



**Human Resources Strategy for Researchers in Accordance with the Principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers**

**Results of On-line Research**

---

University of East Sarajevo  
univerzitet@ues.rs.ba  
Vuka Karadžića 30, 71123 East Sarajevo  
Telephone/ Fax: 00387 57 320 330

December, 2022

## **CONTENT**

---

Results of On-line Research .....	1
Development (3,71) .....	10
Working Conditions (3,74) .....	10
Good Practices in Research (3,74) .....	11
Ethics (3,97) .....	11
Recruitment, Procedures, and Conditions (4,02) .....	11

## **Results of On-line research**

---

During the past five years (2017-2022), the University of East Sarajevo has been actively working on the implementation of Action Plan of Human Resources Strategy for Researchers which includes the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. In order to effectively implement the planned activities and achieve the set goals, two permanent bodies responsible for the implementation of the Strategy were formed:

- Monitoring Group
- Working Group

The monitoring group, made up of University management representatives, was in charge of monitoring the implementation process of the Action Plan of Human Resources Strategy for Researchers which includes the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers in accordance with the procedure prescribed by the European Commission. The description of the duties of the Monitoring Group included providing an active contribution in the expert analysis of the application of the principles given in the European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers adopted by the European Commission and reporting to the Senate of the University, as the umbrella academic body for carried out activities.

For the operational part of the implementation of strategic goals and activities provided in the Action Plan of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers which includes the European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, a Working Group composed of representatives of the management, professional and administrative services of the Rectorate of the University was appointed. In addition to the above, the Working Group had the task of providing an active contribution in the expert analysis of the application of the principles given in the documents European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers with the aim of implementing the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers for the University of East Sarajevo and reporting to the Monitoring Group on the activities undertaken. The Working Group held several meetings that resulted in summary reports on the implementation of activities provided for in the Action Plan of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers, drafted on the prescribed monitoring form. The results of the work of the Working Group were presented to the members of the Monitoring Group.

The Working Group, upon the approval of the members of the Monitoring Group, and for the purpose of preparing for the external evaluation of the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy for researchers at the University by the European Commission, created a survey questionnaire in order to create an internal analysis and evaluate the progress of the University, as well as to use the data obtained for the development of the Human Resources Strategy Action Plan for Researchers for the next three-year period.

The survey questionnaire contained a total of 50 questions covering 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers,

grouped into six thematic units: General Questions, Working Conditions, Good Practice in Research, Ethics, Development, Recruitment Procedures and Conditions. The office for Quality Assurance, International Cooperation, and the Office for Science, Research and Development synthesized all the survey questions/statements of the survey that were used in the previous survey (2016) and created the final version of the University survey questionnaire based on the agreement of the University management. To each question, the respondent could answer with a Likert rating scale from 1 - "I do not agree at all" to 5 - "I completely agree". The questionnaire was created in electronic form using the Lime Survey platform.

The invitation to fill out the survey was delivered to researchers several times via electronic and written letters to faculties of the University in September and October 2022.

A total of 371 researchers at the University participated in the survey, which is a representative number of responses, that is, and the number on the basis of which the Internal Analysis can be made. All surveyed researchers participated in the survey voluntarily, and they filled out the survey anonymously, meaning that all the basic principles of surveying were met: voluntariness, neutrality and anonymity.

An integral part of this document is the Research Statistics document (Excel), which was automatically generated from Lime Survey, and in which you can find data on the total number of surveyed researchers grouped by gender, age, name of faculty and academy, teaching and associate titles, as well as overview of answers to all questions with average marks.

This document only shows data on the number of surveyed researchers by gender and age, faculty/academy of the University, and the title.

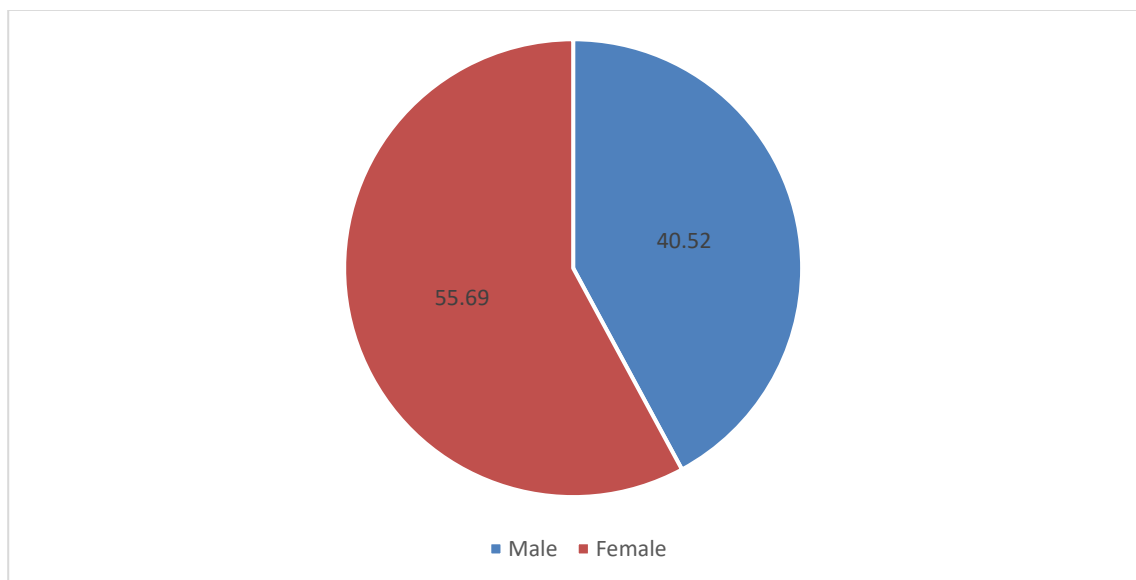


Chart 1. Percentage of participants by gender

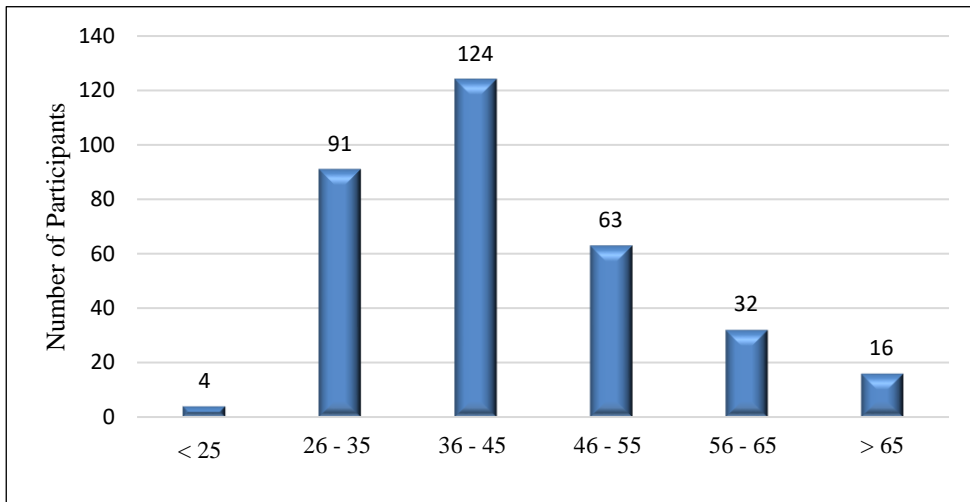


Chart 2. Number of Participants by Age

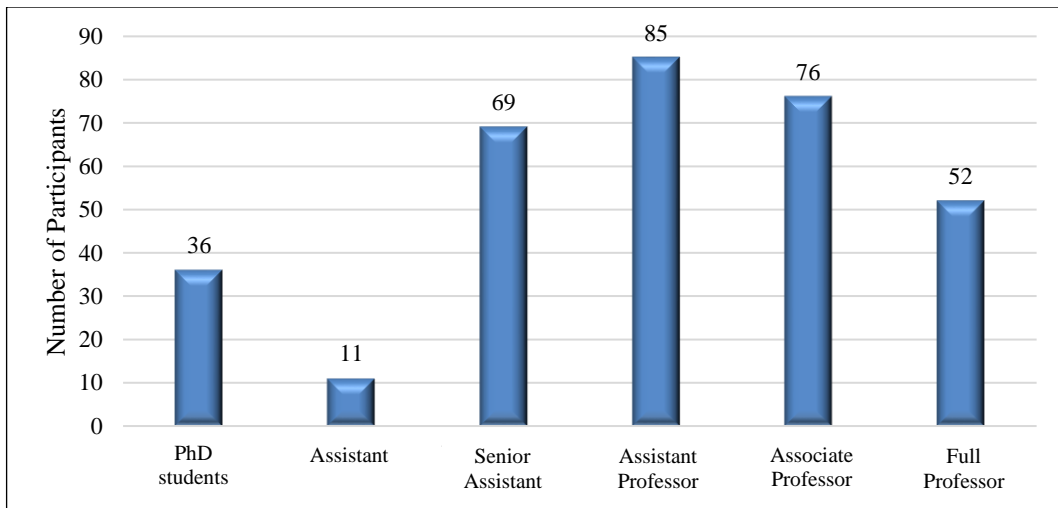


Chart 3. Number of Participants by Teaching/Research Title

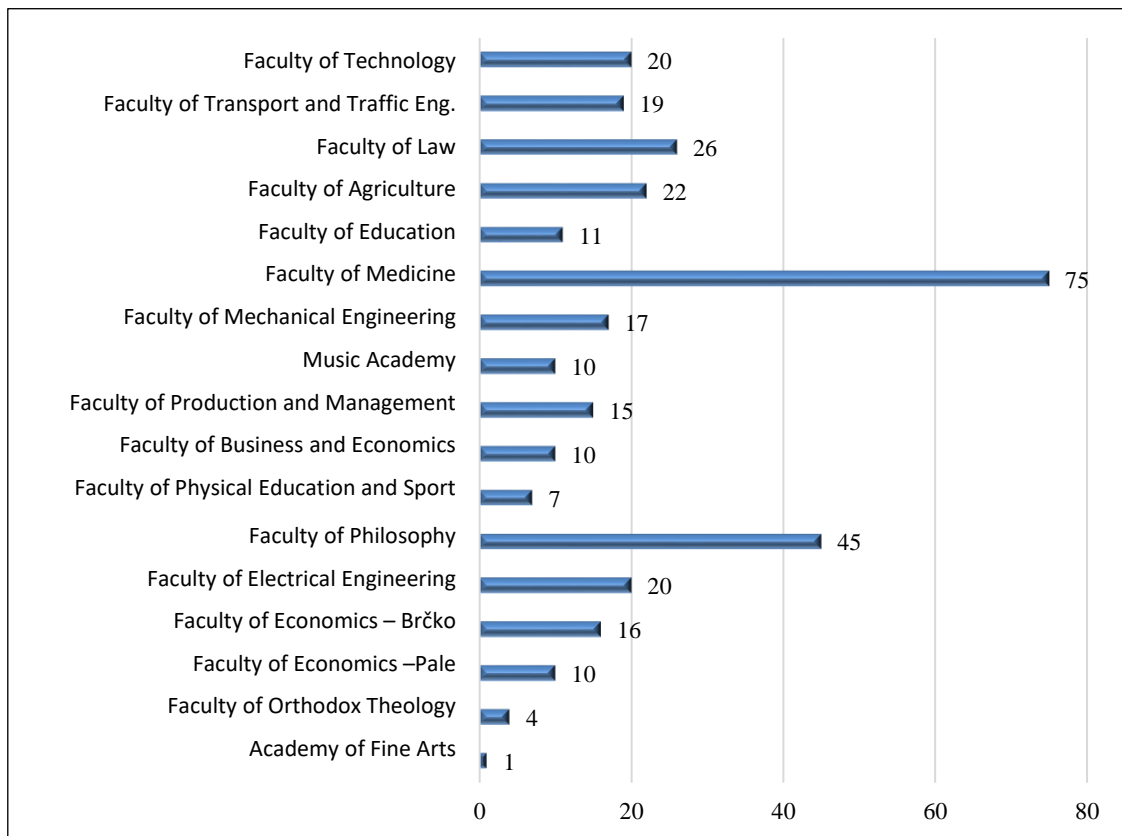


Chart 4. Number of Participants by Faculties/Academies

The following table shows the statements from the university questionnaire based on the 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, ranked from the highest to the lowest average score.

Claim – Questionnaire	Avg $\bar{x}$ value
Likert rating scale 1 - I do not agree at all 2 - I mostly disagree 3 - I can't answer 4 - I mostly agree 5 - I completely agree	
Vacancies at any level of research career are publicly advertised and open within a reasonable period of time and are adequately nationally/entity-wide published in the media.	4.37
In carrying out their research, researchers have complete freedom of thought, expression and application of appropriate methods to approach the research problem.	4.37

Vacancies for the admission of researchers are publicly available and transparent, during which the necessary conditions are stated in the vacancy in such a way not to discourage the application of potential candidates.	4.31
Researchers have adequate social security, including sickness, parental rights, pensions and unemployment benefits in accordance with existing national legislation and national or sectoral collective agreements.	4.22
The institution strives for representative gender equality at all levels, respecting the policy of equal opportunities in employment, but that gender equality does not give priority in relation to quality and competences.	4.17
The institution pays sufficient attention to avoiding discrimination of researchers based on gender, age, ethnic and national affiliation, social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, social and economic status.	4.17
Mobility of researchers (study stay in another country, region, at another institution, change of sector, etc.) is viewed positively, as a contribution to the professional development and advancement of researchers.	4.14
The criteria and standards for the admission of researchers to the institution are clearly stated in the job application and do not discriminate against marginalized groups or those returning to a research career.	4.13
The institution ensures that the competencies and references of the researchers/candidates applying for the vacancies, their creativity and degree of independence, are objectively evaluated by the selection committee.	4.11
The institution values the academic and professional qualifications of researchers, including their informal qualifications, especially in the context of international and professional mobility.	4.10
Researchers conduct original research, respecting the intellectual property of other research.	4.10
Researchers adhere to ethical principles and practices, as well as standards in accordance with national/entity and institutional ethical regulations.	4.10
Selection committees for the selection of researchers/candidates are composed to include members who have relevant experience for the selection of candidates, and are composed of members from different disciplines.	4.09
When evaluating research activities, the institution positively values co-authorship and protects co-authorship rights of researchers.	4.07
Researchers comply with provisions on safety at work in accordance with existing legal and institutional regulations.	4.06
The selection of potential researchers is based on the qualifications for the respective position and is evaluated according to the achievement of the individual, and not according to the reputation of the institution where the potential candidate obtained the qualification.	4.05
The institution recognizes inter-institutional, inter-sectoral, interdisciplinary, virtual and other types of mobility of researchers as an important means of advancing scientific knowledge and professional development at any stage of a research career.	4.05

The admissions process of new potential candidates takes into account a wide range of candidate experience, focusing on their overall potential, taking into account qualitative and quantitative assessments and their career achievements, not just the number of publications.	4.01
Selection committees for the selection of researchers/candidates are composed to include members from other countries.	4.00
Potential candidates who apply for the vacancies are always adequately informed by the selection committee at the end of the selection process about the weaknesses and strengths of their application.	4.00
Researchers regularly publish their research results to make them accessible and, if possible, commercialize them.	3.97
I am aware that the University continuously works to improve the working conditions of researchers in accordance with the European Charter and Code for Researchers (HRS4R).	3.85
Researchers present activities and results to the wider social community and thereby contribute to a better understanding of their research activities.	3.83
All researchers are recognized as professionals and treated by the institution in an appropriate manner, from the beginning of their career, starting at the postgraduate level and beyond.	3.82
Researchers are focused on research that is innovative and of wider social importance.	3.81
During the selection procedure, variations in the researcher's career chronology are considered as a potential contribution to the researcher's professional development.	3.81
The institution applies clear rules and explicit guidelines for the engagement of postdoctoral researchers, including the maximum duration and objectives of such engagement, taking into account the time spent in previous postdoctoral appointments at other institutions and taking into account that the postdoctoral status is transitional with the primary goal of providing additional professional development opportunities for a research career in the context of a long-term career perspective.	3.79
Researchers are familiar with legal and institutional regulations regarding the protection and confidentiality of their research data.	3.77
Researchers are familiar with the contractual and legal (national, entity or institutional) conditions governing their research, training or working conditions, including intellectual property rights and rights and obligations towards funders.	3.76
Adequate conditions and incentives, in terms of salaries, are guaranteed to researchers at all stages of their career and regardless of the type of contract.	3.75
Researchers are continuously improving and broadening their skills and competences through formal trainings, workshops, conferences and e-learning methods.	3.73
The institution has ensured and applies procedures that allow its researchers confidential and informal assistance in resolving work-related conflicts, disputes and complaints, with the aim of promoting fair and equal treatment within the institution and improving the overall quality of the work environment.	3.71



Researchers are familiar with the rules and regulations that regulate their research environment, funding mechanisms, and the means of reporting to the relevant authorities at the institution/or funder.	3.71
The institution provides and improves a stable scientific research environment for the work of researchers, regardless of the nature of the contracted employment relationship.	3.71
The institution uses a transparent system of assessment/evaluation of the professional work of all researchers on a regular basis.	3.69
The institution works to promote researchers' intellectual property rights and legal protection.	3.65
The institution provides researchers with the opportunity for professional development and job advancement through access to activities that contribute to the continuous development of skills and competencies.	3.64
Researchers regularly report to their mentor and other competent bodies at the institution about their research activities and results.	3.61
Senior researchers as mentors and career advisors provide guidance to younger researchers regarding knowledge transfer and career development by building a positive relationship with them.	3.60
The institution has ensured adequate procedures regarding researchers' complaints, including procedures that resolve conflicts between mentors and young researchers.	3.59
The institution has ensured appropriate conditions for the work of researchers (including conditions for disabled researchers), during which flexibility is provided that enables successful research, such as, flexible working hours, part-time work, paid leave, as well as the necessary financial and administrative rules that regulate such arrangements.	3.59
Hiring postdoctoral researchers at the institution provides additional opportunities for professional development.	3.57
The selection committees for the admission of researchers/candidates are always balanced by gender.	3.56
The institution has a strategy that provides every researcher with career development planning in accordance with their developmental, scientific and other preferences, and provides the availability of mentors who provide support and guidance for the researcher's personal and professional development.	3.52
The institution includes researchers in decision-making processes in various bodies and committees in order for them to protect and promote their professional and collective interests, while contributing to the work of the institution.	3.52
The institution provides a highly stimulating research environment that includes appropriate infrastructure, equipment, instruments, laboratories, literature, collaboration through research networks, while respecting regulations related to health and safety in research.	3.52
Teaching duties do not prevent or limit the researcher in conducting research activities.	3.51
The institution ensured that the researchers were adequately rewarded for their teaching duties.	3.46

The institution is responsible for career development counseling and job search assistance at different institutions or through cooperation with other structures, which is offered to researchers at all career stages.	3.44
The institution assigns mentors to young researchers who have sufficient time, knowledge, experience, expertise and commitment to offer researchers in their career development.	3.35

The average values of the received answers ranged from 3.35 as the lowest, to 4.37 as the highest. Analyzing the average scores of the survey questionnaire by grouped areas, it can be seen that the areas of Development (3.71), Working conditions (3.74) and Good practices in Research (3.74) were rated lower than the areas of Ethics (3.97) and Recruitment, Procedures and Conditions that have a higher average rating (4.02).

In order to create the Human Resources Strategy Action Plan for Researchers, which includes the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, the Monitoring Group of the University, as a key working group, made a decision that all claims that received a score below 4 will be treated in the form of necessary activities and will be integral part of the Action Plan. Generally speaking, the management of the University was a little stricter in defining the average grade in an effort to truly undertake activities to improve the research sector to the greatest extent possible. The action plan presents the necessary activities classified by strategic objectives. For each action, the action plan lists outcomes, key quality indicators, responsibilities and deadlines for implementation.

### **Development (3.71)**

In the area of Development, the University's researchers have an average rating of below 4 for activities related to career development counseling and institutional assistance when looking for a job (3.44), as well as those related to providing a wider spectrum of opportunities for the continuous improvement of the skills and competencies of the researchers themselves (3.73). It is necessary to provide additional opportunities for professional development to engaged postdoctoral researchers (3.57), as well as for the institution to improve the promotion of researchers' intellectual property rights and legal protection as a whole (3.65).

### **Working Conditions (3.74)**

In the area of working conditions, researchers rated below 4 the teaching duties for which they believe prevent and limit them from conducting research activities (3.51), as well as adequately rewarding their teaching duties (3.46). The structure of the respondents' answers indicates that it is necessary to more actively involve researchers in decision-making processes (3.52), plan and undertake additional activities that would create a stimulating research environment (3.52) and ensure appropriate conditions for the work of researchers with guaranteed flexibility that would enable conducting successful research (3.59). Researchers also believe that the current institutional system of assessment/evaluation of the professional work of all

researchers on a regular basis should be more transparent (3,69). The results of the survey indicate that in the area of the research sector, it is necessary to further improve a stable scientific research environment, regardless of the nature of the contractual relationship (3.71), as well as the area of legal acts that regulate the research environment, including funding mechanisms and the way of reporting to relevant authorities (3.71). Improvements are needed in the appropriate conditions and incentives, in terms of wages, in order to guarantee it in all stages of their career (3.75). Respondents expressed the need for a higher level of available information on the contractual and legal conditions that regulate research areas (3.76), as well as the improvement of the institutional system of recognition of researchers as professionals (3.82). The availability of information about the University's activities on improving working conditions in accordance with the European Charter and the Code for Researchers is also an area for which it is necessary to create new activities in order to achieve a satisfactory level of information (3.82).

### **Good Practices in Research (3.74)**

---

Based on the results obtained in this area, it is evident that researchers need to be provided with professional and experienced mentors who would help them in their career development (3.35), as well as career adviser who would provide guidance regarding the transfer of knowledge to young researchers (3.6). Researchers expressed the need to improve regular reporting to mentors and other competent bodies about their research results (3.61), and the level of available information on legal and institutional regulations related to the protection and confidentiality of research data (3.77). Researchers also indicated that they are not sufficiently focused on innovative research which is of wider social importance (3.81), that their results and activities are not sufficiently presented to the wider community (3.83), and for the regular publication of research results and their potential commercialization, it should be at a higher level (3.90).

### **Ethics (3.97)**

---

In this area, the surveyed researchers believe that attention should be given at ensuring and applying adequate procedures, first of all those that would define researchers' complaints about the relationship with mentors, and which would contain a procedure for resolving conflicts between mentors and young researchers (3,59). In this area, the University should provide its researchers with confidential and informal assistance in resolving work-related conflicts, disputes and complaints, with the aim of improving the overall quality of the working environment (3,71).

### **Recruitment, Procedures, and Conditions (4.02)**

---

Based on the obtained data, the surveyed researchers indicated that the selection commissions for selecting the candidates are not always balanced by gender (3.56). When it comes to hiring rules and procedures, the University should make additional efforts to create and

apply explicit guidelines for hiring postdoctoral researchers (3.79), as well as provide mechanisms to consider the chronology of the researcher's career as a potential contribution during the selection procedure, and their professional development (3.81).