

HR Excellence in Research

Renewal Assessment: EC Consensus Report

Renewal Phase Assessment With Site Visit - EC Consensus Report

Case number

2019FR369257

Name Organisation under assessment

EHESP

Organisation's contact details

15 avenue du Professeur Léon-Bernard, Rennes, France

Submission date of the Internal Review

09/08/2023

Submission date to the European Commission

14/11/2025

Detailed assessment

a. Quality assessment

The quality assessment evaluates the level of ambition and the quality of progress intended by the organisation. If any statements have prompted a "no" or "partly" in the evaluation, please provide recommendations:

	YES / NO / PARTLY	Recommendations
Has the organisational information been sufficiently updated to understand the context in which the HR Strategy is implemented?	Yes	
Does the narrative provided list goals and objectives which clearly indicate the organisation's priorities in HR-management for researchers?	Yes	
Has the organisation published an updated HR Strategy and Action Plan been updated with the actions' current status, additions and/or modifications?	Yes	EHESP HRS4R page includes the updated HRS4R strategy (2023), action plan 2023–2026, and previous assessments.
Is the implementation of the HR strategy and Action Plan sufficiently embedded within the organisation's management structure (e.g. steering committee, operational responsibilities) so as to guarantee a solid implementation?	Yes	roles are clearly defined and responsibilities are effectively delegated
Is the OTM-R policy in place and publicly available?	Yes	

During the transition period special conditions apply:

Institutions having started the HR Excellence in Research implementation prior to the publication of the OTM-R toolkit and recommendations by the European Commission (2015) may not have prioritised actions implementing the OTM-R principles yet. In this case, they should not be penalised but strong recommendations should be made to address these principles appropriately.

Does the internal assessment of the institution give rise to any issues you wish to explore in more detail during the site visit? (max 1000 words)

Issues to explore in more detail during the site visit, after the internal assessment and desk based review

Employment conditions and career development

- Job insecurity of externally funded staff remains a major concern, as highlighted in the internal survey.
- How does EHESP plan to enhance support for the scientific career development of young researchers, including mentoring and structured career pathways?

Governance and ethics

- The ethics committee status and timeline for full implementation
- How are conflicts between supervisors and employees, as well as PhD students' personal issues, currently addressed? Are there formal mediation or support mechanisms in place?

Recruitment and OTM-R

- While recruitment guidelines are published, international visibility of vacancies on Euraxess and candidate feedback mechanisms remain weak.
- What are the barriers to systematically posting all research-related positions on Euraxess?
- Would greater internationalisation positively impact EHESP's research development, and what measures are planned to achieve this?
- The current level of internationalisation is low. What factors influence this situation, and what strategies will be implemented to attract international researchers and foster mobility?

Implementation status

- Several actions in the new plan should already be well advanced or completed. What is the current status of these tasks, and what corrective measures are in place for delays?

Research profile

- EHESP balance between teaching and research. A summary of academic achievements (e.g., recent publications, completed doctoral dissertations) would provide useful context for understanding the institution's research profile.

HR and research support interactions

- Clarify roles and responsibilities across HR, Research Department, Research Contracts Office, departments, and joint research units for both pre-award and post-award phases.
- Verify pre-award services: budgeting, eligibility checks, IP, ethics, data management plans, gender and open science integration, quality review. Verify post-award controls: time recording, cost eligibility, audit trail, indirect costs.
- Check recognition of research workload: teaching release, sabbaticals, incentives, and actual uptake.

Access to EU and International Funding

- Review the number of Horizon Europe proposals submitted and funded, roles as coordinator or partner, and researcher engagement.
- Assess the support model: topic scouting, partner building, internal red-team reviews, mock interviews.
- Verify compliance with open science, ethics, gender.
- Understand the impact of new U.S. policies (NIH) and the EU's "Choose Europe" response.
- Examine EHESP's participation in ERC and MSCA schemes as indicators of a strong HR research environment.

Which elements of the HR strategy and Action Plan would you like to focus upon during the site visits? (max 1000 words)

Governance and transparency

- Verify leadership ownership of the HRS4R process and its integration into the school's strategic plan.
- Confirm that the full strategy and Action Plan are well communicated and understood by staff at all levels.
- Assess the functioning of the Steering Committee, its representativeness, and its role in monitoring progress

Employment and job security

- Clarify concrete measures to address job insecurity for externally funded staff and the existence of a funding pool for continuity contracts.
- Examine the plan for a stable research-support base and how this aligns with long-term HR planning.

Postdoctoral career pathways

- Assess how EHESP supports career development for young researchers, including structured pathways, mentoring, and incentives.
- Validate the research sabbatical policy and its uptake.

Ethics, integrity, and research culture

- Confirm the operational status, structure, and resources of the Ethics and Integrity Committee.
- Evaluate the ethics support space for public health and social sciences.
- Verify open science support and progress in increasing full-text deposits.

Recruitment and OTM-R

- Confirm that an Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) policy is fully implemented.
- Assess whether recruitment guidelines for academic staff also apply to research positions.
- Verify systematic posting of all research and research-related vacancies on Euraxess and measure conversion to hires.
- Review transparency of recruitment campaigns and feedback mechanisms for candidates.
- Check the operational status of postdoctoral and visiting professor schemes.

Internationalisation

- Explore reasons for the current low level of internationalisation and barriers to posting vacancies on Euraxess.
- Discuss strategies to attract international researchers and whether increased internationalisation would positively impact research development.

Monitoring and indicators

- Examine how progress is tracked, especially for actions with vague or qualitative indicators.
- Ensure that monitoring tools provide consistent, measurable, and actionable data.

Researcher consultation and representation

- Verify how PhD students and R1 researchers have their voice heard by the governance and consultation processes, given their underrepresentation in the 2023 survey.

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Working conditions and inclusion

- Confirm publication and rollout of the LGBTQIA+ charter and its integration with gender equality and diversity plans.
- Review measures to address job insecurity and ensure equal treatment across contract types.

Training, supervision, and research careers

- Confirm systematic training for supervisors and the availability of a research-focused training catalogue (ethics, IP, scientific communication, open data, sustainable research).
- Review the functioning of the community of thesis supervisors, access to documentation across Rennes, and the development of joint doctoral supervision.

-Assess the clarity of pathways from master's to doctorate and the support provided for early-career researchers.

Open Access and Open Science

- Evaluate the extent of open access implementation and identify any challenges.

- Review EHESP's most significant success under HRS4R and the initiatives considered least successful, to understand lessons learned.

b. SITE-VISIT BASED Assessment

Please provide a brief answer to the following questions:

Note:Click on each question to open the editor.

1. Does the site visit confirm the impression made by the written self-evaluation report? ▼

Yes

No

Partly

2. What have been the benefits of implementing an HR Strategy in the organisation under review? How do you judge its overall impact and achievements? ▼

The HR strategy at EHESP has brought clear benefits and a strong positive impact on governance, researcher support, and institutional culture. The site visit confirmed that HR Excellence principles are embedded and driving meaningful change.

main benefits and good practices:

- improved working conditions and researcher satisfaction, with a supportive and collaborative environment
- sabbatical leave for senior researchers, enabling time for competitive funding applications
- strong commitment to equality and diversity, including an LGBTQIA+ action plan and national charter adhesion
- strengthened ethics and integrity through a scientific integrity officer and an ethics committee
- international mobility centre reducing administrative burden and supporting global engagement
- productive cooperation between HR and the research office, improving efficiency and researcher services

Overall impact and achievements

The HR strategy had a role in making EHESP more attractive and inclusive, strengthened governance, and improved researcher satisfaction. It enhanced institutional reputation, fostered internationalisation (though more investment is needed), and created a culture of continuous improvement. researchers confirmed significant positive changes linked to HRS4R initiatives.

The HR strategy is a key driver of professionalisation and research excellence. continued focus on international recruitment and career development will consolidate these achievements and maintain EHESP's strong position.

3. How do you judge the organisation's **level of ambition** with regard to its HR strategy for researchers, taking into account the initial state of play? ▼

EHESP demonstrates a high level of ambition regarding its HR strategy for researchers. Significant efforts have been invested in equality, integrity, mobility, and administrative simplification. EHESP goes beyond compliance, as shown by initiatives such as the LGBTQIA+ action plan, sabbatical schemes for senior researchers, and new contractual arrangements for early-stage researchers. However, ambition should now extend to improving recognition of transitional careers and providing greater clarity on contractual frameworks.

The commitment to implementing the principles of the Charter and Code is equally high. Over the past three years, a change in leadership has brought strong dedication and a proactive attitude toward aligning institutional practices with European standards. Numerous initiatives have been successfully implemented, creating a supportive and ethically grounded research environment.

Governance structures are robust. The Steering Committee operates regularly and plays a key role in maintaining strategic orientation. Working groups are formed as needed, ensuring that issues are addressed by qualified experts. Researcher surveys conducted every three years provide valuable feedback for planning and improvement. EHESP's relatively small size fosters an open and collaborative culture, where informal exchanges complement formal processes and support continuous improvement.

The action plan is comprehensive and well-structured, addressing both institutional priorities and European standards. EHESP has moved well beyond compliance, proactively identifying new areas for development and integrating feedback from its research community. Investments in open science, researcher well-being, and international mobility reflect a forward-looking approach suited to the current research landscape.

4. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding the **Ethical and Professional Aspects of Researchers?** 

Efforts in the ethical and professional domain are extremely relevant and highly effective. The institution demonstrates a very clear commitment to integrity and professionalism, going well beyond minimum compliance.

A dedicated scientific integrity officer, adoption of national equality charters, inclusion of LGBTQIA+ measures, and an explicit equality action plan are fully in line with European best practices. The chairperson of the ethics committee is external, ensuring impartiality and fair resolution of ethical issues.

Matters related to research ethics are rigorously respected at EHESP. As a School of Public Health, legal regulations inherently enforce many ethical standards. Compliance with national and international laws governing health research is a fundamental part of operations.

However, EHESP goes beyond legal obligations. Issues of research integrity, ethical conduct, and professional responsibility are actively addressed and integrated into institutional practices. Researchers are encouraged to reflect on their individual responsibility, and the institution has mechanisms to promote ethical awareness, support ethical decision-making, and ensure accountability.

Regular awareness-raising activities, comprehensive support structures, and transparent procedures are well-formulated, carefully prepared, and evidence of a strong ethical culture. The proactive approach to open science, public engagement, and integration of ethical considerations into daily research activities is very convincing.

EHESP implements adequate measures in data protection, open access policy, and research data management. It is very promising to consider establishing a dedicated institutional data repository to facilitate data sharing, long-term preservation, and compliance with open science standards.

5. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding the **Recruitment of Researchers?** Is an **OTM-R policy** in place? 

Recruitment at EHESP is highly effective and well above average. The process is transparent, supported by Euraxess services, and benefits from strong cooperation between HR and the grant office. Most positions are published externally, except for visiting researchers, whose appointments are managed internally.

The institution's OTM-R (Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment) policy is very clear and fully in line with European standards. Procedures are well-defined, systematic feedback is provided to candidates, and external experts are strongly involved in selection processes. Recruitment campaigns are transparent, and the integration process for new staff is carefully prepared.

Recent improvements include the introduction of permanent positions for research support roles, stabilising critical research functions and decoupling technical roles from project-based funding. Employees in these roles often hold doctoral degrees or extensive professional experience, which is extremely relevant for workforce stability.

However, contracts and career recognition for research engineers, postdocs, and transitional roles remain unclear. Postdoctoral positions continue to be characterised by high uncertainty regarding future employment prospects, reflecting broader academic trends. The contract system is complex, mirroring national employment regulations, and there is a need for greater transparency and consistency to ensure fairness and satisfaction across the research community.

The use of Euraxess for advertising job openings remains limited. Systematic publication of all relevant vacancies—including research managers, lab technicians, and open science officers—on Euraxess is essential to strengthen international attractiveness and ensure full compliance with OTM-R principles. Broader use of this platform will significantly increase visibility, attract a wider pool of high-quality candidates, and reinforce the institution's commitment to best practices in recruitment.

EHESP does not currently have a specific program focused on attracting young talent. Developing initiatives to nurture and attract younger researchers would be very promising for the institution's future.

Overall, the recruitment policy is highly effective, well above average, and fully in line with European standards. Continued investment in transparency, consistency, and international outreach—especially through comprehensive use of Euraxess—will further enhance the institution's reputation and impact.

6. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding the **Researchers' Working conditions and Social Security**? 

Working conditions and social security provisions at EHESP are highly effective and fully in line with European standards. The workplace is positive, inclusive, and supportive, with strong policies on well-being, psychological support, and anti-harassment. Flexible working arrangements and comprehensive occupational health services are in place, demonstrating a thoughtful and professional approach.

Researchers consistently emphasise the generally good working conditions. International scholars, in particular, praise the performance of the office responsible for foreign researchers' affairs, describing its support as excellent and highly efficient. The international mobility centre operates independently and provides high-quality services to several institutions in the region.

The atmosphere is attractive, with a sabbatical scheme, minimal administrative burden, and active onboarding, including welcome days to improve newcomers' integration. The sponsorship system, pairing new staff with experienced colleagues, is very well received and highly effective.

Measures to improve working conditions include temporary exemption from teaching duties to prepare external funding applications and a competitive process to offer permanent positions for research support staff. These initiatives are very promising and evidence of a strong commitment to supporting researchers.

However, the lack of permanent employment opportunities remains a concern, largely determined by national regulations and funding structures. Clarity regarding the different types of contracts is limited, and the diversity of contractual arrangements can create uncertainty for researchers, especially those on externally funded or temporary contracts. It is essential to provide more transparent information and guidance on contract types, rights, and career perspectives to ensure all researchers feel secure and valued.

Onboarding should be more systematic, with a standardised welcome manual and information posted on the website. Introducing feedback mechanisms, such as exit interviews, would be highly effective in capturing honest reflections and driving institutional improvements.

Overall, EHESP's commitment to high-quality working conditions is very strong. Continued efforts to clarify and communicate contract options, standardise onboarding, and collect feedback will reinforce trust and support a more coherent and attractive research environment

7. How do you judge the organisation's efforts to ensure the implementation of the Charter and Code principles regarding **Researchers' Development and Training**? 

Researcher development and training at EHESP are advancing very well and fully in line with European standards. The commitment is comprehensive, carefully prepared, and highly effective.

Systematic onboarding days are in place, ensuring new researchers are integrated smoothly. Equality and diversity training is mandatory for all staff, reflecting a strong institutional commitment to inclusion. Mobility opportunities are available for researchers at different career levels, and sabbatical schemes have recently been introduced and are currently in a pilot phase with two vacancies under evaluation.

Researchers report substantial professional and personal support from research groups and supervisors. PhD students receive effective assistance throughout their doctoral studies, including guidance and help in finding employment opportunities after graduation. This support is extremely well suited to the needs of early career researchers and contributes to successful transitions into academic and professional careers.

The training catalogue is broad and diverse, offering sessions and conferences within the limits of available resources. Interdisciplinary doctoral networks and targeted support for early career researchers are very promising and demonstrate a thoughtful, forward-looking approach. The creation of a doctoral hub and the promotion of joint supervision and international mobility further strengthen the institution's capacity to nurture talent and foster research excellence.

Additional steps could include developing a structured research manual, a career recognition guide for clear assessment of contractual types, and further investment in the data repository to ensure findability and searchability of research outputs.

Efforts should be strengthened to attract new research talent, for example through participation in international mobility and exchange programs such as the Marie Curie network. Increasing EHESP's visibility in such initiatives would enhance competitiveness and help recruit promising early-career researchers.

Please list one or more elements of good practice that you would recommend to other organisations – either in terms of action or in terms of coordination/process. (max 500 words)

Strong cooperation between HR and research offices:

Close coordination between HR and research offices, supported by joint meetings and co-responsibility for researcher services, reduces administrative burden and improves efficiency. This integrated approach is extremely relevant and highly effective, delivering seamless support to researchers and serving as a model for others.

Equality and inclusion embedded in strategy:

EHESP goes well beyond compliance by embedding equality and inclusion into concrete action plans. The institution has signed national equality charters and included specific actions for LGBTQIA+ staff in its equality plan. This demonstrates a very clear and thoughtful adaptation of national frameworks into local, inclusive measures.

Scientific integrity officer and quality labels:

The appointment of a dedicated scientific integrity officer and adherence to national quality labels (e.g., DD&RS, "Bienvenue en France") provide credibility and foster trust. These measures are very convincingly integrated and offer a replicable model for upholding ethical standards and research integrity.

Sabbatical scheme:

A structured sabbatical opportunity is rare and sends a strong signal about valuing researchers' long-term development. This initiative is very promising and can be replicated by other organisations to foster innovation and career renewal.

International mobility centre with Euraxess support:

Investment in a mobility centre, closely linked with Euraxess services, significantly reduces barriers for international researchers. The emphasis on minimising administrative burden and providing excellent support is extremely well suited to attracting global talent.

Positive institutional culture:

The overall atmosphere is highly positive, with strong satisfaction levels among staff. This derives from consistent application of the HR Strategy and a commitment to celebrating researcher successes, creating a reputation as a "good place to work."

Onboarding initiatives:

Systematic onboarding days, complemented by recommendations for a standardised handbook and web-based support, ensure newcomers feel integrated quickly. This is a practical, high-impact action for staff satisfaction and retention.

Cross-Institute internal audit: Implement internal audit processes that operate across all departments. This approach ensures coherence, identifies gaps, and drives continuous improvement throughout the organisation.

Strengths and weaknesses

On the basis of the information submitted and taking into account the organisation's national research context, how would you as an assessor judge the HR Strategy's **strengths and weaknesses?** (maximum 1000 words)

Strengths:

- Inclusive governance: The Steering Committee includes representatives from all researcher levels (R1–R4), HR, and management, ensuring comprehensive oversight.
- Transparent publication: HRS4R documents are published in English and easily accessible on the EHESP website, supporting openness and accountability.
- Regular community consultations: Surveys and consultations were conducted in 2017, 2019, and 2023, demonstrating a commitment to stakeholder engagement.
- Completed actions: Policy development, ethics training, and publication of recruitment processes are completed and well documented.
- Integration into governance: Executive Committee oversight ensures HRS4R is embedded in institutional decision-making.
- Integrity and ethics: The scientific integrity function, awareness actions, and declarations of interest are convincing and evidence of a strong ethical culture.
- High-quality recruitment: Annual campaigns are transparent, involve external experts, and provide systematic feedback to candidates.
- Inclusive working environment: Telework, gender equality, diversity, and accessibility measures are actively promoted.
- Doctoral policy and support: The doctoral hub and guidance for supervisors are very well formulated and credible.

Weaknesses:

- Job insecurity: Externally funded staff continue to face uncertainty, with limited mitigation due to national employment ceilings.
- Postdoc status unresolved: Contracts and leave arrangements (e.g. maternity/parental leave) for postdocs remain unclear.
- Transparency gap: Survey results and committee minutes are only available on the intranet, reducing external visibility.
- OTM-R limitations: International visibility is limited, and candidate feedback is not systematically structured.
- Recognition of research time: Workload rebalancing and incentives for research activities are not evident.
- Open science and ethical support: These areas could be further developed to meet best practice standards.
- Training gaps: Researcher training is not sufficiently targeted, and access to documentation beyond health fields is limited.

If relevant, please provide suggestions for modifications or revisions to the (updated) HR strategy: (maximum 2000 words)

To address current gaps and strengthen EHESP's alignment with European best practices, several targeted recommendations should be implemented.

Job security for externally funded staff requires the creation of a continuity funding pool, The postdoctoral charter should be finalised and published, explicitly including provisions for maternity and illness leave. All actions in the HRS4R strategy must be made SMART to ensure objective tracking and measurable progress.

Recruitment processes must be further improved by mandating that all research-related vacancies—including lab technicians, research managers, and support roles—are posted on EURAXESS in both English and French, with written feedback provided to all shortlisted candidates. Compliance should be tracked and statistics published. Annual targeted PhD surveys will help monitor early-career researcher engagement and experience.

Global talent attraction should become a strategic priority for EHESP. This involves setting clear objectives to attract international researchers and promote talent circulation, with specific targets for international applicants, hires, and visiting staff. Responsibility for these efforts should be assigned to a named lead, and results reported publicly.

Outreach and support for international candidates must be strengthened by developing a clear value proposition, offering relocation and integration support, and simplifying onboarding for global hires. Dashboards should be used to monitor EURAXESS posting rates, international applications, hires, and retention, with results made publicly available to demonstrate progress and accountability.

These measures will reinforce EHESP's reputation for excellence, improve transparency, and ensure a more attractive and supportive environment for researchers at all career stages.

General Assessment

Which of the below situations describes the organisation's progress most accurately? Tick the right situation regarding the award renewal application:

Accepted



Pending modifications



Pending modifications - **extended deadline**



Explanation

- **Accepted:** The organisation is progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan. **There is evidence that the HR Excellence in Research is further embedded. The next assessment will take place in 36 months.**
- Pending modifications: The organisation is, for the most part, progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan, but could benefit from alterations as advised through the Assessment process. **There is some evidence that the HR Excellence in Research is further embedded. The institution is requested to submit within 2 months a revised file taking into account the recommendations of the assessors.**
- Pending modifications - **extended deadline:** The organisation is not deemed to be implementing appropriate and quality actions and this raises some concern for the future efforts to implement actions closely aligned to

the Charter and Code. **There is a lack of evidence that the HR Excellence in Research is further embedded.**

The institution is requested to submit within 12 months a revised file taking into account the recommendations of the assessors.

Until then, the HR Award will be put as "pending".

General Recommendations

If any of the above statements have prompted a "no" in the evaluation, please provide suggestions of modifications in the form below.

- If the general assessment is "pending modifications" the recommendations are split into:
 - Immediate mandatory recommendations (to be implemented for award renewal, resubmission within 2 months)
 - Other recommendations (to be carried out during the award renewal phase).
 - If the general assessment is "pending modifications - extended deadline" the recommendations are split into:
 - Mandatory recommendations (to be implemented for award renewal, resubmission within 12 months)
 - Other recommendations
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Recommendations *

Recommendations for further development and strengthening current good points

Expand international recruitment and visibility:

- Systematically advertise all research and research-related positions on -Euraxess to increase international visibility and attract a wider pool of high-quality candidates.
- Set clear targets for international applicants and hires, and monitor progress through regular reporting.

Enhance support for research careers:

- Develop structured pathways for cross-cutting careers, especially for staff transitioning between hospital, university, and EHESP roles.
- Facilitate access for civil servants to PhD tracks by clarifying procedures and providing targeted support.
- Invest in participation in ERC and MSCA schemes (postdoctoral fellowships, doctoral networks, and Choose Europe)

Strengthen researcher well-being and inclusion:

- Continue investing in psychological support services and anti-harassment measures.
- Regularly review and update the Gender Equality Plan and diversity initiatives to ensure they remain effective and relevant.

Improve contract clarity and career perspectives:

- Provide transparent information and guidance on the different types of contracts, rights, and career progression opportunities.
- Organise regular information sessions and publish clear documentation for all staff.

Invest in research Data Management and Open Science:

- Establish a dedicated research data repository to support open science and compliance with data management requirements.
- Promote training and awareness on open science practices across all departments.

Formalise onboarding and exit processes:

- Set up onboarding as a structured process, including systematic feedback and exit interviews to ensure continuous improvement and early engagement of new staff.
- Improve the peer-to-peer buddy scheme by introducing systematic matching, regular feedback, and structured mentoring activities.

Foster regional and international cooperation:

- Strengthen partnerships with the University of Rennes and other regional stakeholders to enhance synergies, resource sharing, and joint initiatives.

Promote English proficiency:

- Invest in English language training as a key asset for recruitment and career advancement at all levels.
- Make English proficiency a standard criterion in recruitment and promotion processes.

Monitor and communicate progress:

- Use internal audits and feedback mechanisms to identify new areas for improvement.
- Regularly assess the effectiveness of implemented actions and communicate outcomes to the research community.

If the organisation deserves to be commended on their ambition, their actions, evidence of good practice and/or their implementation process, please provide a commentary supporting this. (max. 2000 words)

The organisation developed good practices throughout its implementation process. The commitment to continuous improvement is fully evident, with a comprehensive and well-structured action plan that addresses both institutional priorities and European standards.

Assessors remind that the HRS4R should be seen as a continuous improvement process rather than a simple compliance exercise. EHESP demonstrates a proactive approach, integrating feedback from the research community and investing in innovative practices such as open science, psychological support, and regional cooperation. The implementation of dedicated roles—scientific integrity officer, open science officer, and GEP officer—shows a very clear commitment to excellence and inclusiveness.

The HRS4R process also provides an occasion for trying experimental actions, allowing the organisation to pilot new initiatives and approaches that can further enhance researcher support and institutional effectiveness. This openness to experimentation can lead to thoughtful leadership and strong progress.

Even though EHESP operates within a very regulated framework, there remains significant room for improvement in the space between the legal requirements and current practice. By actively exploring this space, the organisation can further strengthen its procedures, address emerging needs, and set new standards for the sector.

As elements of good practice we identified:

Sabbatical leave – This time off allows them to prepare applications for funding from both national and European sources.

Commitment to gender equality, diversity, and respect for rights – EHESP has demonstrated a strong commitment to gender equality, diversity, and respect for the rights of all staff and students. The institution has joined the LGBT+ Charter and established an Action Plan to ensure that actions are taken effectively in these areas. EHESP also has an administrative unit designed to help address and respond to any instances of discrimination.

Collaboration between HR and the research office – The collaboration between the HR department and the Research Office is clearly yielding positive results in the implementation of the institution's strategic plan.

More in general the structured onboarding process, comprehensive training catalogue, and strong anti-harassment measures further reinforce a positive and supportive working environment.

The institution is to be commended for its ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards and for its efforts to fill identified gaps. The proactive approach to self-assessment, regular updates to the action plan, and openness to feedback demonstrate a strong dedication to improvement. Continued investment in innovative practices, regular monitoring, and a readiness to adapt will further strengthen the institution's position and ensure lasting impact. Maintaining this momentum is essential for keeping up with evolving standards and expectations in the European Research Area.