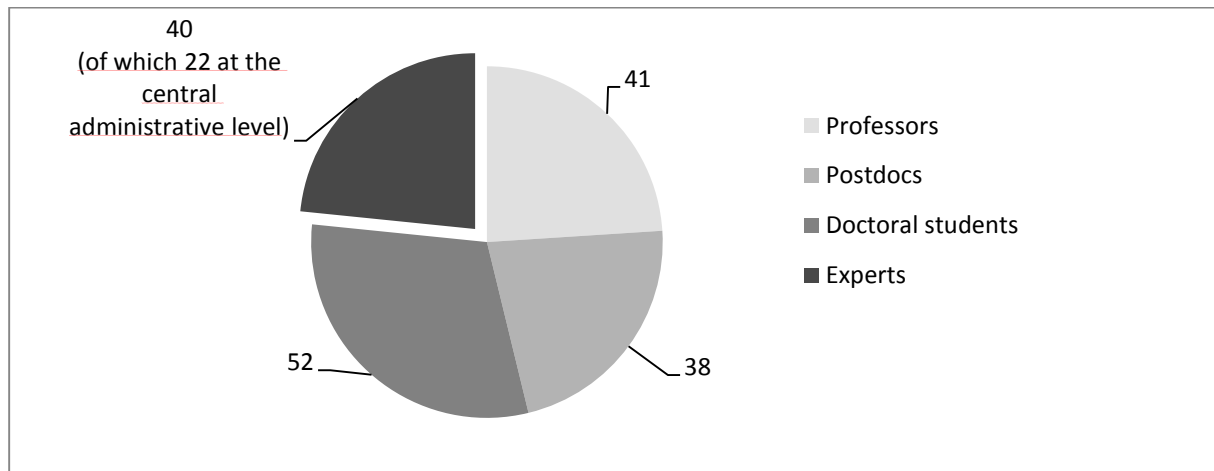
3 Evaluation methods

3.1 Survey results

The collected data was evaluated according to the analysis technique for qualitative content analysis as developed by Mayring (2003).[1]

A status-specific analysis grid with the respective work steps was designed for the steps enumerated by Mayring for paraphrasing, generalization at the level of abstraction, and the first and second reductions. For better handling and for reasons of clarity, the analysis grid was subdivided into the four survey sections of the guidelines (general questions, activity as a researcher, other activities, and career development). The survey results were recorded in a way specific to status groups and faculties.

The responses were anonymized for the evaluation grid while leaving markers for the status group and faculty affiliation. The evaluation steps are introduced in the following:

1. Paraphrasing the answer

When paraphrasing answers, the responses from researchers were transferred from the customized selective interview transcripts. Due to the written recording method, the interview transcript already includes paraphrases of the answers (in shortened and transcribed form).

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[1] Mayring, P. (2003): *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse. Grundlagen und Techniken.* Weinheim**:** Beltz

2. Generalizing at an abstract level

Because no predetermined answer categories were prepared in advance, the level of abstraction for each response is increased to the level of a generalization. This formed clusters of answers, which facilitates better comparability between the respective responses.

3. First reduction

The frequency of the answer clusters then provides an overview of the responses. The reduction presents a summary of the trends and anomalies that are of essential importance for the issue.

4. Second reduction – Takeaways for "Charter & Code"

In the fourth analytical step according to Mayring (2003), the second degree of reduction, multiple similar paraphrases of responses to different questions are reducible to central elements. For the HRS4R project, we chose instead to introduce an analytical step that led back to the "Charter & Code" analysis criteria. In this step, the summarized answers were evaluated against the analysis criteria used in the "Charter & Code."

3.2 Evaluation of expert interviews

In addition to the survey results from researchers, the evaluation also included the results from interviews with selected experts. This incorporates the subject-specific knowledge of respondents from this group as a kind of intensive supplement to the researcher-related survey results. The answers were classified using the "Charter & Code" analysis criteria and integrated into the evaluation.

3.3 Analysis of documents

In addition, existing documents, regulations, as well as statistical surveys by the University of Potsdam on specific topics (e.g., internal equality plans, regulations for doctoral and post-doctoral (Habilitation) degrees, regulations for the (professorial) appointment procedure) were also incorporated. These documents had to be critically assessed however before the survey results and then examined according to their implementation status.

3.4 Reporting

The analysis of the survey results began first at the faculty level in order to be able to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each faculty and thereby develop targeted measures. Faculty-internal results were presented within the faculty primarily through meetings, some of which were with the dean, a faculty-specific Commissioner for Internationalization, or the Faculty Administration. Then the inter-faculty final report was prepared, from which an action plan for reporting to the European Commission was designed in order to develop a staffing strategy for researchers at the University of Potsdam.
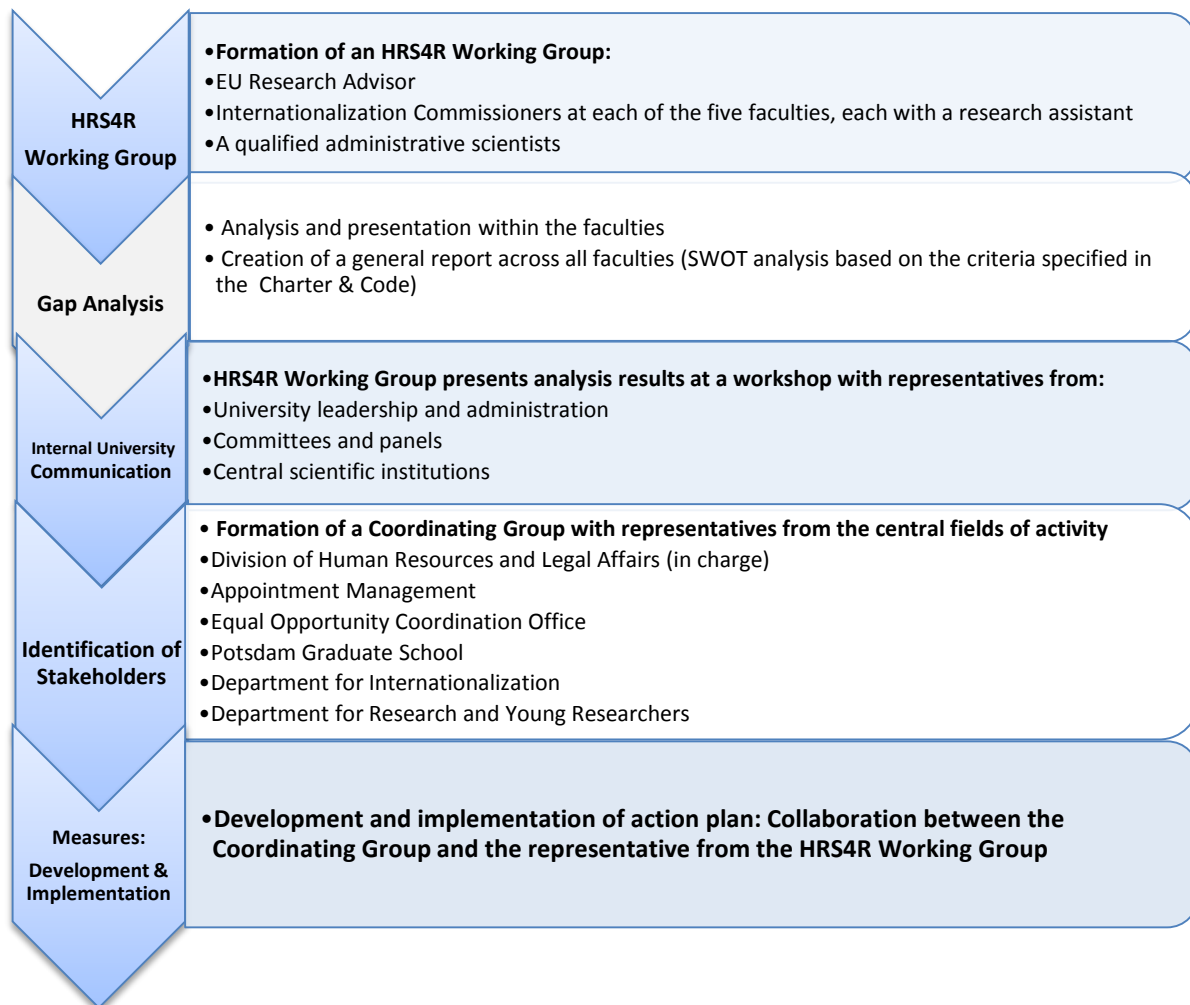
3.5 Development of the action plan

After the conclusion of the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of human resources management in the academic sector, the HRS4R Working Group gave an internal presentation of the results in a workshop with representatives from the University's leadership and administration, committees and panels, as well as central scientific institutions at the University of Potsdam. A gap analysis was then applied to identify central fields of action, which meant that the action plan was developed together with Appointment Management, the Equal Opportunity Coordination Office, the Division for Human Resources and Legal Affairs, the Potsdam Graduate School, the Department for Internationalization, and the Department for Research and Young Researchers. There was a discussion about possible action items in this context.

In order to create synergies, existing efforts at the University of Potsdam were already included in the action plan if they deal with the problem areas identified in the framework of the HRS4R survey. The Action Plan was developed in collaboration with representatives from identified fields of activity, as well as a representative from the HRS4R Working Group.

The fourth section presents a summary of the results of the analysis using the priority themes, along with an introduction of the measures derived from these topics and the assignment of implementation responsibilities to staff in the individual fields of responsibility. Implementation status feedback is directed to a representative from the HRS4R Working Group.

The Implementation Process for the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers

HRS4R Working Group

- **Formation of an HRS4R Working Group:**
- EU Research Advisor
- Internationalization Commissioners at each of the five faculties, each with a research assistant
- A qualified administrative scientists

Gap Analysis

- Analysis and presentation within the faculties
- Creation of a general report across all faculties (SWOT analysis based on the criteria specified in the Charter & Code)

Internal University Communication

- **HRS4R Working Group presents analysis results at a workshop with representatives from:**
- University leadership and administration
- Committees and panels
- Central scientific institutions

Identification of Stakeholders

- **Formation of a Coordinating Group with representatives from the central fields of activity**
- Division of Human Resources and Legal Affairs (in charge)
- Appointment Management
- Equal Opportunity Coordination Office
- Potsdam Graduate School
- Department for Internationalization
- Department for Research and Young Researchers

Measures: Development & Implementation

- **Development and implementation of action plan: Collaboration between the Coordinating Group and the representative from the HRS4R Working Group**

3.6 Subsequent steps and monitoring plan

The action plan measures are scheduled for a period from 2014 to 2018. Appendix 6.3 shows the schedule for the respective measure, including information about the beginning of their implementation. The Coordinating Group (stakeholders from the central levels of activity and a representative from the HRS4R Working Group) are developing specific milestones to measure implementation progress, and they are also defining distinct indicators that provide information about success. In 2017/2018, an internal self-evaluation will assess the implementation status of individual measures and facilitate statements about the success of these measures with regard to the European standards prescribed by the Charter & Code. New measures shall be developed or revised as necessary. The milestones integrated in Appendix 6.3, which are presented in detail on page 24, show the precise steps toward the successful implementation and consolidation of a measure. This shows what the University of Potsdam wants to accomplish before the self-evaluation. There are different review mechanisms that depend on the measure, such as interim reports, final reports, or meetings.

4 Internal analysis and action plan

The action plan was developed on the basis of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the internal analysis. Appendix 6.2 provides a tabular view of special strengths and areas that require attention, organized by the individual Charter & Code criteria. In addition, the table identifies associated measures that will support the prescribed standards. The action plan develops the priority topics of appointment management, working conditions, support for young researchers, and research conditions. Approved measures for the action plan were derived in this context that on one hand contribute to the consolidation of strengths, and on the other hand seek to overcome the identified weaknesses. Existing services and programs were also included in the action plan, and they will be further developed in the context of HRS4R, thereby integrating and consolidating previous and ongoing projects. Some of the measures presented here are already in the process of being implemented. Pursuant to the Executive Board's resolution on November 14, 2012, to support the Charter & Code, the HRS4R surveys were conducted in the period from July 2013 to June 2014, and the action plan was developed in the first two quarters of 2015. The following discussion presents the most important findings of the survey, organized by topic, as well as the associated measures and responsibilities.

4.1 Appointment management

The appointment process is governed by the Brandenburg Higher Education Act of April 29, 2014, as well as the current Appointment Regulations of the University of Potsdam, dated October 22, 2014. Many of the criteria enumerated in the European Charter are taken into consideration in the "Code of Conduct," such as equal opportunity, regulations regarding the

composition of selection committees, and the recruitment of scientists from abroad. In general, the surveys indicated that the appointment procedure may be lengthy but was considered by most respondents to be transparent.

The active participation of Equal Opportunity Commissioners in the appointment procedure, as well as the services on offer, aim to increase the proportion of female professors and to make the University of Potsdam attractive in terms of employment conditions for potential applicants. Equal opportunity considerations are integrated in the entire appointment process, and the faculty-level Equal Opportunity Commissioners provide consultations to help with the work of the Search Committee. The efforts of everyone involved to recruit outstanding female scientists for our university are mirrored in the nationwide ranking on equal opportunity and the growing proportion of female professors (28% as of April 1, 2014).

The consideration of equal opportunity is strengthened by a quota for the staffing of the Search Committee (40% women), the participation of faculty-level Equal Opportunity Commissioners as consulting members in the appointment procedure, and the work of the Dual Career Service.

Researchers gave positive feedback for the welcoming culture at the University of Potsdam. The Welcome Center, the Dual Career Service, coaching for new hires, the International Relations Office, services for families, and the Division for Human Resources and Legal Affairs offer numerous services, both in German and English, for newly recruited researchers, and the surveys assessed these services as helpful. In the field of coaching for new hires, there is a New Hire Workshop held once a year that is designed as a kick-off event. At the same time, the conceptual development of workshops designed especially for holders of department chairs continues. The services provided by the Dual Career Service for including families and partners (second hires) in the recruitment of professors (first hires) – for example by means of support services during the job search, organizational affairs, help in finding child care or schools, assistance in looking for a home – make an important contribution to strengthening our welcoming culture, both for new hires and their families.

Despite the anchoring of equal opportunity aspects in the appointment procedure, and the numerous offers of support at the University of Potsdam, further measures are being planned and implemented that will make it easier for international researchers to hit the ground running (Measure 1), increase the proportion of women among the professorate (Measure 2), and consolidate existing services in the field of coaching for new hires and the Dual Career Service (Measures 3 and 4).

Actions items for appointment management

No.	Task	Responsibility	Planning
1	International announcement of professor positions (Brandenburg Higher Education Act of April 29, 2014).	**Faculties** **Appointment Management**	**Continue with measure**

	Deviations from the rule must be justified in accordance with the current Appointment Regulations (October 22, 2014). **Principle: Mobility**		of October 2014
2	Introduce a checklist for the work of the Search Committee on gender equity in the design of appointment procedures and the systematic integration of equal opportunity concerns in all staffing decisions **Principle: Hiring (Charter) / CVs with chronological gaps**	**Equal Opportunity Coordination Office** **Appointments Committee**	**In implementation since September 2015**
3	**Welcome Center** Expansion of prevalent support services for international scientists by filling an internal position **Principle: Research environment / Valuing mobility**	**Welcome Center**	**May 2015**
4	**Services for new hires** Expansion of services and support for newly hired professors in the Dual Career Service and coaching for new hires **Principle: Hiring (Code) / Working conditions**	**Appointment Management** **Dual Career Service**	**May 2015**

4.2 Working conditions

The University of Potsdam aims to guarantee its researchers favorable working conditions and the requisite social security to create a propitious and supportive research environment.

The compatibility of work and family is an important aspect of securing advantageous working conditions and is understood as a cross-sectional task as well as part of the profile development of the University of Potsdam. The Equal Opportunity Coordination Office handles this issue. The office's "Service for Families" program provides advice, assistance, and information to researchers and employees about work-life balance and offers comprehensive support for flexible childcare if needed. The possibility of flexible arrangements for working hours also supports the compatibility of work and family. Efforts at the University of Potsdam towards improving equal opportunity for women and men resulted in the University's fifth "Total E-Quality" award on October 24, 2014.

The surveys also addressed the stability and security of employment. Contracts of limited duration are a problem in general for young researchers. The short duration of employment contracts, as well as frequent contract changes, limit continuity and the ability to plan a scientific career, which can lead to a loss of motivation among affected researchers. The Senate has therefore approved minimum periods of employment to counter this development (Measure

5). Furthermore, the relevant committees will discuss the possibility of introducing staff-supervisor discussions for academic staff (Measure 6).

Measures related to working conditions

No.	Task	Responsibility	Planning
5	The Senate decisions on the **minimum period of employment** (first decision: July 11, 2012) pursue the aim of facilitating the longest possible period for fixed-term employment, thereby creating planning security for employees. The Senate decision of June 18, 2014 (Resolution S 9/219) refined the first resolution with further specifications. This reinforced the goal of guaranteeing **minimum periods of employment for academic staff members and supporting staff**. The faculties and central institutions are thereby obligated when hiring new employees or extending existing contracts to apply the entire foreseeable duration of work contracts. The Senate has established a working group to monitor developments in contract durations. **Principle: Stability and security of employment**	**Faculties** **Scientific institutions** **Office for Personnel and Social Affairs**	**Continuation of the measure of June 2014**
6	**Expansion of staff-supervisor discussions:** Engagement in committees regarding the introduction of staff-supervisor discussions in the faculties that are based on the model of measures that apply to non-academic staff **Principle: Career development / Possibility of career advising**	**Senate** **Faculties** **Researchers**	**Planned for 2016**

4.3 Support for young researchers

The University of Potsdam offers an attractive research environment for young researchers. The University established the Potsdam Graduate School in 2009 as a central scientific institution with the objective of funding, supporting, and training its young researchers. Along with several internationally oriented, bilingual (German and English) cross-discipline training pro-

grams, the Potsdam Graduate School offers an array of support to young researchers, including financial support for expenses such as proofreading, or travel cost subsidies to facilitate participation in international conferences, colloquia, and summer schools. The "International Teaching Professionals" certification program is oriented towards young German researchers who are interested in an international scientific career, as well as researchers from abroad who would like to teach and research at the University of Potsdam. The internationalization strategy provides a solid foundation for deepening scientific knowledge while simultaneously acquiring experience with mobility and networking. The lecturer mobility program in ERASMUS+ is considered a good option for funding international experience in the realms of teaching and research as well as networking activities. Measure 7 aims to expand and consolidate services that promote mobility.

The opportunity for further training in science exists through a variety of cross-disciplinary training offers for scientific staff (Potsdam Graduate School, coaching for new hires). The support offered by the Career Service also creates opportunities for career planning and networking. The survey responses indicate that this diverse array of services is highly appreciated. The Potsdam Graduate School host an event called PhDay every two years, offering a platform for networking among young researchers at the University of Potsdam and its extramural partner institutes. In strictly bilingual formats, researchers are offered an event customized for their special target group for networking, exchanging, knowledge transfer, project presentation, and further education in the context of mini-workshops. The option of mobility between the public and private sector is implemented by the "Entrepreneurial Postgraduate Education" EPE (Science meets market) program line at the Potsdam Graduate School, in which management competences are conveyed at different levels and start-up activities receive support.

An initiative at the Potsdam Graduate School's Complementary Profile Development (CPD) program ensures a needs-oriented, innovative range of qualification offers for postdocs, holders of the Habilitation, and junior professors in all disciplines who want to engage in cross-disciplinary training in parallel to their scientific education and to prepare themselves for fields of activity inside and outside of science. The focus here is on academic professional fields with specialization in teaching and management competences. Program lines in science management, scientific communication, and policy consulting are planned to begin in 2016. The initiative is supported by a personal potentials analysis as well as a basic module that teaches fundamental methods and instruments of academic-related management (Measure 8). With this rich array of professional development services, the University of Potsdam meets the requirements of the European Charter in terms of opportunities for further training in research and offers a broad spectrum of possibilities for further professional development.

In order to attain the highest possible equality of opportunity among men and women in the context of career development, the Potsdam Graduate School, along with the Career Service and the Equal Opportunity Coordination Office, offers the Mentoring Plus program, which is explicitly geared to doctoral students and postdocs. The core of the nine-month program is the mentoring relationship in the form of a one-to-one mentoring session with the aim of

opening up exchanges between an experienced expert leader and a young researcher (Measure 9a). The further development of the "Equal Opportunity Bridging Program," which was introduced in 2007, is defined by the further refinement of the groups targeted for support, higher transparency in the process, and the opening of the program for men with family responsibilities. The University takes seriously its commitment to be a family-friendly institution, which is why it has expanded the scholarship program to offer completion funding after a family phase that caused an interruption in educational development (Measure 9b).

Measures related to support for young researchers

No.	Task	Responsibility	Planning
7	Financial support of European lecturer mobility in the context of activities in the International Teaching Program **Principle: Valuing mobility**	**Potsdam Graduate School** **Internationalization Department**	**Continuation and quantitative intensification of measure**
8	**Expansion of the "Complementary Profile Development (CPD)" qualification offer** by means of new program lines, the opportunity to get a personalized potentials analysis, as well as a basic module on the fundamental methods and instruments of science-related management **Principle: Career advising / career development**	**Potsdam Graduate School** **Pearls - Potsdam Research Network**	**Planned for 2016**
9a	**"Mentoring Plus" Program** This program supports doctoral students and young researchers who already have their PhD in terms of improving their career and promotion opportunities. **Principle: Professional development consulting / Supervision and management tasks**	**Potsdam Graduate School** **Equal Opportunity Coordination Office** **Career Service** **Pearls - Potsdam Research Network**	**Continuation of this measure, which began in September 2014**
9b	**"Equal Opportunity Bridging Program"** Completion funding for doctoral students and financial bridging for the period after the doctoral degree is completed **Principle: Career advising / career development**	**Equal Opportunity Coordination Office**	**Continuation of measure from 2013**

4.4 Research conditions

The required ethical and professional aspects of the European Charter are partially enshrined in law, which means that freedom of research is guaranteed by the Basic Constitution (Article 5, Para 3), the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000/c364/01), as well as the national constitution. The majority of interviewees confirmed that there were no restrictions on this freedom.[2] The public notice on "Self-monitoring in the sciences – Rules for ensuring good scientific practice at the University of Potsdam, dated February 14, 2002"[3] contains basic ethical aspects regarding research behavior, which correspond in principle to the criteria of the European Charter in terms of professional responsibility and conduct, accountability, co-authorship, dissemination of results, and intellectual property rights.

The faculty surveys had mixed results regarding the research environment. The availability of financial resources was criticized as not always sufficient to be able to keep pace with leading-edge international research. Planning is underway for the preparation of an overview of all research funding measures to make the organization of internal research support services more transparent; this is meant to promote the formation of community within the University and to facilitate access to these funding opportunities (Measure 10).

In order to create a high-performance research environment, the University of Potsdam's Development Plan (2014 – 2018) anticipates internal support for priorities in research. In this process, the research priorities established on July 1, 2014, for three to five years (geosciences, functional ecology and evolution research, cognitive sciences, plant genome research, and systems biology) will receive special funding to ensure the ability to perform research and to improve basic equipment (Measure 11). Separate target agreements with the Executive Board govern this process. At the faculty level, additional funds will be provided to high-powered research areas in the context of performance and target agreements with the faculties. The University Development Plan foresees additional support for flexible financial funding of innovative research projects and offers further supportive measures for individual project funding.

Moreover, the Ethics Committee of the University of Potsdam is in dialogue with researchers in order to ensure compliance with growing ethical requirements. The responsibilities of the Ethics Committee should be expanded in such a way that, in addition to experiments and examinations of human beings – the committee's primary subject – the potentially critical topics of military research and animal experimentation can also be considered (Measure 12).

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[2] The only restrictions identified were related to resource availability
[3] http://www.uni-potsdam.de/fileadmin01/projects/forschung/docs/PDFs_Forschung_Allgemein/selbstkontr_wissenschaft.pdf

Measures related to research conditions

No.	Task	Responsibility	Planning
10	**Transparency in internal university research funding** by forming a university public sphere **Principle: Research environment**	**Department for Research and Young Researchers**	**Currently being implemented**
11	**Internal university support for profile development** by concentrating on university research priorities **Principle: Research environment / Research freedom**	**Faculties** **Executive Board**	**Continuation of measure from December 2014**
12	**Expansion of the responsibilities of the Ethics Committee and refinement of its work methods** by forming sub-committees **Principle: Ethical principles / Research freedom**	**Executive Board** **Ethics Committee**	**Planned for late 2015**

5 Conclusion and remaining challenges

The measures in this action plan consolidate and secure the principles of the rights and duties of researchers, their employers, and funding sources, as defined in the European Charter, creating an attractive research environment than can be sustainably supported. The measures that the University of Potsdam has decided to implement range across different priority levels in the Charter in which efforts are pursued with regard to ethical and professional aspects, hiring processes, working conditions, social security, and the training and education of young researchers. In this way, the University of Potsdam seeks to facilitate a motivating research environment for its researchers and offer diverse, attractive career prospects, which also contributes to creating a competitive yet open European research area. The University of Potsdam therefore submits this action plan as an application for the "Human Resources Excellence in Research" award.

Nevertheless, open challenges remain for the University of Potsdam. The SWOT analysis table (Appendix 6.2) identifies fields of action that remain open (highlighted in red, without assignment of action items). These open items pertain to the criteria of 1) accountability, 2) processing and evaluation of results, and 3) teaching.

1) It seems that researchers (especially young researchers) have rather limited information about existing structures, guidelines, and support services. This affects the area of accountability, in that researchers may view the transparency of research as important, yet are not informed

about the regulations. We can attain higher awareness of this topic by means of targeted instruction and pointing out existing guidelines and structures, some of which have only been accessible on the Intranet.

2) The Charter & Code criterion of the processing and evaluation of results is viewed as "a matter of course," yet it is subject to an intrinsic motivation. Researchers who responded to the survey wanted more recognition for their achievements, for example presentations at international conferences. Additional non-financial mechanisms of expressing appreciation for excellent achievements could have a motivating effect.

3) On one hand, numerous support services continue to exist in the form of professional education and coaching, as well as family-friendly programs; on the other hand, researchers continue to be subjected to major time pressures as they attempt to balance high-quality teaching, student supervision, and administrative responsibilities. While implementing the scheduled measures, we should critically evaluate the expense and temporal compatibility of ongoing and additional tasks (Charter & Code Criterion 33; Compatibility of Teaching and Research).

In the future, the University of Potsdam will face the following challenges in the further development of its human resources strategy: providing more information about existing support services, supporting mechanisms of recognition and appreciation, and using existing aid services to mitigate stress factors.

6 Appendix

6.1 Demographic data for surveyed researchers

(All statistical figures in absolute numbers)

Gender
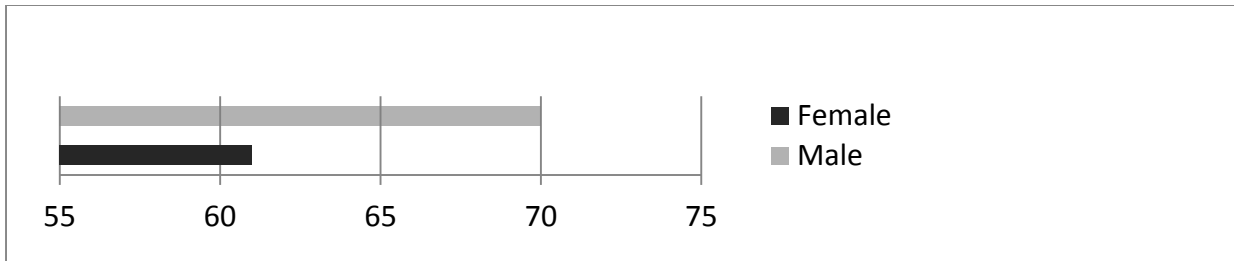
Legend:
- Female
- Male

Qualification level

Legend:
- Ph.D.
- Habilitation (second Ph.D.)
- Neither Ph.D. nor Habilitation

Nationality

Legend:
- German citizen
- Citizen of another European country
- Citien of a country outside Europe

Date of hire

Legend:
- Less than 2 years ago
- 2 – 5 years
- 5 – 10 years
- More than 10 years ago

Employment relationship

Legend:
- Employed at UP (budget)
- Employed at UP (third-party funding)
- Scholarship holder
- No employment relationship with UP
- No information
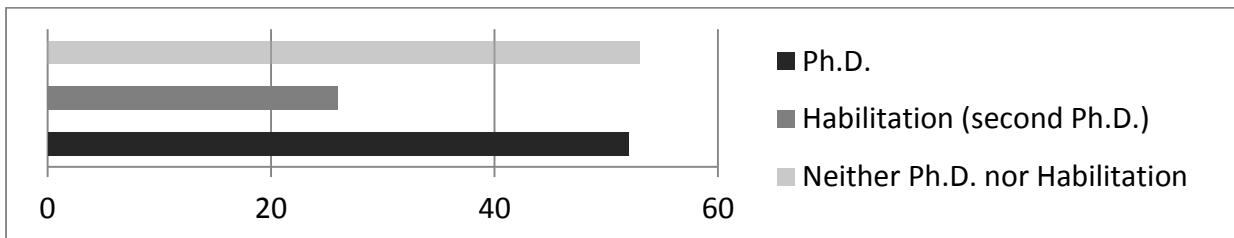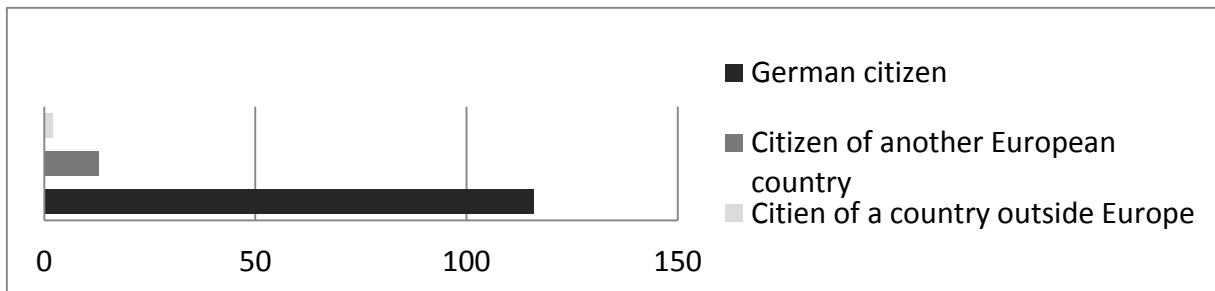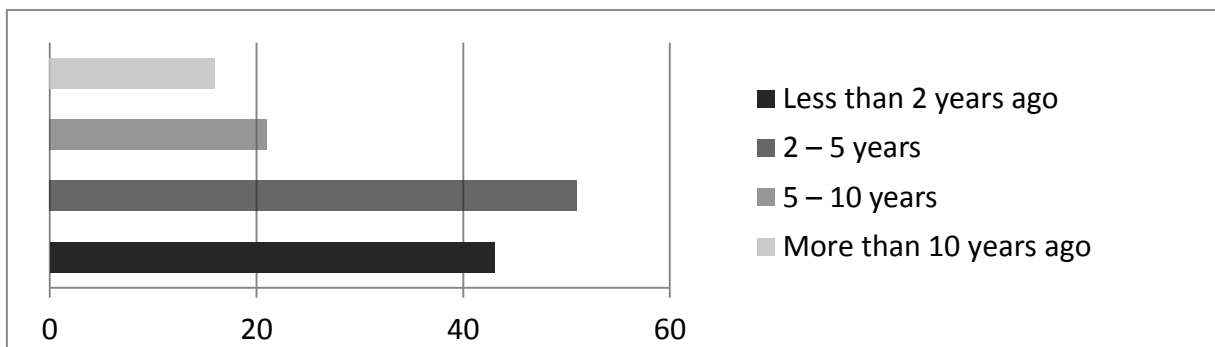
Legend:
- Fixed-term
- Unlimited
- No information
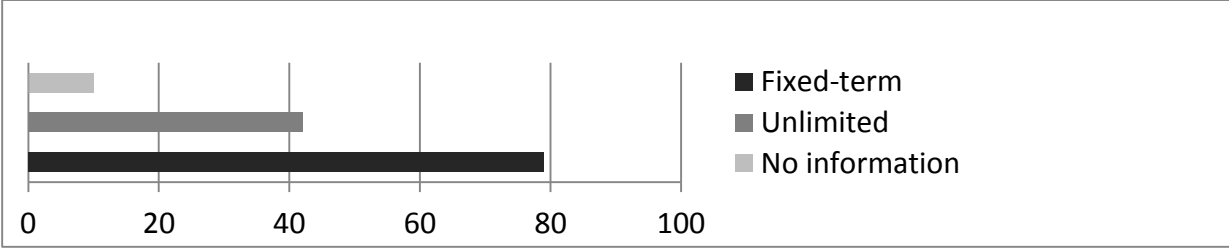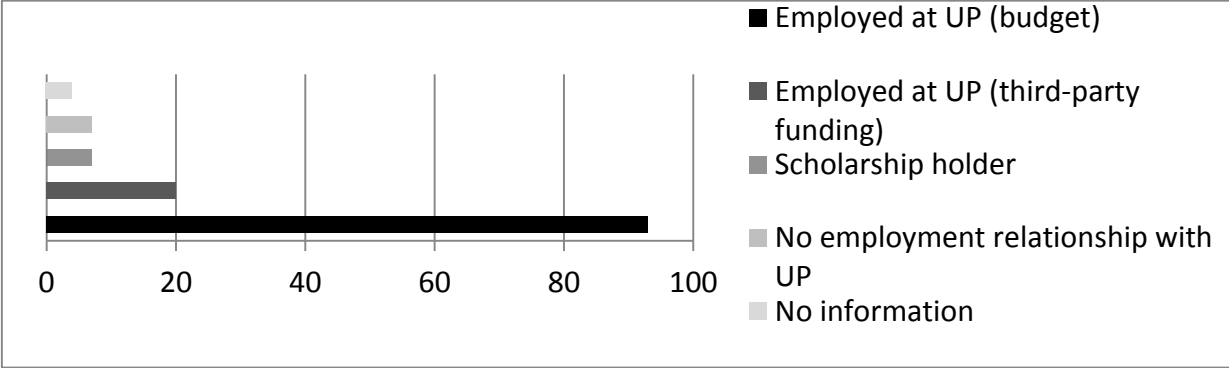
6.2 Charter & Code – Analysis: Priorities

Legend on p.22

N°	Aspects	Strengths / Opportunities	Weaknesses / Risks
1 – Ethical and professional aspects			
1.	Research freedom		Measure no. 11,12
2.	Ethical principles	Measure no. 12	
3.	Professional responsibility		
4.	Professional attitude		
5.	Contractual and legal obligations		
6.	Accountability		
7.	Good practice in research		
8.	Dissemination, exploitation of results		
9.	Public engagement		
10.	Non-discrimination		
11.	Evaluation / appraisal systems		
2 – Recruitment			
12.	Recruitment	Measure no. 2	
13.	Recruitment (Code)		Measure no. 4
14.	Selection (Code)		
15.	Transparency (Code Part 1)		
	Transparency (Code Part 2)		
16.	Judging merit (Code)		
17.	Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)	Measure no. 2	
18.	Recognition of mobility experience (Code)	Measure no. 1	
19.	Recognition of qualifications (Code)		
20.	Seniority (Code)		
21.	Postdoctoral appointments (Code)		
3 – Working conditions and social security			
22.	Recognition of the profession		
23.	Research environment	Measure no. 3, 10, 11	
24.	Working conditions	Measure no. 4	
25.	Stability and permanence of employment		Measure no. 5
26.	Funding and salaries		
27.	Gender balance		
28.	Career development		Measure no. 6, 8, 9a &b
29.	Value of mobility	Measure no. 7, 3	
30.	Access to career advice		Measure no. 6, 8, 9a & b
31.	Intellectual property rights		
32.	Co-authorship		
33.	Teaching		
34.	Complaints / appeals		
35.	Participation in decision-making bodies		
4 – Training of young researchers			
36.	Relation with supervisors		Measure no. 6
37.	Supervision and managerial duties	Measure no. 9a	
38.	Continuing professional development		Measure no. 6
39.	Access to research training and continuous development		
40.	Supervision		

Legend

Strengths / Opportunities	Weaknesses / Risks	Meaning
		Standards fulfilled
Measure x		Particular strength in this area; measure aims to reinforce/consolidate
	Measure y	Area with strengths and weaknesses; measure aims to address weakness
		Open field of activity; weaknesses identified, measures required in the future
		Especial strength; no action required

6.3 Schedule for HRS4R – Action Measures

No.	Task	Responsibility	2014		2015				2016				2017				2018			
			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Appointment Management																			
1	International advertisement of professor positions	AM / Fac							1A											
2	Checklist for gender equity in the professorial appointment procedure	EOCO / AC		2A/B			2C	2D	2E		2F/G			2H						2I
3	Expansion of support services in the Welcome Center	Welcome Center			3A															
4	Expansion of assistance and advising services for new hires	AM / Dual Career Service			4A		4B		4C											
	Working conditions																			
5	Implementation of Senate decree regarding minimum employment times for academic staff members & RAs	OPSA / Fac / Scholarly institutions						5A	5A		5B									
6	Expansion of staff-supervisor discussions	Senate								6A										
	Support for young researchers																			
7	Increase lecturer mobility in the context of the International Teaching Professionals Program	Internationalization Department / PoGS							7A			7B				7C				
8	Expansion of complementary profile development qualification service	PoGS														8A				
9a	Mentoring Plus Program	PoGS / EOCO														9aA				
9b	Equal Opportunity Bridging Program to support young researchers	EOCO		9bA				9bB			9bC			9bD						9bE
	Research conditions																			
10	Formation of a public sphere within the university for internal research support	Research department - Young researchers				10A														
11	Internal university support for profile development	Executive Board / Fac							11A			11B	11C							
12	Expansion of the responsibilities of the Ethics Committee	Executive Board / Ethics Committee								12A										

Legend:
- preparatory discussion
- Implementation start
- Implementation process

AM: Appointment Management
Fac: Faculties
EOCO: Equal Opportunity Coordination Office
AC: Appointments Committee
CS: Career Service

OPSA: Office for Personnel and Social Affairs
PoGS: Potsdam Graduate School

Legend for HRS4R action measure scheduling / Explanation of milestones

No./Milestone	Maßnahme	Time
Appointment Management		
1	**International announcement of professor positions**	
1A	Implementation of revised English-language template texts	Q2 2016
2	**Checklist for gender-equitable design of the appointment process**	
2A,D,F, H,I	Closed meeting of Equal Opportunity Commissioners	Q4 2014/15/16/17/18
2B	Development of a checklist for gender-equitable design of the appointment process	Q4 2014
2C	Introduction of the checklist in the appointment process	Q3 2015
2E	Interim evaluation on the application of the checklist	Q2 2016
2G	Revision of checklist as needed	Q4 2016
3	**Expansion of support services in the Welcome Center**	
3A	Implementation (fill an internal position)	Q2 2015
4	**Expansion of assistance and advising support for new hires**	
4A	Implementation (by means of staffing)	Q2 2015
4B	Carry out the redesigned New Hire Workshop (expanded to two days)	Q4 2015
4C	Release the new website in German and English	Q2 2016
Working Conditions		
5	**Implementation of Senate resolution regarding minimum periods of employement for staff researchers and Ras**	
5A	New Senate resolution with additional definitions for substantiating the Senate resolution of June 18, 2014, in the results of the Working Group's activity. Specification of term for new hire of scientists	Q4 2015/ Q1 2016
5B	The maximum degree of attainment for the implementation of the Senate resolution has probably been reached; possibly only a few deviations	Q4 2016
6	**Expansion of staff-supervisor discussions**	
6A	Engagement in committees regarding the introduction of staff-supervisor discussions in the faculties that are based on the measures that apply to non-academic staff	Q3 2016
Support for Young Researchers		
7	**Supporting lecturer mobility in the International Teaching Professionals program**	
7A	Financial support of the program: increase support from € 6,000 to € 12,000 (to be paid proportionally as a matching fund by the AAA and PoGS)	Q1 2016
7B,C	Q1 2017: Review option to further increase financial support, depending on availability of funds	Q1 2017 / Q1 2018
8	**Expand and establish the Complementary Profile Development professional development service**	
8A	Review	Q2 2018
9a	**Mentoring Plus Program**	**Q1 2018**
9aA	Review	
9b	**Equal opportunity bridge program for supporting young researchers**	
9bA-9bE	Monitoring	Q4 2014/15/16/17/18
Research Conditions		
10	**Formation of internal research funding for staff and students**	
10A	Publication on UP website	Q2 2015
11	**Internal university funding for profile enhancement**	
11A	Reporting by the faculties, including Funding Line II (research areas in the faculties)	Q1 2016
11B	Intermin reporting on the "Functional Ecology and Evolution Research" funding priority	Q4 2016
11C	Interim reporting on other research priorities	Q2 2017
12	**Expansion of the responsibilities and remit of the Ethics Commission**	
12A	Possible Senate resolution, involvement in final report	Q2 2016