



# Open, transparent and merit-based recruitment

a priority for the European Research Area (ERA)

a 'must' for a *Charter & Code* compliant Human Resources Strategy for Researchers

Camerino, July 8, 2015

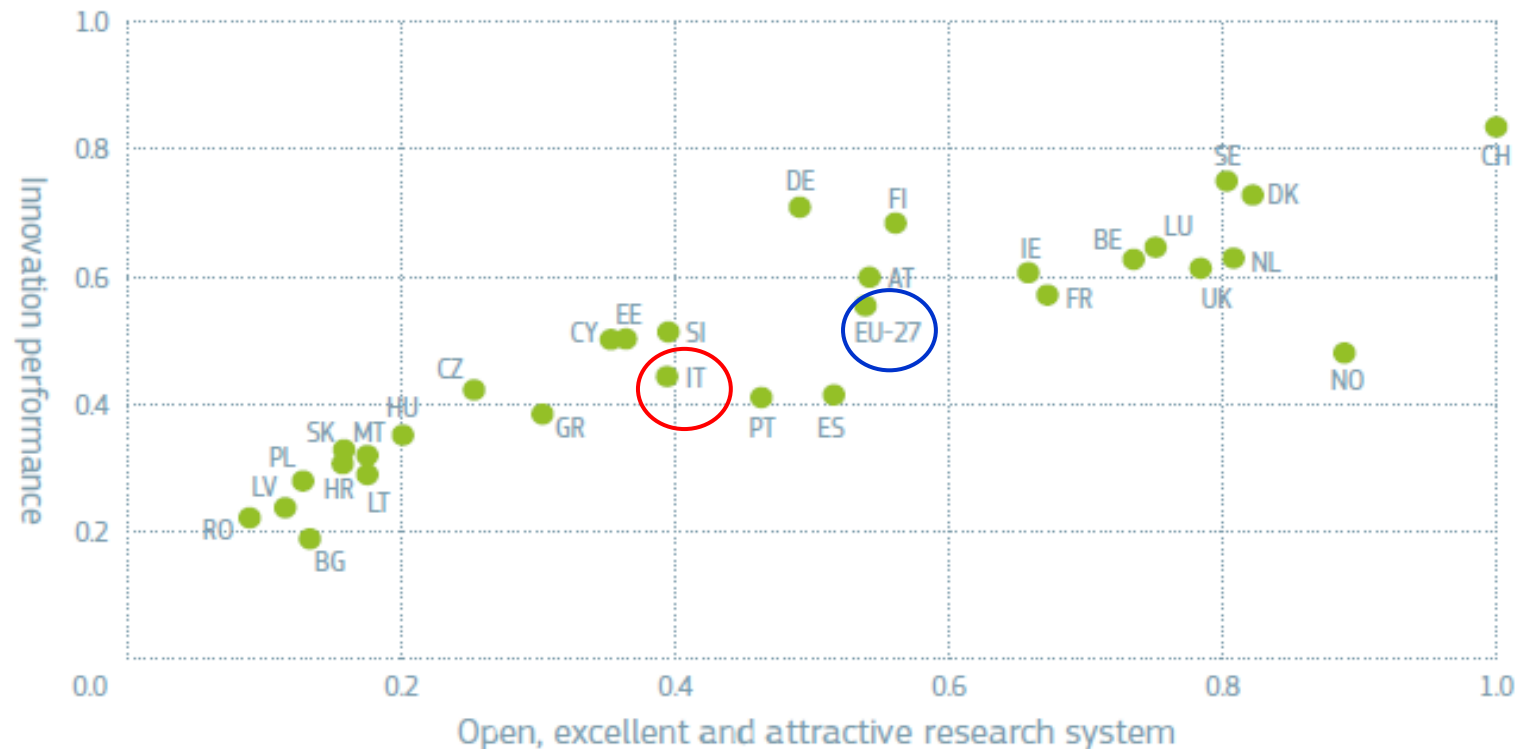
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## Why to adopt open, transparent and merit-based recruitment (OTM-R) ?

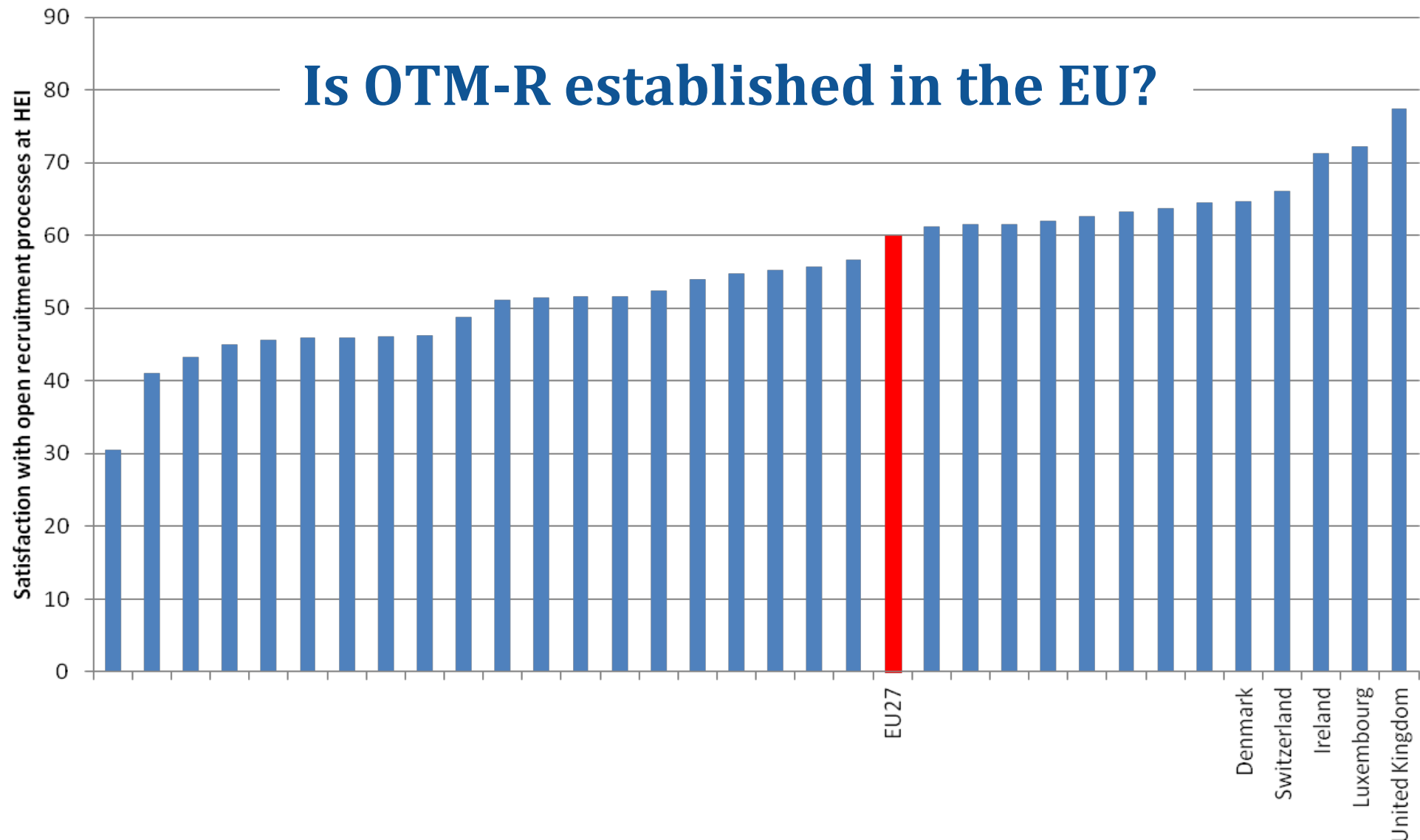
Graph 13: Open, excellent and attractive research systems and innovation performance (2014)

Source: DG Research and Innovation calculations based on Innovation Union Scoreboard 2014



[http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/pdf/era\\_progress\\_report2014/era\\_facts&figures\\_2014.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/pdf/era_progress_report2014/era_facts&figures_2014.pdf)

## Is OTM-R established in the EU?



[http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/pdf/era\\_progress\\_report2014/era\\_facts&figures\\_2014.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/pdf/era_progress_report2014/era_facts&figures_2014.pdf)

## OTM-R is perceived as a priority

To achieve ERA Priority “*An open labour market for researchers*”, the consultation of MS + AC identified, as a **Top Action Priority**,

**Using open, transparent and merit-based recruitment practices with regard to research positions**

## Why OTM-R is a 'top priority'?

**Lack of open recruitment hinders mobility,  
the matching of talent to opportunities,  
and gender equality, thereby  
impeding achievement of the ERA's full potential**

## Actions to promote OTM-R

(Competitiveness Council, May 29, 2015, approval of the ERA Roadmap)

At *National* level, governments and relevant stakeholders (in particular Research Funding Organisations, RFOs)

1. should consider how **the rules for national funding schemes** could better promote the uptake and effective implementation by Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) of the principles of openness, transparency and merit-based recruitment as articulated in the Charter and Code.
2. Where relevant, governments should remove legal barriers or other hindrances to OTM-R of researchers in public sector RPOs and *define new structures and approaches to researcher career development.*

## Actions to promote OTM-R - continued (Competitiveness Council, May 29, 2015)

3. RPOs in turn should be encouraged to participate in the **Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)** and to review their current **recruitment processes** in a reflective and self-critical way, amending them where necessary to improve their openness and transparency as benchmarked against the **Charter and Code**.

**A Charter and Code compliant HRS4R  
cannot dispense with OTM-R**

## Actions to promote OTM-R - continued (Competitiveness Council, May 29, 2015)

- At *European and national levels*, authorities should encourage openness and the circulation of international talent by reinforcing a **welcoming culture for EU and third-country researchers** and reducing obstacles to mobility.
- At *European level*, participation in Horizon 2020 should reinforce uptake of the C&C, in particular through **Article 32 of the Model Grant Agreement**.
- The role and effectiveness of **EURAXESS** in supporting the open recruitment of researchers should also be reviewed, particularly the impact of the **EURAXESS portal**.



## A working group on OTM-R established by the Steering Group on Human Resources and Mobility

- Starting date: **November 2014**
- Aim: to develop an **OTM-R “Package”** for assisting RPOs to carry out, on a voluntary basis, a review of their current recruitment policy and practices and revise these, where needed
- Members: **15** Member States (MS) and Associated Countries (AC), the EU Commission, the VoR, the ERC, the EUA, the LERU, the CESAER
- Final Report to be handed over to the SGHRM by **June 2015** [*in fact, last Friday, July 3*]

## Not to re-invent the wheel...

- The Charter & Code (2005)
- The EURAXESS portal (Rights and Jobs current sections)
- The MS and AC legislation
- The examples of good practice from RPOs, RFOs, MS and AC
- **The European Framework for Research Careers**

## The 4 elements of the OTM-R 'Package' for RPOs

1. Why is an OTM-R system essential? **The rationale**
2. What should an OTM-R system look like? **The principles**
3. How does your organisation's OTM-R system rate? **The checklist**
4. Does your RPO want help to establish an OTM-R system? **The toolkit**: a step-by-step guide to improve (if, when and where needed) the RPO's **OTM-R practices**

# 1. The **rationale**: why is OTM-R important?

- It ensures that the **best person for the job** is recruited
- It guarantees **equal opportunities** and access for all
- It facilitates developing an **international portfolio** (cooperation, competition, mobility)
- It makes research careers more **attractive**

In sum: **an OTM-R system benefits researchers, RPOs and the country's research system**

## 2. The **principles**: what should an OTM-R system look like?

It should :

- be based on a **review** of the current OTM-R policy, practices and procedures (i.e. the 'OTM-R system')
- foresee the **publication** of the (revised) OTM-R system
- establish/adapt an 'OTM-R guide', on which to **train** (and raise awareness of) the RPO personnel
- be embedded into the RPO's **Quality Control** System
- consider to develop and incorporate an **e-recruitment** tool

### 3. The **checklist** for RPOs: How does your organisation's OTM-R system rate?

Institutions are encouraged to use the checklist as a **self-assessment tool** to determine the degree to which their current practices are **really OTM-compliant** and to identify where improvements should be made.

The checklist includes only 23 questions to support a review on:

- **The OTM-R system in general**
- **The Advertising and Application phase**
- **The Evaluation and Selection phase**
- **The Appointment phase**

### 3. The **checklist**: a few sample questions

About the OTM-R System (in general):

***8. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract underrepresented groups?***

About the Advertising and Application Phase:

***15. Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate?***

About the Evaluation and Selection Phase:

***17. Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees?***

About the Appointment Phase:

***21. Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?***

#### 4. The **toolkit**: a step-by-step guide to help RPOs establishing an OTM-R system compliant with the C&C principles

- The toolkit sets out, in chronological order, i.e. from job advertisement to appointment, the various steps of the recruitment process.
- It aims to build on the principles of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, providing more detailed information, **practical solutions** and includes **examples** of good practice.



## When is a recruitment process **OPEN**?

(NB: **openness and transparency** are frequently interconnected)

**A recruitment process can be considered OPEN when it encourages external candidates to apply and also attracts researchers from abroad.**

The **APPLICATION PHASE** can be considered OPEN and TRANSPARENT when:

- ✓ advertisement uses the **R1-R2-R3-R4 framework** 'vocabulary';
- ✓ interested candidates and applicants receive all **the relevant information**;
- ✓ the **issue of (foreign) languages** is taken into account;
- ✓ **administrative burden** is minimal (for candidates AND for selection committees).

### **An EXAMPLE from the TOOLKIT:**

*Candidates unfamiliar with the 'local system' must be able to assess the attractiveness of a position and to fully understand the application procedure*

## When is a recruitment process **OPEN and TRANSPARENT**?

The **INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS** can be considered **OPEN and TRANSPARENT** when it includes:

- ✓ a publicly accessible **institutional recruitment policy**;
- ✓ **institutional recruitment regulations** which are clear to applicants & reviewers;
- ✓ a system to regularly **check, review and revise** recruitment regulations (including to monitor their effectiveness);
- ✓ a serious mechanism to deal with **complaints**.

### **EXAMPLES from the TOOLKIT:**

- *Differentiation between internal promotions and new recruitment*
- *No fake vacancies for internal promotions as open positions*
- *No reservations of open positions for internal candidates*

## When is a recruitment process **TRANSPARENT** and **BASED ON MERIT**?

The **SELECTION PHASE** can be considered **TRANSPARENT** and **BASED on MERIT** when:

the **communication with candidates/applicants** (acknowledgement, feedback) is timely and appropriate;

the **selection panel composition**

- ✓ is made public,
- ✓ is established for all profiles (R1-R4),
- ✓ is adequate for the candidates' profile, in terms of size and composition,
- ✓ is **independent, objective**, and takes **evidence-based decisions**.

### EXAMPLES from the TOOLKIT:

- *inclusion of **external** experts (outside the institution), **international** experts, experts from **different sectors***
- *relevant experience, qualifications and competencies of members to assess **each** candidate*

## When is a recruitment process **BASED ON MERIT?**

- While an absolute and universally acceptable definition of ‘merit’ is virtually impossible to achieve, **a recruitment system can be considered merit-based when it is able to ensure that the institution recruits the best person for the job**
- The application of the **European Framework for Research Career**, which identifies both **required and desirable competences** for each profile (R1 to R4), **may substantially help RPOs** willing to adopt a genuine OTM-R system

### **AN EXAMPLE from the TOOLKIT:**

- *To adapt the procedures according to the level, nature and type of position*

## When is a recruitment process **BASED ON MERIT**?

### When the criteria for selecting researchers

- foresee appropriate assessment and evaluation of **a wide spectrum of qualifications** (encompassing non-formal qualifications, skills and competences, international portfolio)
- are focused on **past performance and future potential**, with a different relative weight according to the profile (R1-R4)
- are **consistent** with the requirements of the position
- combine **qualitative and quantitative** judgment, focusing on results within a diversified career path

**EXAMPLES from the TOOLKIT: see next slide**

## When is a recruitment process **BASED ON MERIT?**

### **EXAMPLES from the TOOLKIT**

*A **wide range** of evaluation criteria should be used and balanced, according to the position and the specific profile of the post; these criteria may include (**in alphabetical and NOT hierarchical order**):*

- *acquisition of funding;*
- *generation of societal impact;*
- *international portfolio (including – but not only – mobility);*
- *knowledge transfer and exchange;*
- *management of research and innovation;*
- *organizational skills/experience;*
- *outreach/public awareness activities;*
- *research performance;*
- *supervision and mentoring;*
- *teaching;*
- *teamwork*

*Thanks for your attention  
and get involved **now** with the 're-shaped'  
**Human Resources Strategy for Researchers Award,**  
including  
**open, transparent and merit-based recruitment procedures***