

**Important message to institutions:****Onsite visits are resumed starting 1 September 2022**

The broad lifting of the COVID-19 related travel limitations, allow us to cautiously resume the onsite visits. All site visits scheduled to take place after 1 September, will be organized under the normal onsite configuration.

Please note that after 1 September the virtual formula for "remote" site visits, will not be in place anymore.

## Internal Review

**Case number:** 2021IT599603

**Name Organisation under review:** University of Palermo

**Organisation's contact details:** piazza marina 61, palermo, 90133

**Submission date to the European Commission:** 13/07/2022

## 1. Organisational Information

Please provide an update of the key figures for your organisation. Figures marked \* are compulsory.

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	2835
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	142
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	393
Of whom are women *	1181
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	1565
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	84
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	984
Total number of students (if relevant) *	40040
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	4211
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	268341582.92
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	260363145.01
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	11637777.88
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	1005121.17

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

The University of Palermo(UniPa), founded in 1806, is a public Education and Research organization with 16 Departments, 1 School of Medicine, 21 libraries, 3 decentralized premises (Agrigento, Trapani, Caltanissetta), a delocalised Museum System, Language Centre, an Italian school for foreign students, a Guidance Centre. The AA2021/2022 educational offer comprises 144 bachelor and 40 master degree programmes, 29 specialization schools, 23 PhD programmes, 53 double-degree agreements, 10 programmes taught in English. In AA2021/2022, UniPa enrolled 500 foreign students, is hosting 351 incoming ERASMUS students within the framework of 186 inter-institutional agreements. 2014 UniPa obtained the "HR Excellence in Research Award".

## 2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please review the strengths and weaknesses under the 4 thematic areas of the Charter and Code, as provided by your organisation in the initial assessment phase. When doing so you should do not only look back, but also consider new priorities, strategic decisions, etc. which may further influence the action plan. Please also provide a brief commentary in the "Remarks" column if major changes have occurred versus the initial plan.

**Note:** Click on the name of each of the four thematic headings of the Charter & Code to open the editor and provide your answers in the Internal Review for Interim Assessment dedicated section.

#### Ethical and professional aspects\*

##### Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)

##### Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

##### Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) \*

For many years UniPa is engaged in a process of continuous improvement of its policies and statutory provisions to promote the growth of all ethical and professional aspects of the work-life of the members of its community - teachers, researchers, technical/administrative staff and students. As stated in the Statute, **"The University considers the international dimension of teaching and research a priority and undertakes to take all measures to pursue it and is guided by the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (Statute\_2022\_Art 3.2) (1).**

Fundamental **integrity principles**, such as *freedom in research and teaching (Statute\_2022\_Art 1.4)*, *equal consideration and respect for all members of the University community (Statute\_2022\_Art 1.7)*, *transparency, correctness, and accountability in the management of funds (Statute\_2022\_T.VI)* are core values of UniPa. In 2014 the University developed and adopted an **Ethical Code (2)**. Conditions of incompatibility and conflict of interest in recruitment were highlighted in its more recent revision (CEC\_2019\_Art. 7). The **Code of Conduct** of UniPa defines obligations of diligence, loyalty, impartiality, and good conduct to be observed in all procedures, including bids. (3) UniPa periodically elaborates also the "Three-year plan for the prevention of corruption and transparency" (4).

The defense of **inclusivity principles** is addressed in its multiple dimensions, including gender, religion, personal beliefs, political opinion, language, ethnical or social origin, nationality, health, age or sexual orientation (Statute\_2022\_Art. 1.1.). A strong commitment to supporting diversity is reflected in the actions of the 2021-2023\_Strategic Action Plan (5), in the "CUG Positive Actions Pan 2020-2022" (6) and in the recent nomination of a vice-Rector for Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Gender Equality Policies.

In the fulfillment of National legal obligations, UniPa has the "*Single Guarantee Committee*" for equal opportunities, employee well-being and non-discrimination in the workplace; nominates a *Trusted Advisor*, an external adviser who ensures that all those who study and work at the University have the right to be protected from any discriminatory act or form of behavior. In 2022, UniPa has issued a *Code of Conduct for the prevention of Violence, Harassment, and Discrimination in the University Context (7)*, elaborated and approved the *Gender balance A.A.2020-2021 (8)* and the *Gender Equality Plan\_2022-2024 (9)*.

In the year 2022 revision of the Statute, a new provision has been included to uphold the principles of equal opportunities and equal treatment in the access to all elective offices and encourage balanced gender representation in candidacies for the Senate and the Board of Directors (Statute\_2022\_T.II\_Art 10).

UniPa is also committed in preserving and reinforcing the founding values of peace, freedom, promotion of human rights and openness towards cultural diversity. It has instituted an Interdepartmental Research Centre "Migrare" that carries out research, training and third mission activities in the field of migration, dignity of the person and promotion of human rights.

Every year, several scientific and cultural initiatives on diversity, gender issues and stereotypes are organized for the widest community of students and researchers (29-31).

##### Remarks (max 500 words)

UniPa recognizes that this is a time of unprecedented challenge for the higher education sector, with the National economy under enormous financial pressures after the Covid 19 emergency, facing uncertainty about the operation of socially distanced campuses, amidst a climate emergency and an energy supply emergency. In this context, the **reputation** of the institutions is very critical as Universities are called upon to play an important role in sustaining society and the economy, driving innovation and growth and helping to ensure long-term sustainability.

Reputation grounds on a set of core values, such as **Integrity** (transparency, accountability, honesty, freedom of speech and academic freedom), **Inclusivity** (equality, diversity, accessibility, participation, and fair outcomes for all), **Excellence** (high-quality research, scholarship and teaching) and **Community** (public service, citizenship, collegiality, collaboration), as defined in the European policy of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) and the European Charter of Researchers. These core values are reflected in the already cited Statute, Strategic Action Plan and Positive Actions Plan, and in the programme of the new Rector, Prof. Massimo Midiri, elected on the 01/11/2021.

A new governorate has recently taken office. For the first time, a vice-Rector for Inclusion, Equal Opportunities and Gender Equality Policies, Prof. Beatrice Pasciuta, has been appointed, who will reinforce the policies and actions of UniPa on these issues. In continuity with the previous Rectors, a delegate for the implementation of the "Human Resources Strategy for Researchers Incorporating the Charter & Code", Prof. Clelia Dispenza, has been nominated in February 2022. The new members of the two main governing bodies, Academic Senate and Board of Directors, will be elected on the 18/07/2022. The new governance is strongly committed to strengthen inclusive and meritocratic approaches to all its processes and procedures and to reinforce a bond with the territory, highlighting the centrality of public engagement activities and actively contributing to the regional socio-economic development. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, a centrum for "Sustainability and Ecological transition" has been constituted (10).

The major critical aspects can be identified in the non-adequate availability of:

- qualified technical personnel that can support researchers in elaborating and/or revising research agreements with third parties to adequately protect IP;
- linguistic/communication experts and translators to make the statute, all other policy documents, all regulations, minute formats, web pages and services available in languages other than Italian;

- professional counselling experts and/or mentors to support young researchers with difficulties;
- personnel supporting incoming foreign (extra-EU) young researchers to obtain visa, deal with banks, find accommodations.

There is also need of further developing the principles of an *Ethical Conduct in Research*, specifically addressing aspects such as accountability, correctness, and diligence in designing, planning and conducting research, in assessing the social and environmental impact of the research and research outcome, in addressing gender balance and “Do Not Significant Harm” DNSH principle. There is a need to develop guidelines for conduct in classrooms and laboratories, for managing research documentation and archiving data. It is also necessary to provide researchers with effective tools for identifying plagiarism and self-plagiarism.

## Recruitment and selection\*

## Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)

## Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

## Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) \*

According to its statutory provisions, UniPa encourages the adoption of "Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R)" procedures, in line with the National legislation and the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. Recruitment within our academic community is a process subject to careful and continuous review of its procedures, aimed at avoiding inappropriate practices that do not respect the principles of openness and transparency in merit selection.

At UniPa, all type of calls (for PhD, fixed term/tenure track researcher and professor positions) are widely publicized in the UniPa, MUR (Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca) and EURAXES webpages, to reach the widest possible number of potential internal and external applicants. Openings for competitions are also published in the Gazzetta Ufficiale. Guidelines on how to apply are published in Italian and in English to encourage the participation of foreign applicants.

Application can be performed solely by electronic means. EU applicants can self-certify possession of qualifications and scanned copies of documents are accepted. In contrast, Non-EU researchers cannot provide self-certifications due to restrictions imposed by Italian regulations.

In accordance with national legislation and in line with some elements of the EU Charter and Code checklist (OTM-R checklist), UniPa has adopted written internal regulations that define the criteria and methodologies for the composition of selection committees; for communicating the terms and conditions of application; for establishing the professional profile of candidates; and procedures for publicizing the results of each stage of the recruitment process. Information on the administrative unit in charge for the procedure and general conditions of work are also provided in the calls.

These internal regulations have been recently reviewed with particular reference to the selection criteria for the recruitment committee to limit the problem of biased recruitment committees (11-12). The new regulations also strengthen attention to gender equality in the composition of the evaluation committee (see art 5.1, 10.1 and 20.1).

Administrative officers in charge of managing the procedures are well trained and careful to monitor and validate the various steps in the process. For all types of positions, they have created tool-kits to facilitate the work of recruitment committees (13). The committees take minutes at each stage of the recruitment process, which are made public in the UniPa website throughout the process.

In the near future, all recruitment and career advancement procedures will be managed through an electronic portal that will streamline processes and dematerialize documentation, as is already the case for the recruitment of technical-administrative staff.

At the present, recruitment regulations and formats for minutes are produced only in Italian. This can discourage the application of international candidates and the participation of international examiners in the recruitment committees. Even if allowed by Italian legislation, there is only very limited involvement of external examiners from non-academic bodies. More importantly, no training is provided to professors to become members of recruitment/career advancement committees at any level (PhD, research assistant, fixed-term researchers, professor).

## Remarks (max 500 words)

The Italian academic system is usually perceived as a non-competitive, close system. In the last years, changes have been introduced at a National and local levels towards more openness, more research-oriented and meritocratic recruitment processes and academic career path. These changes have been taking place in years of financial restraint, with limited resources to effectively promote research and a low replacement ratio of aging research staff. These financial restrictions have often neutralized policies towards greater openness in the hiring of external candidates (i.e. coming from a different university or research centre, in Italy or abroad), reinforcing the historical perception of the academia being a closed environment. Another problem is related to the precarity of academic research carriers. Precarious working conditions and a lack of long-term prospects for post-Docs have implications for these researchers' personal lives, for instance in terms of family formation and access to housing.

In these last years, UniPa has taken initiatives to increase the number of positions for fixed-term researchers to grant an adequate replacement ratio, to allocate resources for career progression of fixed-term researchers, but also to introduce merit-based parameters to manage career progression of tenure professors. This effort is evidenced in the **Framework Recruitment policy\_2020-2022**(14), **Strategic Action Plan\_2021-2023 Obj. 5 – Human resources** (5) (O.5.1 Increase the number of "Type A Researchers" (fixed-term researchers on a three-years contract that can be extended for two more only, after positive evaluation of the research activity) and "Type B Researchers" (fixed-term researchers on three-years contract and tenure-track); O5.3: Improve the technical-administrative structure through the enhancement and retraining of existing skills, and the recruitment of human resources with reference to the technical, research and student services areas), and **Recruitment plan 2022: budget to be allocated to departments (Decrete N. 29307/2022 – 16/3/22)**. The number of PhD scholarships per year directly funded by UniPa has increased from 100 in 2019 to 160 in 2021 and 2022.

For increasing the turnover, UniPa is making use of the additional resources deriving from the new National Research Program (PNR) 2021-2027. Further resources to recruit young researchers will come from the Italian PNRR scheme (Piano Nazionale Ripresa e Resilienza). These funding opportunities will require to devise strategies to limit the risk of contributing to the precariousness of fixed-term researchers.

We are still far from achieving optimal conditions for the recruitment and international mobility of Italian researchers. The Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale (ASN)-which is a mandatory step to gain access to Italian universities-has the English-language website that has not been updated since 2013, hence all more recent open windows to apply for accreditation are published only in Italian.

Salaries and pay scales are fixed by national legislation, which do not help Italian Universities in competing for the most talented researchers worldwide.

There are difficulties for universities located in less economically developed regions to provide adequate economic incentives, like start-up packages. The cost to advance internal candidates is significantly lower than to recruit external candidates; this can be a key determinant in conditions of financial constraints.

## Working conditions\*

## Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)

## Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

## Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) \*

The University of Palermo is situated in the city of Palermo. It is city with an extraordinary historical and cultural heritage but afflicted by high unemployment levels, inadequate efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the local administration. The relative isolation of Palermo (and Sicily) in the geographic system and in the Italian transport network is an extra-challenge. On the other hand, the rapid growth of the accommodation systems and number of charter flights, in a context with a strong tourist vocation (recovering from the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic), can partially offset the isolation.

Attractiveness of any academic institution is only to a limited extent grounding on the location of its structures, being the reputation of its researchers, the availability of high-level laboratories and research centers, the main drive. Hence, UniPa is making significant efforts to increase its attraction potential through better **support to Research and Third Mission**.

To this aim, UniPa has recently redefined processes and management responsibilities of the Quality Assurance System through new Guidelines issued on 30/03/2020 (15); is currently investing 17 M€ for the modernization of educational and technological facilities (including laboratories, lecture halls and research areas) of its main Campus and further 6 M€ for the improvement of safety in laboratories (Decree n.959/2021\_14/10/2021); has recently increased its support to fundamental research (€ 1.335.000,00 for 2022), providing a small fund to all researchers (FFR) including fixed-term researchers (Decree n.737\_25-06-2021\_art.2). More resources are expected from PNRR.

For many years, UniPa has implemented an institutional repository for research products, IRIS (16), that includes all publications and research projects involving UniPa researchers and enables easy appraisal of the research performance of individuals, groups of individuals, departments. Open access policies are encouraged (17).

To enhance visibility, an open portal of research, PURE, that links to the personal pages of researchers and provides a viewpoint onto the available research expertise and facilities, has been created (18).

Administrative units support research grant search, filing and reporting activities. Regulations and guidelines on how to apply to research grants (19-20) or how to file a patent (21-22) or publish in Journals owned by UniPa are provided (23).

Attention to **Organizational Wellbeing** has grown to a great deal in the recent past, also as a result of National regulatory interventions. UniPa has been monitoring the levels of organizational well-being of its staff, through two surveys: the first was part of a broader "Good Practice" project coordinated by Politecnico di Milano (24); the second was carried out at local level to identify key areas of intervention to be included in the last Strategic Action Plan. An administrative unit supports the implementation of these actions.

Unipa offers benefits for the access to the University sport campus to all its workers and their families; medical assistance points for all students (including PhD students); a nursery open to 1-3 years old children of PhD students, professors, researchers, staff; discounts on the fares for public transportation, car and bike sharing, and for selected theater and concert tickets (CRAL (25)).

## Remarks (max 500 words)

Despite the pandemic emergency, in the year 2020 and 2021 the University guaranteed the provision of all services and the continuity of all teaching, research, third mission and internationalization activities (including Erasmus projects), promptly informing all of the new provisions by email and constantly updating the web portal on the dedicated page. This has implied arrangements to permit (or mandatorily instruct) employees to work from home and a massive recourse to digital technologies, provided that sufficient IT skills and accessible high-speed connectivity were available. Carried out constantly from home, in a state of captivity, often in inadequate or overcrowded housing, with constant shifts between work and family care commitments, the pandemic version of distance working has not been the best exemplification of a flexible form of work. Nonetheless, there are aspects of that stress-test that can be preserved, improved and implemented. Remote work to some extent can support employees with parenthood duties. **Teams or another equivalent platform can still be useful to support teaching, supervision and collaboration among researchers, and to manage more effectively and efficiently meetings.**

It is evident though that the adoption of remote work can have uneven effects on the quality of employment conditions, depending on the personal and professional characteristics of the workers, like for example occupational position, job contents, digital literacy, availability of suitable dedicated workspaces, access to connectivity infrastructures and family duties. Since these effects mostly tend to benefit skilled and economically affluent workers that enjoy high degrees of operational autonomy and penalize low-skilled and disadvantaged groups (including women with caring responsibilities), remote work could, in the worst scenario, sharpen the polarization of the workforce and induce segregating effects with respect to some categories of workers. Risks of pervasive surveillance enhanced by digital devices and dedicated software, higher work intensity, difficulties in reconciling work and private life and the shifting on the worker of the financial costs related to the work equipment, like internet connection and utilities are also evident. Notwithstanding limitations, difficulties and risks, workers generally give a positive assessment of their remote working experience, and would be prepared to continue, prior a renegotiation and a better clarification of terms and conditions of the employment relationship. Remote work can become smart work, when it is chosen with real autonomy where and if it is accompanied by **work organization pattern characterized by an increased responsibility of workers towards the work performance objectives.**

"Smart" work performance requires a change of the managerial and organizational approach, alongside a more effective digital transformation of our infrastructures and processes, and the development of new/improved regulations at the Italian and EU levels (like the "Framework Agreement on Digitalization and the Parliament's Proposal for a Directive on the right to disconnect"). UniPa has elaborated the regulation for "Smart" and "Agile" work of technical and administrative staff (27/04/2021) (26) and since 01/04/2022 30% of the staff has been authorized to work in these conditions. Platforms for monitoring and controlling the achievement of goals have been implemented (through the web application "Fenice").

## Training and development\*

## Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)

## Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

## Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) \*

Training and development initiatives are offered to Researchers at various stage of their development, with a special attention to early-stage researchers (R1).

Internationalization of PhD programmes has been identified as one of the UniPa strategic areas of intervention (Strategic Action Plan 2021-2023). Presently, 205 framework agreements with foreign Universities are in force. Several include joint supervision of PhD students, co-tutelle de these, double degree, joint degree with specific PhD programmes. Collaboration was also encouraged between academic and nonacademic sectors to develop transferable skills that can increase job opportunities for PhDs, promote their innovative thinking and entrepreneurship-and thus enable them to contribute to the country's economic growth. UniPa has instituted the Master of Art in International Studies that embeds a Path of Excellence in International Studies with the involvement of experts from the field of international politics and relations. (27)

Training young researchers in soft skills is an established practice that the Charter & Code Working Group (C&C WG) has been leading. It consists of a programme of seminars/workshops aimed to increase self-awareness, improve communication skills, understand carrier prospects and social security plans, highlight the value of intellectual property protection and entrepreneurship (33-34).

R1 and R2 researchers are supported with workshops (35-36) on how to access fellowships and international mobility programs (e.g., doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships from the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions) or to build or consolidate a research group (e.g., ERC fellowships). The Research Support office is constantly involved in communicating open calls for research and collaborative projects for the benefit of the broader research community.

Young researchers are offered of laboratory trainings (organized by ATEN Centre) (28) and involved in public engagement events, such as the "European Research Night" (38).

The University promotes the participation of its researchers to the "Start Cup Palermo" (SCP) a "business plan competition" among groups of people developing business ideas based on scientific research (39).

Just recruited, fixed-term researchers are encouraged to attend courses aimed at developing skills for teaching (29). Another important, bottom-up, voluntary initiative, aimed at developing new or improved strategies for teaching and learning, is Progetto Mentore (40)

Efforts are paid to improve linguistic skills of all personnel, through the access to the English language Conversation Club and free access to Rosetta Stone Platform (41).

Critical aspects are the lack of developmental models to support less productive research groups and to integrate more isolated individuals and areas in multidisciplinary research activities. As for the most experienced and most advanced in career community members (R3 and R4), there is the need of improving their soft skills in areas, such as Human Resources Management, Conflict Management, Recruitment and Selection Training, Project Management and Auditing, laboratory safety.

## Remarks (max 500 words)

As part of its continuous development process, UniPa participates to the FORTHEM Alliance (42) (Fostering Outreach within European Regions, Transnational Higher Education and Mobility) and to the embeded Fostering Institutional Transformation of R&I Policies in European Universities (FIT FORTHEM) project (43). One of the aims of FIT FORTHEM is to give researchers, research managers, early career academics, administrative staff and students a possibility to upscale professional skills in various areas – from project management to open science, from human resources to science communication. Selected early-stage researchers and staff have been involved in professionalization workshops, co-creation workshops for FORTHEM Labs to connect and collaborate with university-external actors and boot camps.

## Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed? (max 500 words)

The launch of the new **Horizon Europe programme** catalysed the process that led Unpa to draft its first Gender Equality Plan.

**Resources from the Recovery and Resilience and React-EU Plan** are allowing the recruitment of a significant number of young researchers (both PhD students and fixed-term researchers (RTDa)). In particular, PNR\_ Missione 4\_ Componente 2\_ 'Education and Research' has allocated – on a national basis – a total of 31.9 billion euros (30.9 euros billion from the Recovery and Resilience Fund and 1 billion euro from the Complementary Fund) to be spent in the period 2021-2023) with the aim of strengthening the education system, improving the country's digital and techno-scientific skills, and supporting research and technology transfer. Research collaborations involving all key players for the socioeconomic development of the country and the region (other research institutions, e.g., the National Research Council, regional technological districts, private companies, hospitals etc.) are underway.

**New national regulations for doctoral studies** have recently been issued (Decree n.226\_12/14/2021). The most noticeable changes concern the establishment of national PhD on strategic themes; a reduction in the number of scholarships required for the establishment of doctoral courses, favoring smaller and more specific courses instead of so-called "mega-doctorates"; and a revision of the discipline of 10 percent research funds, which are made accessible from the first year of doctoral studies to all, scholarship holders and non-scholarship holders alike; an increasingly pronounced professionalizing vocation of the doctorate for the insertion of PhDs into the private labor market and public administration, through the participation of third parties in the definition of the doctoral student's educational path.

UniPa has revised his internal regulations of the PhD studies, to align them with the national regulations and has further stressed the importance of *ad hoc* organized education: courses and training activities for PhD students, different from I and II level University courses and to be recognized as an institutional teaching load.

The combination of extra funds and new regulations has produced, in the year 2022, in addition to the 160 University-sponsored doctoral fellowships (which are in line with the previous year's numbers), the availability of an additional 215 doctoral fellowships (DM351 and DM352 of 09/04/2022). Most of these scholarships can only be effectively obtained if collaboration agreements with third parties are formalised by the end of July 2022, which is proving not to be easy.

The increasing number early-stage researchers (R1 and R2) has and will redefine the priorities in terms of working and training space, and trigger initiatives to engage with third parties at an earlier stage, to set the best conditions for collaborations, and to support the continuation of the career of the young researchers inside and outside academia.

Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates, changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy? (max 500 words)

On the 1st of November 2021, the **election of the new Rector** has determined the installation of a new Governance staff. The adoption of GEP as well as the Gender Balance and the introduced statutory changes to favor the presence of a balanced gender representation in the decision-making bodies. (Statute 2022\_art.6 comma R) Senate and Board of Directors members will be elected in mid-July 2022. In this transition phase, the Institution has been carrying on mainly short-term actions while the longer-term HR strategy is under elaboration.

The **disruption caused by the Covid-19 emergency** has affected the offering of soft skill training seminars for R1 and R2 researchers that were typically organized by the C&C WG. Most of the efforts of our organization were absorbed to adapt - in the shortest possible time - a system of education and research built around physical activities to online platforms. On the other hand, training initiatives were devoted to support the acquisition of skills in operational distance-learning/teaching/working platforms. The results of these collective efforts have led to the emergence of innovative solutions in response to the pandemic that, without the development of more resilient and innovative post-Covid organization models, will be soon forgotten. The crisis has thrown light upon the inadequacy of investment in those aspects of teacher training that involve improving the ability to operate online learning platforms efficiently and to develop pedagogical resources for use in entirely remote training and learning.

Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan? (max 500 words)

On the 05/06/2022 the Boards of Directors has approved an **addition to the University Strategic Plan 2021-2023**.

On the 30/06/2022 the Italian Parliament has approved a significant **reform of the career path for early-stage academics**.

UniPa has been accredited, according to the Italian legislation, in year 2017 and will undergo to a **new accreditation process in year 2023**. The quality of research will be under scrutiny as well as the quality of education against a revised set of standards (AVA 3). Preparatory internal reviews are undergoing.

All the above events and processes may result in the emergence of new actions and/or change of priorities.

### 3. Actions

Please consult the [list of all actions](#) you have submitted as part of your HR strategy. Please add to the overview [the current status of these actions as well as the status of the indicators](#). If any actions have been altered or omitted, please provide a commentary for each action. You can also add new objectives.

**Note:** Choose one or more of the principles automatically retrieved from the GAP Analysis with their implementation ratings.

#### Proposed ACTIONS

Action 1	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Elaboration and wide dissemination of the Ethical Code in Research, an addendum to the Ethical Code that covers aspects like plagiarism, authorship, conflict interest, ethical and legal requirements, licenses, permissions and agreements, research data and records management, intellectual properties, health and safety, research misconduct	2. Ethical principles	Start/ends: Q2-Q3 Y2023	UniPa GOVERNANCE UO Prevention of corruption and transparency, University legislation, privacy and inspection service University Research Special Service	Approval by Senate and the Board of Directors of the revised Code of Ethics that includes the dimension of the Ethical Conduct in Research
	<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>		
		The ethical code has been elaborated in 2014, revised in 2016 and 2019. In its present form, it defines the core set of values of the Institution and covers the main aspects of an ethical conduct in the		

workplace. It does not specifically address the dimension of the Ethical Conduct in Research. A draft of "Code of ethics and conduct" encompassing also aspects related to "Ethical Conduct in Research" was produced in 2018 but never finalized. A specific topic, plagiarism, was covered in Art. 6 of Regulations for Scientific Journals owned by the University, etc. (23). Good practices were also shared in a series of conferences, open to the widest community of researchers, organized in 2019 for each of the main research areas, in the occasion of the internal mid-term review exercise for Research Quality Assessment (VQR).

<b>Action 2</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Produce a "Research Integrity and Good Research Practice" Checklist for Supervisors of Research Students				Approval by Senate and the Board of Directors of the Research Integrity and Good Research Practice Checklist for Supervisors of Research Students
2. Ethical principles		Start/end: Q4 Y2023	C&C WG	
7. Good practice in research				
<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>			
NEW	After the revised "Code of ethics and conduct" covering "Conduct in Research" enters in force a "Research Integrity and Good Research Practice Checklist" will be produced to assist supervisors of research students to address issues of research integrity and good research practice as part of the supervision process. The checklist also seeks to provide an introduction to these principles to researchers and students and encourage broader dialogue about research integrity and good research practice.			

<b>Action 3</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Dissemination to all researchers of information regarding open or soon to be opened calls to support research.				University Research Service (UO-Special Research and Promotion and Results Exploitation) Full coverage of the European and MUR calls
2. Ethical principles		Continued End: Q3 Year 2025		
<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>			
IN PROGRESS	Number of email communications about funding application calls from the Internal Research Dissemination Office Manager (currently Dr Daniela Cataldo) Applying the following search filter to the email repository (To: professori e ricercatori from:			



Daniela Cataldo) an average number of 70 emails per year have been found.

<b>Action 4</b>		<b>GAP Principle(s)</b>	<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Further development of the English version of the University's website. Complete mapping and regularly up-date of the section of the University's PURE.unipa.it web page which illustrates the most relevant research activities carried out in the University labs and research activities' output. Regularly up-date the researcher's personal Italian and English web pages.		8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	End: Q3 Year 2023	UniPa GOVERNANCE Heads of Department University ICT Service U.O. Communication	Status of completion of the English Website: 100% of the parts related to Research.
		23. Research environment			
		<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>		
		IN PROGRESS	All the general parts of the website have a responsible person in charge (Web Administrator), that has the responsibility to fill and update the information. The research dimension is mapped by the portal PURE that is linked to the personal page of the researchers and laboratories. Several parts of the website, including most of the research staff personal pages, are still only in Italian. Only a limited share of the laboratories have created a dedicated webpage, hence results from the portal. To complete this action, the support of linguistic/communication experts, translators, and ICT experts is required. Editing of the website by the researchers also requires some technical skills that are not widespread. Technical support should be provided to those who require it.		
<b>Action 5</b>		<b>GAP Principle(s)</b>	<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Produce, regularly update, and distribute the official presentation of Unipa that present mission, vision and values of Unipa as well as the "numbers" of Unipa for its research, education and third mission activities.		2. Ethical principles	Start/end: Q1 Year 2023	UniPa GOVERNANCE	Availability of an official UniPa presentation (power point and video)
		9. Public engagement			
		<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>		
		NEW	A power point official presentation as well as a short video should be made available to researchers, professors and staff to download from the website. The presentation should be regularly updated.		
<b>Action 6</b>		<b>GAP Principle(s)</b>	<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Create an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions and publication of this guide on the website		12. Recruitment	Start/End: Q3 Y2023	C&C WG	Publication of the OTMR guide on the UniPa website
		<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Remarks</b>		
			Internal regulations for recruitment have been		

EXTENDED recently revised and published alongside with new guidelines for the composition of the selection committees. An updated OTMR-check list is published in the HSR4R webpage of UniPa website. The OTMR guide, in Italian and in English, is under elaboration.

**Action 7**

Create an internal guide for those who would like to start or prosecute their research career inside UniPa

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
12. Recruitment	Starts/Ends: Q1 Y2024	C&C WG	Publication of the internal guide for researchers' career on the UniPa website.
22. Recognition of the profession			
Current Status	Remarks		
EXTENDED	Building on the results of the "Early Career Researchers - Challenges, Support Measures and Strategies" project under the FORTHEM Alliance and the embedded FITforthem project to develop a guide that best meets the needs of stakeholders.		

**Action 8**

Encourage the Coordinators of the PhD programmes to advertise programmes and open calls on social media (Facebook, Instagram, twitter, etc) and professional web networks (Research gate/Linkedin).

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
12. Recruitment	Start: Q4 Y2022 End: Q1 Y2023 Start: Q4 Y2023 End: Q1 Y2024	C&C WG UO Doctoral Studies	Number of posts on social media/minimum 2 per PhD programme.
Current Status	Remarks		
IN PROGRESS	Calls were advertised in Research Gate and LinkedIn in 2018 and in 2019. Funds available from specific projects, e.g. the SO-UNI Alliance project (40) or allocated by UniPa (CORI call) (41) can be used for further promotional initiatives.		

**Action 9**

Encourage the adoption of "open" selection procedures, widely publicized in English so as to permit the access to the research career (PhD programmes) also to foreign applicants. Publish the call for applications to the selection processes for external research/teaching positions on the Euraxess web platform.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
12. Recruitment		UniPa GOVERNANCE C&C WG	
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	All PhD calls are translated in English generally reserve one scholarship to PhD students with a degree from a foreign University, while all the other scholarships are offered to all type students without restrictions (with the exception of positions offered within special bi-lateral international agreements). Law 240/2010 states that all (fixed-term) positions must be published on the national and EU websites (Euraxess). Vacancies are also posted on the national database (run by MUR). Cals are advertised both in Italian and English.		

<b>Action 10</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Dividing the resources for HR planning among career advancements and fixed-time researchers. Encourage the elaboration of stabilization policies. In particular, increase the number of high-quality, fixed-time researchers having access to the prosecution of the career.		12. Recruitment	Continued End: Q3 Year 2025 UniPa GOVERNANCE	Share of funds allocated to new hires
<b>Current Status</b>		<b>Remarks</b>		
IN PROGRESS		In general, a portion of the available funds for recruitment and carrier progression are and will be reserved for the recruitment of fixed-time researchers. Number of calls for tenure-track fixed-time researchers (Type B researchers) 2017 : 29 2018 : 27 2019: 37 2020: 31 2021: 79 Number of calls for standard fixed-time researchers (Type A researchers) 2017 : 29 2018 : 27 2019: 51 2020: 41 2021: 115 (Data from Web site of university) Funds deriving from the Next Generation EU are going to significantly increase the number of available positions for young researcher new recruits. In order to favor the stabilization of high-quality fixed term researchers Unipa has allocated financial resources to recruit principal investigators of EU/MUR funded projects (i.e. Marie Skłodowska-Curie GF, ERC, Rita Levi Montalcini, etc). To cover areas that can be of strategic interest for UniPa a foster International Collaborations a public notice for the expressions of interest of scientists for a permanent position of full professor or associate professor or tenure track assistant professor has been announced in 28/4/22 and is still open.		

<b>Action 11</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Create a guide for the selection committees		12. Recruitment	UniPa GOVERNANCE	Call for recruitment and carrier progression set up clear general criteria that the committees must follow in their evaluations.
<b>Current Status</b>		<b>Remarks</b>		
COMPLETED		Call for recruitment and carrier progression set up clear general criteria that the committees must follow in their evaluations.		

<b>Action 12</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Improve basic research: Increase the amount of internal resources for basic research activities (FFR funds)		24. Working conditions	Continued Ends: Q3 Year 2025 UniPa GOVERNANCE	Percentage increase of the FFR budget per year

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	In 2018-2020, 3 Mln euros were allocated to support basic research. 1,7 Mln euros of this budget was planned to support individual researchers in the three years (ca. 570,000 €/year on average). In 2022 the support has been increased to €1.335.000,00 In the years before 2018, this provision was not given due to financial constraints.

**Action 13**

Improve laboratories, lecture halls and research areas in order to abide current norms and rules regarding work conditions and safety. Hire technicians for supporting research activities.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
24. Working conditions	Continued End: Q3 Year 2025	MUR UniPa GOVERNANCE Heads of Department	Monitor the effectiveness of the actions regarding research infrastructures and support by one survey in Q3 Y2022 and one survey in Q3 Y2024.

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	While up to 2020, the resources allocated to improve laboratories and infrastructure in general were only a marginal share of the total investment due to the limits imposed by the regional, national and European legislation, from 2021 they are becoming more significant. The enhancement, qualification and retraining of technical-administrative staff, through training plans and recruitment of new staff on targeted skills is part of the Strategic Plan 2021-2023 and is also in the programme of the new Rector.

**Action 14**

Increase transport through bus services which connect the town centre to the university structures, create nurseries. Invest in the increase of infrastructures to support physically challenged and women workers.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
24. Working conditions	Continued End: Q3 Year 2025	UniPa GOVERNANCE Municipality of Palermo	Monitor the effectiveness of the actions regarding mobility by one survey in Q3 Y2022 and one survey in Q3 Y2024. Monitor the effectiveness of the actions of GEP to specifically support early-carrier women researchers by one survey in Q3 Y2022 and one survey

in Q3 Y2024.

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	<p>City mobility infrastructures are going through major renovations. In Italy the welfare is currently supported largely from families. No parental rights have been extended to post-docs. The new legislation on early-stage researcher recruitment in Academia may have a positive impact on this respect. In most cases researchers cannot get sabbaticals, because of their teaching commitments. To support students and employees UniPa 1) has created, in the main university campus, medical assistance point for all students who need assistance (<a href="https://www.unipa.it/strutture/ambulatorio/">https://www.unipa.it/strutture/ambulatorio/</a>); 2) runs a nursery open to the 1-3 years old children of professors, researchers, administrative units, PhD students and post-Doc; 3) offers discounts for the fares of Palermo public transportation and free-shuttle buses to connect the metro station with the different areas of the main Campus. In recent times, to help fighting the Covid-19 pandemic, UniPa has organized the vaccination campaign for employees and students and granted free tampons to those who could not vaccinate.</p>

**Action 15**

Connect the entity of doctoral and post-doc grants to the quality and quantity of scientific research outputs obtained by each researcher. Establish economic reward systems for single researchers or groups of researchers whose scientific research outputs are of particular relevance at the national and international level.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
16. Judging merit (Code)	Continued End: Q3 Year 2025	MUR UniPa GOVERNANCE	Continue to introduce incentives for excellence in the distribution of financial resources to the Departments.

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	<p>A share of the government funds for PhD scholarships are distributed by the Central Administration to the Departments on the basis of the fulfillment of minimum requirements in terms of number of publications of PhD students. This financial incentive is intended to make PhD supervisors aware of the importance for PhDs of wider recognition and visibility of their scientific achievements. The PhD scholarships are generally fixed by law and may not be combined with any other scholarships for any reason whatsoever, except with those granted by national or foreign institutions useful for supplementing the scholarship holder's research activity with stays abroad. Post-Doc (Assegni di Ricerca) salaries are more flexible being generally paid from research project budgets. PhD students and Post-Doc have representatives in the Department Councils (with limited voting rights) and in the Academic Senate. In the recruitment policy, incentives have been provided to departments for the career progression of researchers and associate professors who are coordinators/principal investigators of projects funded by national and international competitive calls (e.g. Italian PRIN and EU Horizon, MSC and</p>

ERC projects).

<b>Action 16</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Increase visibility of researchers through the establishment of an in-house editor and agreements with external editors		8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	UniPa GOVERNANCE, Digital library office and C&C WG	
<b>Current Status</b>		<b>Remarks</b>		
COMPLETED		The University of Palermo has established an inhouse editorial activity, Unipapress ( <a href="https://unipapress.com/">https://unipapress.com/</a> ) and an agreement with an international editor, UnipaSpringer ( <a href="http://www.unipa.it/Unipa-Springer-Series/">http://www.unipa.it/Unipa-Springer-Series/</a> )		
<b>Action 17</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Raise consciousness about precious role of senior researchers involving them in teaching activities after their retirement.		18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)	UniPa GOVERNANCE & Vice Rector for Teaching	
<b>Current Status</b>		<b>Remarks</b>		
COMPLETED		Senior lecturers and researchers are involved, on a voluntary basis, in teaching undergraduate and postgraduate students and in training temporary researchers to improve their pedagogical skills.		
<b>Action 18</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
1. Create an educational program for academic teaching (Teaching and Learning Center) - COMPLETED 2. Motivate and monitor research re-qualification and update at all stages of researchers' career. Setting out a plan about continuous education.		37. Supervision and managerial duties  39. Access to research training and continuous development	Continued End: Q3 Year 2025  UniPa GOVERNANCE C&C WG	Define and implement the AA 2022/23 and AA 2023/24 plans of continuous education on soft skills. Organization of an Unipa Leadership Development programme.
<b>Current Status</b>		<b>Remarks</b>		
		The new regulations for doctoral studies include the participation of doctoral students in academic courses, as well as the mentoring and supervision of students as recognized activities for the acquisition of ECTS credits. Unipa has launched a bottom-up activity of peer observation of academic lectures, the 'Mentor' project, which now involves more than a hundred researchers and professors and is receiving national and international recognition and appreciation. Seminars and residential workshops, with local and international experts, are organized,		

IN PROGRESS

with the UniPa sponsorship. Since 2011, there has been a cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary training programme involving young researchers (especially doctoral students) run directly by the C&C Working Group. It stopped in years 2020 and 2021 because of the Covid-19 pandemic emergency state. This initiative will be resumed and continued. Leadership is one of the key factors in ensuring that people work together successfully, with an efficient use of resources. Initiatives (seminars/peer observation and mentoring) will be promoted to increase employees' motivation and experience towards leadership, contributing to their professionalization and excellence. A Leadership Development programme will be elaborated taking advance of the knowhow developed with the activities of the FITFORTHEM project. A Teaching and Learning center has been instituted to offer andragogy/academic teaching courses.

<b>Action 19</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Social security education for early-stage and professors to increase awareness of societal /individual rights and responsibilities.		26. Funding and salaries	C&C WG	Organization of dissemination events for new recruits: 1 event/year
<b>Current Status</b>		<b>Remarks</b>		
IN PROGRESS		The topic was included in the seminars organized by the C&C WG for PhD students. Specific seminars will be organized and offered also to new recruits.		

<b>Action 20</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Inform/train HR offices about OTM-R.		38. Continuing Professional Development	UniPa GOVERNANCE C&C WG	Organization of dissemination events for HR staff: 1 event/year
<b>Current Status</b>		<b>Remarks</b>		
IN PROGRESS		The training needs of administrative staff supporting recruitment are mapped and addressed as part of the Strategic Plan objectives to improve staff qualification. A personnel manager from the HR department participates in the C&C Working Group to help assess whether and how the actions taken will meet the requirements of the OTM-R .		

<b>Action 21</b>		<b>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</b>	<b>Responsible Unit</b>	<b>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</b>
Enhance the capacity of the patent office to increase the support offered to researchers for the protection of the IPRs they contribute to create.		31. Intellectual Property Rights	UniPa GOVERNANCE UniPa Industrial Liaison Office (ILO) patent	Patents from areas that have never filed a patent/n.
		Continued End: Q3 Year 2025		

service 3  
support.

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	The University has an Industrial Liaison Office (LIO) that provides support for IP protection and spin off initiatives launch. Number of commercially exploitable patents: 2019: 11 2020: 3 2021: 7 Number of accredited spin-off companies: 9 in three years.

Unselected principles:

- 1. Research freedom    3. Professional responsibility    4. Professional attitude    5. Contractual and legal obligations    6. Accountability
- 10. Non discrimination    11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems    13. Recruitment (Code)    14. Selection (Code)    15. Transparency (Code)
- 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)    19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)    20. Seniority (Code)
- 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)    25. Stability and permanence of employment    27. Gender balance    28. Career development
- 29. Value of mobility    30. Access to career advice    32. Co-authorship    33. Teaching    34. Complains/ appeals
- 35. Participation in decision-making bodies    36. Relation with supervisors    40. Supervision

**The extended version of the reviewed HR Strategy for your organisation for the next 3 years, including the OTM-R policy must be published on your organisation's website.**

Please provide the link to the dedicated webpage(s) on your organisation's web site \*:

URL \*: <https://www.unipa.it/amministrazione/direzione generale/serviziospecialericercadiateneo/u.o.promozioneorganizzazioneeventiperlaric/ca/europea-ricercatori/>

If your organisation has already filled in the OTM-R checklist in the Initial Phase, please also indicate how your organisation is working towards / has developed an Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Policy. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above in the action plan (as emerged from the Gap Analysis), please provide a short commentary demonstrating the progress of the implementation versus the initial phase.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Initial Phase)

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal Review for Interim Assessment)

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal Review for Award Renewal)

The National legislation (L.240/2010, "Regulations on the organization of universities, academic staff and recruitment, as well as delegation to the Government to boost the quality and efficiency of the university system" – Titolo III ") disciplines most of the aspects of the recruitment process, in harmony with principles of the C&C.

UniPa elaborates its internal regulations regarding recruitment procedures to reflect all mandatory prescriptions of "L. 2010 n. 240" and subsequent amendments, and periodically revises and upgrades them to make them more consistent with the OTM-R principles and with the set of core values that is willing to affirm (Action 10). Two noticeable changes have been recently introduced in the procedures that both concern the selection committee based on external professors from other Universities. The commission is regarded to be a key determinant for unbiased, merit-based procedures. The proposed components must have a high scientific profile at an international level and are drawn among the full professors belonging to them of the lists of commissioners for National Scientific Qualification. A recommendation to look at the gender balance whenever is possible is made.

UniPa constantly informs and periodically trains the administrative personnel who is responsible for recruitment procedure (Human Resources Offices), whose representatives have been also included as members of the C&C working group (Action 8). In particular, access to all relevant information is now available to both external and internal applicants through dedicated sections of the website; information on calls and application procedures is available in both Italian and English and is published on the EURAXES website and other national websites (Action 7). Procedures have been simplified and all documents can be submitted by applicants electronically; documents can be provided in scanned copy of the original together with a self-declaration of conformity to the original (there are limitations for non-EU applicants due to restrictions imposed by national legislation).

Toolkits with all relevant documentation for the selection committees are provided. The selection procedures, when in person interviews are involved, can be carried out in the premises of the Human Resources Office (HRO) to grant all the candidates of a neutral and comfortable environment and to grant the Committee constant support from well-trained HRO personnel.



The total number of available positions and the proportion between new hires and career progressions are a fundamental part of the university's Strategic Plan ("Framework resolution on recruitment policies for the three-year period"), which is formulated on the basis of the available resources and the indication that come from the audits carried out by the internal (PQA) and external (NV) evaluation bodies. The review reports are widely publicized. The resources earmarked for the recruitment and advancement of research staff are distributed to the Departments according to criteria drawn up and approved by the Academic Senate and the Board of Directors. The Departments can develop their human resources strategy independently, within the overall framework of the University's strategy. The balance between new hires and career progressions is carefully controlled. The funds from the EU Next Generation recovery plan will significantly increase the number of positions available for the recruitment of young researchers for whom appropriate career development strategies will have to be developed within and especially outside academia.

The internal regulation and minute formats for recruitment are not available in English. Likewise, the "Framework resolution on recruitment policies for the three-year period", as well as all the other policies of the University, are only produced and published in Italian. Training for selection committees on OTM-R principles and values is not provided. Hence, Action 5 and Action 6 will be continued.

The distance from an open EU labor market for researchers is caused by a number of exogenous and endogenous factors: comparable retribution levels would be required in all countries; a full package to tenure track professors, including lab space, training/mentoring opportunities, support for accessing to national/international funding schemes and to protect autonomy, independence and authorship of research, support for reconciliation between family commitment and career aspiration (to increase the proportion of women in high academic positions); the opportunity to access to a phasing-out year following the termination of the tenure track appointment, if the tenure track professor is not successful in becoming a permanent associate professor; criteria to assess merit able to value diverse skill- and competency-based career paths, recognize both individual and team performance, quality over quantity in academic outputs.

**Please be aware that your OTM-R policy should be 'embedded' into the institutional HR strategy at the award renewal phase. The extended version of the reviewed HR strategy including the OTM-R policy and actions should be published on your organisation's website.**

#### 4. Implementation

General overview of the implementation process: (max. 1000 words)

The above Improved Action Plan has been seen and approved by the Academic Bodies (Academic Senate and Board of Directors) and by the External Evaluation group (Nucleo di Valutazione), a group of internal and external Academics that verifies the correct use of resources, and the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of all University activities.

The implementation phase will be coordinated by the C&C Working Group whose composition will be partially changed with respect to the past one. A steering committee will be also instituted, involving vice-rectors and Rector's delegates who are mostly involved in the strategic planning for research and human resources management. A member of the Senate and representatives of early-stage researchers from different Departments will be also included.

The responsibility of each of the 21 actions identified will be formally assigned to an administrative operational unit (UO) by Disposition of the General Manager. The assignment will indicate objectives, indicators and timeline for the implementation of the action. The actions proposed will be included in the Performance Plan of the Administration. When it is required to allocate a budget for the implementation of the action, a proposal is submitted for approval to the Board of Directors.

A kickoff meeting will be organized to start the new implementation phase involving the member of the C&C working group, the Steering Committee, the administrative staff of the UO involved in the implementation of the actions.

Periodic monitoring meeting will be organized to follow the progress of the implementation plan, discuss eventual deviations from the plan, identify extra-measures to achieve the objectives within the timeframe set.

A gantt chart is provided in the attachment file with all UniPa documents reference lists.

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

**Note:** Click on each question of the checklist to open the editor.

How have you prepared the internal review?\*

Detailed description and duty justification (max. 500 words)

The internal review has been coordinated by the new Rector's Delegate, Prof. Clelia Dispenza, for the implementation of C&C, with the support of a past Rector's Delegate, who had been coordinating all the initiatives of the HRS4R process from 2010, Prof. Eleonora Riva Sanseverino, and the collaboration of Research Support Office (Dr. Patrizia Marcella Scalisi and Dr Luciano Tropea), by making a careful survey on all actions and initiatives taken by UniPa on the various dimensions. Several administrative offices have collaborated in providing the relevant information for the gap analysis. Inputs have been received by past and new vice-Rectors, members of the Board of Directors and of the External Evaluation groups (NV).

For the elaboration of the new version of the OTM-R checklist staff of the Human Resources office for recruitment has been interviewed.

A first draft was presented to the Rector before presenting it at the meetings of the Academic Senate and Boards of Directors.

How have you involved the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?\*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The Rector's Delegate for the Implementation of the C&C principles, with the collaboration of the Research Support Office and the C&C Working Group, has organized periodic surveys to monitor the effectiveness and efficacy of the actions of the implementation plan. It has then revised the Action plan accordingly. The analysis of these surveys has been published in the HRS4R webpage.

The HRS4R webpage is being currently revamped to more effectively communicate the objectives of the process, the University of Palermo's stage in the process, and to provide easy access to relevant documentation and website links.

Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?\*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Yes, UniPa has instituted a C&C Working Group and will institute a steering group.

Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? For example, is the HRS4R recognized in the organisation's research strategy, overarching HR policy \*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Already during the second phase of the HRS4R process, after the HR award granting in 2010 and the external review in 2014, the C&C WG has headed more strongly towards the embedding of the HR quality process inside the University of Palermo organization structure. The Group has included personnel from administrative offices in the recruitment area (head of selection office and two more units). The Academic Senate and the Board of Directors have been involved in the process and in the OTMR implementation monitoring and informed by the outcome of any internal review and survey carried out the C&C WG.

The C&C WG oversees the whole process and take responsibility of specific actions, such as continuous education of researchers and setting out the OTMR guide. In order to involve the research community in the C&C implementation process, seminars for "soft skills" have been provided for young researchers on a regular basis. (see Figure 1)

To monitor the implementation level of each action, a set of indicators - in line with the University strategic action plan - have been introduced in the HRS4R action plan. The progress of the actions has been monitored by the C&C WG. Internal and external reviews were prepared collecting all documents witnessing possible progress and organizing surveys involving the stakeholders.

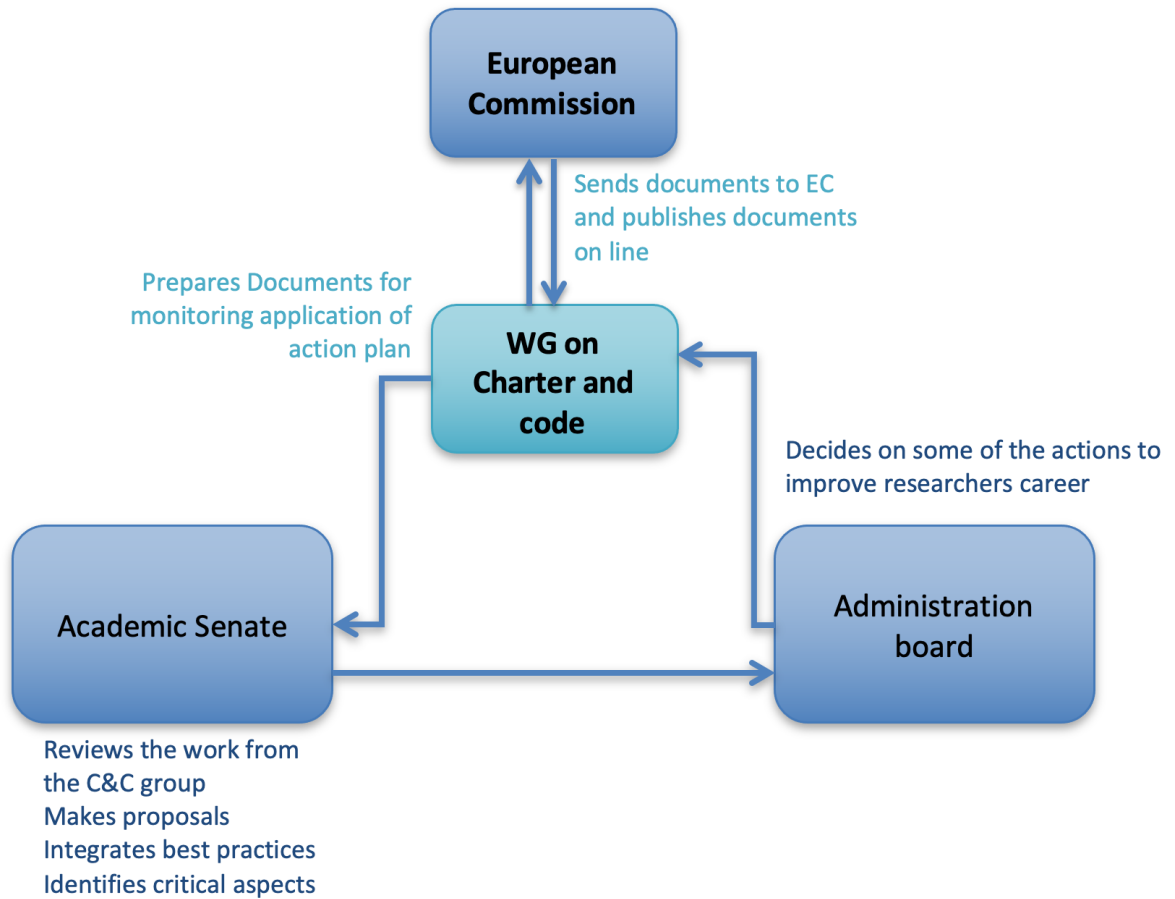


Figure 1 – Embedding the HRS4R into the UniPa committees

How has your organisation ensured that the proposed actions would be also implemented?\*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The alignment of the organizational policies with the HRS4R, described in the previous point, is one important condition to ensure that the proposed actions will also be implemented.

After the nomination of the new Rector and the elaboration and approval of a revised version of the University Statute, that was one of the priorities of the new Rector's programme, the composition of the Senate and Board of Directors will be renewed in late July. A new General Director will also be appointed.

This internal review has been elaborated by the new Rector's Delegate for the Implementation of C&C, in collaboration with a task force comprising of Professors, Researchers and techno-administrative staff. It was circulated within the UniPa Governance, discussed and approved by the Academic Senate and Board of Directors.

The C&C Working Group, with a partially modified composition with respect to the past one, and a newly appointed Stirling Committee will be instituted after the submission of this internal review and before the site visit for the renewal of "HR Excellence in Research" award.

During the first meeting of the new C&C WG, the Improved Action Plan (IAP) will be discussed, and a Monitoring Plan (MP) will be defined, with the aim of ensuring the achievement of the objectives set in the IAP within the time limits indicated.

The IAP and MP will be submitted to the Stirling Committee first, to have a feedback from representatives of the main stakeholders, then to the PQA and NV (internal and external evaluation units of the University, respectively) to be validated from a methodological point of view, and to make sure that the objectives and timings are in line with the strategic action plan of the University and, finally, submitted to the Senate and Board of Directors, with the request of funds to the latter in order to support some of the C&C WG initiatives (e.g. to organize specific training courses).

For each of the proposed action in the plan, in collaboration with the General Director, the administrative structure and personnel involved in the implementation will be identified. The achievement of the objectives of the HRS4R IAP will be linked to the objectives of the techno-administrative staff and related to the individual and organizational performance.

The official nature of the IAP and MP, together with the strong commitment of the University to the C&C principles, are also a guarantee that the IAP will be implemented.

How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?\*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

As explained above, the **monitoring plan** will be developed through a succession of verification moments in which the progress of the implementation of the actions envisaged in the initial action plan will be checked and modifications will be introduced to align the actions with the University's strategic plan and take due account of feedback from stakeholders and the stirring committee.

Quarterly reviews will be scheduled and will take place through agreed meetings between one or more members of the C&C WG and the administrative structures responsible for implementing the actions.

A cloud storage space will be created for sharing minutes, reports, survey results and all relevant documents.

Here below the main milestones and deadlines.

Nomination of the new C&C WG and of the Stirling Committee: by 15 September 2022

Kick off meeting with first draft of the IAP and MP: by 30 September 2022

**Approval of the finalised version the IAP and MP:** by December 2022

*Quarterly overall progress review meetings*

**First interim internal monitoring report:** by October 2023

**Approval of a revised IAP and MP:** by November 2023

*Quarterly overall progress review meetings*

MID-TERM SURVEY AND PRESENTATION OF ACTIONS AND ACHIEVMENTS: May 2024

**Second interim internal monitoring report:** by October 2024

**Approval of a revised IAP and MP:** by November 2024

*Quarterly overall progress review meetings*

**Third interim internal monitoring report:** by October 2025

**Approval of a revised IAP and MP:** by November 2025

Internal review for renewal without site visit

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

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

For each of the actions proposed in the IAP different indicators and targets are defined.

The administrative office responsible for the implementation of the action will be entrusted for the collection of the information, data or documents that can provide evidence that the implementation is progressing or that the target has been met. Surveys that directly involve the beneficiaries of the planned actions will be carried out as planned.

Whenever is possible, the same monitoring indicators than in the University Strategic Plan and Performance Plan will be adopted.

If the level of performance is weak, an improvement strategy will be drawn up.

How do you expect to prepare for the external review?\*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

After submitting the request for the HR award (15 July 2022) with the request of a site visit, possibly between 15 October 2022 and 15 November 2022, the new C&C WP and the stirring committee will be officially nominated (by the 15 September 2022) and will have a kick-off meeting (by the 30 September 2022). The confirmed dates for the site visit will be communicated once agreed.

The C&C WG will gather all the necessary documents and provide access to the publicly available information for the experts. Moreover, The C&C WG will contact and select representatives of the different categories of stakeholders including administrative areas to be involved in the assessment process.

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

No additional remarks or comments.