

**TEMPLATE 4: ACTION PLAN****Case number:** 2022RO738119**Name Organisation under review:** Universitatea "Dunarea de Jos" din Galati**Organisation's contact details:** Domeasca nr.47, Galati, Galati, 800008, Romania**Submission date** 04/03/2024

## 1. Organisational Information

*Please provide a limited number of key figures for your organisation. Figures marked \* are compulsory.*

<b>STAFF &amp; STUDENTS</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	802
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	3
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	0
Of whom are women *	481
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	365
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	437
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	51
Total number of students (if relevant) *	12837
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	1441

<b>RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)</b>	<b>€</b>
Total annual organisational budget	60512102
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	1126454
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition)	9264614

with other organisations – including EU funding)	
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	215496

**ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)**

"Dunărea de Jos" University of Galați (UDJG) is the most important higher education institution in Southeast Romania, consistently ranking in the top 20% for research. Accredited by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance, UDJG offers a diverse range of training programs to nearly 20,000 students across 14 faculties and two extensions in Romania and Italy. These programs encompass bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional training, in Romanian and foreign languages. UDJG's primary mission as a research university is to establish itself as a nationally renowned multidisciplinary research institution in Central and Eastern Europe.

## 2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please provide an overview of the organisation in terms of the current strengths and weaknesses of the current practice under the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code at your organization.

### **Ethical and professional aspects \***

#### **Strengths:**

UDJG is an all-encompassing university wherein researchers adhere to the acknowledged ethical practices and principles that pertain to their respective research areas, in accordance with the University's Code of Ethics and Deontology.

The Charter of UDJG explicitly states that academic freedom is a fundamental value within the institution. Consequently, the teaching and research staff possess the autonomy to conduct research, select their research topics, develop and submit research projects, and make decisions regarding the research programs and competitions in which they participate. At UDJG, any form of discrimination is strictly prohibited and discouraged, as per the University Charter and the Code of Ethics and Deontology.

The Intellectual Property Office provides expert advice and assistance to researchers, facilitating a comprehensive comprehension of the governing principles and regulations, as well as guidance on patenting research findings.

The Operational Management Service offers guidance and oversight in relation to accessing and implementing research projects, grants, and research contracts with the industry. The administrative aspects, including financial matters, pertaining to the implementation of these projects, grants, and contracts are closely monitored by project officers, who are employees of the Operational Management Service.

UDJG operates in accordance with the national regulations governing the budgetary control of public funding institutions. Detailed information regarding the budget and annual expenditures is publicly available on a national online platform and the university's website. All research-related expenses must undergo internal approval processes and internal and/or external audits, as stipulated by grant agreements or contractual provisions.

UDJG's Office on Occupational Safety and Health provides internal guidelines and procedures for the implementation of safe working practices, in accordance with national legislation. All researchers receive training from the Occupational Safety and Health

Personnel, which equips them with the necessary knowledge and measures to ensure safety in their work procedures.

The dissemination of research findings is a primary responsibility of UDJG's professors and researchers. The evaluation of their performance includes an assessment of their dissemination and utilization of research results, with data being collected through an internal online platform. This assessment fosters internal transparency, as all reported data is accessible on the intranet and can be viewed by colleagues.

### **Weaknesses**

The frequency of training sessions has been reduced and awareness events, particularly for early-career researchers, need to be increased. These events should focus on topics related to professional responsibility, such as plagiarism prevention, the importance of research topics, open science, the risks of discrimination, the application process for grants, and the administrative or technical regulations for grant proposals.

To properly onboard international researchers, it is necessary to have English versions of the internal employment and occupational safety regulations, as most of them are currently in Romanian.

Researchers need better access to the services provided by the Intellectual Property Office.

The level of technological transfer and patent utilization in the industrial sector is currently low.

### **Recruitment and selection \***

#### **Strengths:**

All positions (researchers and teaching staff with research duties) are occupied by open competition, applying UDJG's internal regulations, drawn up in accordance with the national legislation and obeying the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, equal opportunities and quality standards specific to the level of the vacant job.

- According to the type of the open position a mix of advertising channels are used: the university's website, Official Gazette of Romania, dedicated national platforms, national newspapers, Euraxess platform.
- All recruitment advertisement specifies details on the recruitment and selection process (including deadlines, documents to be submitted, selection criteria and the evaluation procedure, deadlines for results, appeal procedure, etc.). All the results are published on the university website (in the career dedicated section).

- Selection committees are appointed according to their expertise and are approved by the Executive Board and by the University Senate (for researchers with tenure contracts).
- UDJG's selection criteria take account of the candidates' whole range of experience. Quantitative evaluation criteria are used, as well as qualitative criteria that address the professional and personal qualities of the candidates.
- Fostering the internationalization activities is a strategic priority for UDJG, meant to stimulate the participation of the university staff in international teaching and learning, scientific or educational events, as a premise for developing the international cooperation, improving the visibility of the university and enhancing quality.
- Postdoctoral researchers' appointments follow clear rules, according to national and internal regulations. The duration of the work contract (for Romanian postdoctoral researchers) and the duration of the fellowships awarded (for international postdoctoral researchers) are established by internal regulations and selection methodologies.

**Weaknesses:**

- Most of the job ads and contest documentation are in Romanian, limiting the access of international applicants. The vacant positions are advertised on Euraxess for all project-based positions and only occasionally for open positions funded by UDJG.
- The communication channels for advertising open positions (mandatory by law) are not entirely efficient. In addition, the ads for the open positions are published in a format (also imposed by law or national online platforms) which do not always allow a clear presentation of the working conditions and the career development prospects.
- No explicit requirements regarding the gender balance are included in internal regulations.
- No detailed information referring to the career development prospects is included in the advertisements for the open positions.
- There are few presentations on rules, procedures and standards governing the recognition of formal and non-formal qualifications within the context of international mobility.
- Professional experience (length of service) is required for research positions, according to Law 319/2003 (Law on the Status of Research and Development Personnel).

**Working conditions \*****Strengths:**

The researcher profession is officially recognized by national law, and researchers are acknowledged as professionals.

The university provides research infrastructure, including facilities and access to international databases, and conducts information sessions on the use of these databases.

Continuing professional development programs are available, including research-oriented and English-language master's programs. UDJG has a specialized training department, with over 3,000 participants annually, in various professional development programs. Adequate training is provided for teaching and coaching activities as part of the professional development of researchers.

Support is offered to researchers who do not reside in Galați City. Children of teachers and UDJG employees benefit from admission fee exemptions and recreational programs.

Employees enjoy various benefits, such as flexible schedules, access to a gym, a canteen, cultural activities, part-time work options, parking facilities, online platforms, the possibility of a sabbatical year, stable employment contracts, and specific career development opportunities.

Equal gender representation is encouraged at all staff levels, including in management positions, following a policy of equal opportunities during recruitment and throughout career progression.

Adequate participation and representation are ensured in decision-making bodies.

**Weaknesses:**

Access to specific research infrastructure is limited, and some facilities necessitate advance scheduling. The procurement procedures for laboratory reagents and materials can be time-consuming, as they require approvals from the ministry.

Insufficient facilities are available for teachers and researchers with disabilities in all buildings, including a lack of direct access from the parking lot.

There is a need for sufficient counseling and support mechanisms to facilitate academic career development.

Specific guidelines are lacking for co-authorship and intellectual property rights, which should align with contemporary trends in open data, open access, open science, etc.

**Training and development \*****Strengths:**

Researchers hold representation positions in important university bodies such as the Senate, the Scientific Council, and the Board of Directors, with guest status and without voting rights for the union representative.

Specific procedures are in place for conducting and endorsing research projects.

The institution conducts various activities aimed at training and professionally developing researchers, with a particular focus on young researchers. These activities include scientific seminars within doctoral schools and information sessions on competitions in national and European programs related to research and innovation.

Researchers in their training phase maintain regular contact with their supervisors, and senior researchers take their roles as supervisors, mentors, leaders, or project coordinators seriously.

Researchers are provided with opportunities for professional development and enhancing their employability through access to measures that support the continuous development of their skills and competencies.

**Weaknesses:**

Academic positions often entail a substantial teaching workload in comparison to the time available for research activities

**3. Actions**

The Action Plan and HRS4R strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the organization's Action Plan/HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s):

<https://cercetare.ugal.ro/management/hrs4r>

Please fill in the list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HRS4R to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap-Analysis.

<b>Proposed ACTIONS</b>	<b>GAP Principle(s)</b>	<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicators/Target(s)</b>
ACTION 1	(+/-) 6. Accountability(+/-) 9. Public engagement	Q2 2024	Legal and Human Resources Direction + Faculties committees	Revision of the alignment in the HR policies and recruitment criteria with the rule of law in force (Low199/2023).
ACTION 2	(+/-) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)	Q4 2025	UDJG Doctoral School	Information sessions on Postdoctoral opened positions and funding opportunities
ACTION 3	(+/-) 23. Research environment (+/-) 24. Working conditions	Q1 2026	UDJG Library	-Extending the mobile access option (from home) to 70% of the databases accessible on campus in the next 3 years; -Increasing the number of publications accessible directly online by 10 % in the next 3 years.
ACTION 4	(+/-) 23. Research environment (+/-) 29. Value of mobility (+/-) 30. Access to career advice	Q1 2025	Personnel Office+ Faculties committees+ Administrative Council+ University Senate	Increasing by 15% the number of employees benefiting from the programs of continuous professional
ACTION 5	(+/-) 23. Research environment	Q3 2025	Personnel Office	- 3 annual information sessions - increasing by 10% the number of participants in information sessions
ACTION 6	+/-) 24. Working conditions	Q4 2025	Legal and Human Resources Direction+ Administrative Council+	Revision of the procedure for awarding the sabbatical year in line with the



			University Senate	applicable law, as the case may be
ACTION 7	+/-) 23. Research environment (+/-) 24. Working conditions	Q4 2025	General Administrative Direction	-2 routes verified -2 routes adapted
ACTION 8	(++) 36. Relation with supervisors (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q2 2024	Administrative Council + The University Senate	A strategy for Research, Development and Innovation 2024-2027
ACTION 9	(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility (+/-) 4. Professional attitude (+/-) 6. Accountability (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights (++) 32. Co-authorship	Q3 2025	Vice-Rector Research, development, innovation + University Ethics Commission+ Administrative Council+ The University Senate	A guide to good practices in research
ACTION 10	(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility	Q2 2025	Legal and Human Resources Direction + Operational Management Service + IT Direction	Revision of the internal specific procedures with specific provisions regarding information security and protection of research data as well as the free access publication rules and facilities.
ACTION 11	(++) 33. Teaching	Q3 2025	Faculties	At least 10 teachers will advance in career in the next three years. Reduction of the number of hours on the assistant level by 5% in the next 2 years.
ACTION 12	(++) 34. Complains/ appeals	Q3 2024	Legal and Human	One or more procedure

			Resources Direction+ Administrative Council+ The University Senate	updated.
ACTION 13	(+/-) 9. Public engagement	Q3 2024	Department of communication, promotion and public relations	10% increase in number of researchers involved in UDJG actions at European Researchers' Night
ACTION 14	(+/-) 9. Public engagement	Q4 2024	Research, development, innovation Office + Office of communication, promotion and public relations	One action to promote the research results to the general public at the Research Gala or other events.
ACTION 15	(+/-) 9. Public engagement	Q3 2024	Faculties	2 actions to promote the websites in Q3 2024.
ACTION 16	(+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (+/-) 27. Gender balance	Q3 2025	Operational Management Service	Updating the Internal Operational Procedure of the Operational Management Department - Recruitment and selection of personnel
ACTION 17	(+/-) 6. Accountability (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (++) 36. Relation with supervisors (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q4 2024	Administrative Council + The University Senate	One regulation updated
ACTION 18	(+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 14. Selection (Code) (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code)	Q3 2025	Personnel Office + IT Direction	A jobs section on the main page of UDJG website

The establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HRS4R strategy. Please also indicate how your organisation will use the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Toolkit and how you intend to implement/are implementing the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, please provide a short commentary demonstrating this implementation. If the case, please make the link between the OTM-R checklist and the overall action plan. (max. 1000 words) \*

As an organization wishing to obtain the HRS4R certification, "Dunărea de Jos" University of Galați (UDJG) has analyzed the extent to which the internal recruitment policies are aligned to the OTM-R principles and recommendations. The University already applies most of the OTM-R principles or similar principles in the recruitment and selection of researchers, so HRS4R certification does not involve a major change in human resources management policies, and it will continue to be part of the overall strategy of the University. However, the elaboration of HRS4R documentation created the opportunity for internal analyses that are useful in shaping the future evolution of the human resources management involved in research and development activities in accordance with the OTM-R principles.

The implementation of the OTM-R principles will be achieved by adopting some of the measures included in the Action Plan: Revision of the recruitment and internal evaluation criteria to incorporate aspects related to: mobility, atypical professional path, doctorate outside the University, etc.;

Updating the specific procedures and regulations of the "Dunărea de Jos" University regarding the scientific research activity;  
Developing a specific strategy in the field of research - development, as a partial strategy of the general strategy of the University.  
Through the proposed approach, the Action Plan ensures that the strategic and operational plans of the University are correlated with the OTM-R principles.

If your organisation already has a recruitment strategy which implements the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment, please provide the web link where this strategy can be found on your organisation's website:

URL: <https://cercetare.ugal.ro/files/hrs4r/Politica-OTM-R-UDJG-En-2024.pdf>

#### 4. Implementation

General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan: (max. 1000 words)

The Action Plan reflects the orientation of the UDJG towards ethical principles, transparent processes of recruitment and selection, improvement of working conditions and facilitating the training and development of the human resources involved in the research-development activity within the University.

The HRS4R process was started at the initiative of the Vice-Rector for Scientific Research, Development and Innovation, through an institutional project that included:

1. A **Steering Committee** which supervises and coordinates the actions of elaborating the main documents of the HRS4R process at institutional level (GAP analysis, Action Plan, OTM-R and Strategy) and implements the Action Plan.
  - ♦ Elena MEREUȚĂ, PhD Professor, Vice-Rector Teaching activity and quality assurance
  - ♦ Nicoleta MIȘU BĂRBUȚĂ, PhD Professor, Vice Rector Financial Management and Administrative Strategies and Institutional Human Resources Management
  - ♦ Silvius STANCIU, PhD Professor, Vice-Rector Research, development, innovation activity and partnership with the economic-social environment and RDI Human Resources Management
  - ♦ Nicoleta STĂNCIUC, PhD Professor, Member of the Council for Scientific Research UDJG
  - ♦ Cătălina ITICESCU, PhD Professor, Member of the Council for Scientific Research UDJG
  - ♦ Eugen Victor Cristian RUSU, PhD Professor, Member of the Council for Scientific Research UDJG, Director of the Council for Doctoral Studies
  - ♦ Luminița MORARU, PhD Professor, Member of the Council for Scientific Research UDJG, Director of the Doctoral School of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering
  - ♦ Dana ROTARU, Head of General Directorate Secretariat
  - ♦ Daniela MODIGA, Head of Economic Directorate
  - ♦ Victorița GRIGORAȘI, Head of Personnel Department
  - ♦ Cristina VASILACHE, Head of Operational Management Department

2. A **Working Group** – in charge with the monitoring the implementation of the main actions included in the Action Plan elaborated within the HRS4R institutional project. The following are part of the Working Group:

- ♦ A research coordinator of the Working Group;
- ♦ Head of Operational Management Department;
- ♦ Head of Personnel Department;
- ♦ Researchers in charge of elaborating the documents within the HRS4R.

The Steering Committee will oversee and provide support to the Working Group in implementing the Action Plan according to the specified timetable. A matrix of responsibilities will be developed, outlining the divisions responsible for implementing actions and the individuals involved in their execution. The Action Plan will be subject to approval by the University's Board of Trustees, and the actions scheduled for each calendar year will be integrated into the annual operational plan of the divisions responsible for their implementation.

The Steering Committee was established in 2023, following the formal initiation of the HRS4R process. It has been consistently monitoring the documentation process specific to HRS4R and will continue to do so throughout the implementation phase. Additionally, the Working Group will convene quarterly meetings, typically in the last week of each quarter, to conduct stage-by-stage assessments of action plan implementation for those quarters. If significant deviations or challenges arise during the implementation of actions, the Working Group will report them, and the Steering Committee will analyze these deviations and propose corrective measures.

Regular communication with the academic community regarding the Charter & Code and OTM-R principles will occur both before and during the implementation phase. The Steering Committee and the Working Group will strive to inform every researcher through various means, including information sessions, training, and informative materials, about the progress of implementation. The implementation process will actively involve each researcher at the University, serving as both a validation source for the proposed actions to eliminate or reduce gaps and a means for identifying potential difficulties or obstacles during implementation.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist below, which you will need to describe in detail:

**How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?\***

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The Working Group will convene quarterly meetings, typically held in the last week of each quarter. During these meetings, the divisions responsible for implementing the Action Plan will provide updates on the status of their assigned actions. The Working Group coordinator will compile this information to create a summary report on the progress of the HRS4R project, which will be shared with the Steering Committee.

Within these quarterly meetings, the progress reports will be thoroughly analyzed to compare the planned stage of action implementation with the actual progress achieved. This analysis aims to identify any negative deviations from the planned schedule and to devise corrective measures to ensure adherence to the established deadlines. If the Steering Committee identifies significant deviations in the implementation process of certain actions, it will propose additional measures to realign the process and get it back on track.

**How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?\***

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The research community will be involved in the implementation process, along with the other stakeholders at the institutional level, through:

- ♦ the involvement of the vicedeans in charge of the research activity and the directors of research units in updating the regulation for the organization and functioning of the scientific research;
- ♦ the involvement of the specialized departments and divisions in providing the information needed to elaborate the main documents of the HRS4R process, but also in the implementation phase of the Action Plan (for each important action, the components of the structural organization responsible for the implementation phase are specified in the plan);
- ♦ informing members of the scientific community (researchers, PhD students, post PhD students) about the events organized by the Research and Innovation Management Division (Researcher's day each year, special information meetings, The Award for Excellence in Research at UDJG) both on the initiation of the process and on the stage of its implementation.

In fact, all the components of the organizational structure at the university level will be involved in this process.

**How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy.**

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

As previously mentioned, the HRS4R project has become a vital element of the University's strategic plan for the upcoming strategic horizon.

Given its institutional-level nature, the project necessitates aligning all of the University's policies, regulations, and procedures with HRS4R principles whenever a potential gap is identified.

**How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?\***

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The implementation of the actions outlined in the Action Plan will be integrated into the operational annual planning, control, and monitoring processes of the divisions responsible for carrying out these actions.

The Working Group will conduct quarterly assessments to evaluate the progress of the proposed actions' implementation, and it will inform the Steering Committee every six months in the event of significant deviations. The Steering Committee will then recommend the adoption of supplementary corrective measures to rectify the reported deviations.

**How will you monitor progress (timeline)?\***

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

To effectively monitor the progress of the HRS4R project, a detailed calendar will be developed. On a quarterly basis, the Working Group will conduct a thorough analysis of the implementation and completion status of the actions. This analysis will involve comparing the actual stage of action implementation with the planned milestones and taking any necessary corrective measures.

The quarterly information reports from the departments will include the following:

Planned start and completion deadlines for each action.

Percentage progress in the implementation of the actions and the attainment of specific indicators.

Any existing deviations in the implementation of the actions.

Proposed measures to rectify existing deviations.

Assessment of potential risks, implementation of actions, and compliance with proposed deadlines.

**How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?\***

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The degree of achievement of specific indicators for each action will be a prominent aspect of each progress report for every six-month period. The indicators outlined in the Action Plan will be communicated to the divisions responsible for their fulfillment, following the matrix of responsibilities.

At the end of each year, the Working Group coordinator will compile and present an annual progress report regarding the indicators outlined in the Action Plan to the Vice-Rector for Scientific Research, Development, and Innovation.

The Vice-Rector will then seek approval for this report from the Steering Committee. In cases where deviations from the planned deadlines for achieving the indicators are identified, the Vice-Rector for Scientific Research, Development, and Innovation may propose additional measures for analysis and approval by the Steering Committee to ensure the fulfillment of the indicators as stipulated in the Action Plan.

**Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process:** (max. 1000 words)



The implementation of the Action Plan, as indicated in the previous points, will involve the University's most important divisions. The heads of these divisions will bear full responsibility before the Vice-Rectors and the University Board of Trustees for the successful completion of the actions outlined in this plan. The Action Plan, through its various components, will be integrated into the University's annual plans, and the entire community will actively participate in its achievement.

Implementing the Charter & Code is not solely the responsibility of one individual, the Steering Committee, or the Working Group. Instead, it is regarded at "Dunărea de Jos" University of Galati as a collective responsibility of the entire academic and research community. Involving researchers and PhD students in the implementation process through special information events and sessions, including those conducted online via the University's virtual platforms, will enable the Working Group and the Steering Committee to gain valuable insights for assessing the implementation of actions and for reducing or eliminating identified gaps.

The internal monitoring of actions taken to implement the Charter & Code is an integral part of the preparation process for the external evaluation of the implementation. Preparing for the external evaluation of the Action Plan and its alignment with the Charter & Code perspective is a fundamental operational effort undertaken by "Dunărea de Jos" University of Galati to advance towards its strategic objectives in the areas of research, development, and internationalization.