

HR Excellence in Research

Internal Review

Internal Review

Case number

2023RO46811

Name Organisation under review

National Research and Development Institute for Industrial Ecology – ECOIND

Organisation's contact details

Drumul Podu Dambovitei 57-73, Bucharest-6, 060652, Romania

1. Organisational Information

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

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	57.42
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	0
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is the host organisation) *	0
Of whom are women *	36.5
Of whom are R3 or R4 = established or leading researchers with a large degree of autonomy (e.g. holding the status of principal investigator or professor) *	14.25
Of whom are R2 = recognised researcher (e.g. postdoctoral researcher, junior researcher) *	24.84
Of whom are R1 = first stage researcher (e.g. doctoral candidate, research apprentice) *	18.33
Total number of students (if relevant) *	0
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching, and research staff) *	152.51
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for the most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	3751937.2
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	2172641.1
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	182563.08
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	1396733.1

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

National Research and Development Institute for Industrial Ecology-ECOIND is a national institute in Romania that provides a global approach to environmental and industrial ecology issues. It operates as a public institution under the coordination of the National Authority for Research.

ECOIND's vision is to promote the maintenance of a clean and safe environment through sustainable practices, to support a healthy future.

The institute mission is to research, innovate and develop analytical and protective solutions for current societal challenges in the field of environmental protection, pursuing excellence in research and solid strategic partnerships.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please review the strengths and weaknesses under the four pillars of the European Charter for Researchers, 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 European Charter for Researchers to open the editor and provide your answers in the section dedicated to internal review for the interim assessment.

Strengths and weaknesses (initial phase)

STRENGTHS:

- The existence of an institutional culture oriented towards performance, scientific quality and permanent development;
- The existence of a strong openness towards the establishment of partnerships and for internal and international cooperation activities;
- The existence of a strong connection with institutes and universities in European countries, for developing research projects;
- The existence of research directions and thematic profiles appropriate to current national and international trends, regarding societal challenges and market requirements in the environmental field;
- The existence of permanent concerns for the development of the institute as a pole of scientific and technological innovation and for the promotion of research results;
- The ability of the research team to produce applicable and relevant scientific results for the national and international community;
- The freedom to carry out research and development activities, to initiate and submit proposals for research projects and to approach new research topics;
- The existence of programmatic documents such as: the Strategy for the Research and Development Activities, the Code of Conduct, the Collective Labour Agreement, the Individual Labour Contract, the specific procedures from the Integrated Quality - Environment - Health and Safety Management System, and so on;
- The existence of a performance evaluation system in research activities that is applied in the institute (the evaluation includes aspects related to the number and quality of scientific publications, research performance, the ability to manage research projects, the experience and the ability to coordinate research teams);
- The existence of an integrated IT system, as well as researchers' access to the main national and international scientific platforms.

WEAKNESSES:

- The reluctance of researchers to carry out research activities in fields complementary to the specific department of which they are a part;
- The lack of participation of all researchers who hold the Ph.D. title in national/international project proposals as project director/responsible;
- Lack of guidelines/procedures for professional responsibility which can emphasize new trends such as open data, open science, co-authorship, and so on;

- The non-existence of bilingual versions of the main programmatic documents existing in the research-development activity of the institute, in order to attract researchers from abroad.

Strengths and weaknesses (interim assessment)

STRENGTHS:

- Comprehensive Code of Ethics and Integrity, regularly updated to comply with legislative changes.
- Dedicated Ethics and Professional Deontology Commission with clearly defined responsibilities.
- Regular ethics training for staff through annual training programmes.
- Transparent governance supported by annual ethics reports and documented commission decisions.
- Strong institutional oversight, with ethical documents reviewed and approved by the Scientific Council and Board of Administration.
- Integration of ethics into the institute's research management system and professional practices.

WEAKNESSES:

- Limited evidence of measurable outcomes.
- There is little information on monitoring the effectiveness of ethics training or staff awareness.
- No clear indicators for evaluating the impact of ethics training on staff behaviour or awareness.
- No specific mechanisms for assessing the long-term impact of ethical policies on research quality. Little information on mechanisms for monitoring compliance with ethical standards beyond routine reporting.
- Limited evidence of external benchmarking or independent evaluation of the institute's ethics system.

Remarks (max 500 words)

The institute demonstrates a well-established framework for research ethics and professional conduct. It has an updated Code of Ethics and Integrity (Edition 9/2025), aligned with current Romanian legislation, and a dedicated Ethics and Professional Deontology Commission responsible for promoting ethical behaviour and handling ethical issues. The commission operates under approved regulations and supports ethical governance through annual training programmes, annual reports, and documented decisions. Ethical policies are reviewed regularly and approved by both the Scientific Council and the Board of Administration.

The institute has a strong and well-structured ethical and professional framework supported by updated policies, an active ethics committee, and regular staff training. The main area for improvement is providing more quantitative evidence of the effectiveness and impact of these ethical measures, including statistics on ethics cases, training outcomes, and continuous performance monitoring. Greater transparency regarding ethical case outcomes and lessons learned would further strengthen institutional credibility.

Strengths and weaknesses (initial phase)**STRENGTHS:**

- Compliance with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, equal opportunities, in accordance with the internal regulations within the institute and in accordance with national legislation, for the recruitment and selection process of the institute's staff;
- The existence of a procedural framework in the recruitment and selection of the institute's staff, made up of procedures, regulations and carried out by commissions appointed at the institute level;
- The existence of a managerial vision oriented towards the promotion and attraction of young staff within the institute;
- The existence of strong connections with relevant universities in Romania in order to recruit and select young staff.

WEAKNESSES:

- Insufficient promotion of available positions at international level, especially on platforms such as <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/> (<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/>) ;
- The lack of attractiveness of a career in the field of research for young university graduates, mainly due to the relatively low level of remuneration compared to other fields, but also to insufficient information about the particularities of a career in the field of research;
- Absence of promotion in the online environment (especially on the institute's website) of the possibilities of staff mobility;

Strengths and weaknesses (interim assessment)**STRENGTHS:**

- Commitment to the European Charter for Researchers: ECOIND adopted the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers in 2022 and obtained the HR Excellence in Research award in 2024, demonstrating commitment to transparent and merit-based recruitment.
- Clear human resources framework: Recruitment and employment are supported by internal regulations, collective labour agreements, performance evaluation procedures, equal opportunity provisions, and ethical standards, providing a structured recruitment environment.

- Highly qualified workforce: The institute has a multidisciplinary research team with a high proportion of PhD-qualified researchers, making it attractive to prospective candidates and supporting recruitment of high-level personnel.
- Career development opportunities: Researchers benefit from participation in national and international projects, scientific collaborations, training, conferences, and publication activities, supporting recruitment and retention of talented staff.
- Strategic focus on human resources: Human resources development is identified as a strategic priority, including internationalisation and strengthening research capacity.

WEEKNESSES:

- Limited international recruitment: The evaluation highlights relatively limited participation of international researchers and limited visibility in international scientific leadership, suggesting that recruitment remains largely national.
- Limited doctoral supervision capacity: The institute has only a small number of doctoral supervisors, reducing its ability to attract and recruit early-career researchers through doctoral programmes.
- Ageing research workforce: The need for attracting young researchers is identified as a strategic challenge, indicating succession planning and renewal of research staff remain priorities.
- Limited institutional recruitment strategy: Although procedures exist, the documents provide limited evidence of proactive international talent attraction, structured onboarding, or dedicated recruitment campaigns targeting diverse candidates.
- Dependence on project-based funding: Recruitment opportunities are influenced by the availability of externally funded research projects, potentially limiting long-term workforce planning.

Remarks (max 500 words)

The institute benefits from a highly qualified multidisciplinary research team and provides researchers with opportunities for professional development through participation in research projects, international collaborations, scientific conferences, publications, and training activities. These strengths contribute to an attractive research environment and support the recruitment and retention of competent researchers.

Despite these strengths, several challenges remain. International recruitment is still relatively limited, with modest participation of foreign researchers and limited institutional visibility in international scientific leadership. The institute also has a small number of doctoral supervisors, which constrains its capacity to attract and develop early-career researchers through doctoral programmes. In addition, recruitment is influenced by the availability of externally funded research projects, making long-term workforce planning more

difficult. While the strategic documents identify human resource development and internationalisation as priorities, further efforts are needed to implement proactive international recruitment, strengthen succession planning, attract young researchers, and enhance institutional competitiveness in the global research market.

Strengths and weaknesses (initial phase)**STRENGTHS:**

- The existence of one of the most modern and performing research infrastructures in Romania in the field of industrial ecology;
- The existence of material and financial resources necessary for the good functioning of the institute as well as the existence of a solid financial situation;
- The existence of the financial reserves necessary to support *in-house* research studies, for the development of new topics/the completion of master's theses and some topics from doctoral theses;
- The existence of a real concern within the institute for matchmakings, workshops and round tables on topics of interest or for the dissemination of the results of research projects;
- The existence of an open access database for researchers from the institute called ECOLIB - Library of the National Research and Development Institute for Industrial Ecology - ECOIND, an institutional repository that includes information, results and research data (<http://dspace.incdecoind.ro/> (<http://dspace.incdecoind.ro/>)) ;
- The existence of a technology transfer centre within the institute accredited by the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitization that provides support to researchers in order to capitalize on the results obtained;
- The existence of a representative framework for researchers (there are information, consultation and decision-making bodies at the institute level - such as the Scientific Council, the Management Committee, the Technical-Economic Commission, or through the representatives of employees who take part in the meetings of the Board of Directors, and so on);
- Stimulating staff with outstanding results in research-development-innovation activities by implementing a coherent system of financial incentives for staff who publish scientific papers in ISI-rated journals with a high impact factor / patentable results.

WEEKNESSES:

- The impossibility of carrying out research activities in a hybrid work system or with work from home, due to the dependence on the existing facilities within the institute for obtaining results.

Strengths and weaknesses (interim assessment)**STRENGTHS:**

- Safe and well-managed working environment through an Integrated Management System certified to ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001, and Innovation Management standards, supported by documented procedures.
- Comprehensive internal regulations covering employment conditions, performance evaluation, equality of opportunity, occupational health and safety, ethics, and collective labour agreements, providing a clear framework for staff.
- Strong research infrastructure, including modern laboratories, advanced analytical equipment, pilot installations, and regional branches, providing researchers with excellent facilities for scientific work.
- Continuous investment in infrastructure demonstrating commitment to maintaining high-quality working conditions.
- HR Excellence in Research recognition, following adoption of the European Charter for Researchers, reflecting commitment to improving researchers' working environment and career conditions.
- Modern digital resources, including the ECOLIB open-access institutional repository and upgraded digital infrastructure that supports research visibility and accessibility.

WEEKNESSES:

- Dependence on project-based and external funding for infrastructure development may affect the long-term sustainability of investments and equipment renewal.
- Research staff numbers have gradually declined during the evaluation period, potentially increasing workloads and reducing organisational resilience.
- International mobility and researcher exchange opportunities can be further strengthened as part of the working environment.

Remarks (max 500 words)

The institute provides a well-structured and supportive working environment underpinned by a comprehensive management framework, modern research infrastructure, and clearly defined institutional policies. Researchers benefit from internationally recognised quality, environmental, occupational health and safety, and innovation management systems, supported by extensive internal procedures governing employment, performance evaluation, ethics, equality of opportunity, and workplace safety. Continuous investment in advanced laboratory facilities and scientific equipment has created a high-quality research environment that enables competitive research and the delivery of specialised services. The institute has also demonstrated its commitment to improving researchers' working conditions through the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the achievement of the HR Excellence in Research award.

Despite these strengths, several areas require further development to fully align with best practices in researcher working conditions. The institute remains dependent on external and project-based funding to sustain infrastructure investments, which may affect long-term stability. In addition, the gradual decline in research staff numbers during the evaluation period may place increasing pressure on existing personnel, and opportunities for international researcher mobility and exchange could be further strengthened to enhance career development and institutional attractiveness. Overall, the institute offers a robust and well-managed working environment, with opportunities to further improve staff wellbeing, workforce sustainability, and international engagement.

Strengths and weaknesses (initial phase)

STRENGTHS:

- The existence of a varied scientific expertise of the institute's staff that helps develop the skills of young researchers;
- Periodic support of *in-house* trainings with young researchers from the institute on topics of interest;
- The existence of a large and qualified staff, with experience in the field of industrial ecology, able to facilitate the rapprochement between the research environment and the business environment and to contribute to an easier and more efficient identification of the real needs expressed by private enterprises;
- The existence of a real concern for the students that are engaged in practice activities within the institute (through activities such as guidance, evaluation, providing feedback);
- Ensuring the continuous professional improvement of the research staff by participating in training / improvement / mobility internships, supporting participation in doctoral and postdoctoral programs, scholarships granted, promotion in scientific degrees, increasing skills in the field of technological transfer and project management;
- The existence of a high level of mobility of the institute's staff, having both the resources and the availability to travel in the country and abroad, in order to disseminate the results of the research activity, or to represent the institute at various national/international events.

WEAKNESSES:

- The decrease in the mentoring activity for young researchers due to workload and time constraints;
- Lack of standardized documents regarding training and mentoring, such as a career development policy in research or an internal procedure/regulation focused on the mentoring activity in each of the stages of the research career, lack of an institutional career advice system.
- The lack of an individualized professional development plan for each researcher within the institute;
- The lack of specialized mentors at the institute level (or external persons) to provide training regarding the career plan, the possibilities of professional development, and so on;
- Lack of training courses on general topics necessary for a researcher's career, such as research methodologies, research project planning, ethical aspects in research projects.

Strengths and weaknesses (interim assessment)

STRENGTHS:

- Strong commitment to continuous professional development, with researchers encouraged to participate in national and international conferences, workshops, specialised training courses, and scientific exchanges to enhance their knowledge and skills.
- Active involvement in doctoral education, with researchers serving as members of doctoral schools, PhD committees, and thesis examination boards, contributing to the training of the next generation of scientists.
- Increasing proportion of PhD-qualified researchers, reflecting a highly qualified workforce and a strong culture of academic development.
- Participation in national and international research projects provides researchers with opportunities to acquire new technical, scientific, and project management competencies while strengthening international collaboration.
- Implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the HR Excellence in Research process demonstrates the institute's commitment to structured career development, researcher training, and continuous improvement of human resource practices.
- Institutional strategy recognises human resource development as a strategic priority, including measures to strengthen researcher skills, internationalisation, and collaboration with industry.

WEAKNESSES:

- Limited number of accredited PhD supervisors, restricting the institute's capacity to independently supervise doctoral candidates and expand doctoral training.
- Training activities are largely linked to research projects, with limited evidence of a comprehensive institutional training programme covering leadership, management, transferable skills, and career planning.
- International researcher mobility could be further expanded to provide broader professional development opportunities.
- Declining numbers of research staff may reduce opportunities for mentoring and knowledge transfer within the institute.

Remarks (max 500 words)

The institute demonstrates a strong commitment to researcher training and professional development through active participation in scientific conferences, research projects, doctoral education, and international collaborations. A highly qualified research workforce, together with the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the HR Excellence in Research initiative, provides a

solid foundation for continuous learning and career development. Human resource development has also been recognised as a strategic institutional priority, reflecting the institute's long-term commitment to strengthening research capacity and scientific excellence.

Nevertheless, opportunities remain to establish a more structured and comprehensive professional development framework. Expanding doctoral supervision capacity, introducing formal mentoring programmes, strengthening transferable skills training, increasing international mobility, and implementing systematic evaluation of training outcomes would further enhance researchers' career development and improve alignment with international best practices in human resource development.

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

ECOIND priorities on short and medium terms shifted from institutional strengthening and capability building in the short term to international competitiveness and impact in the medium term.

Short-term priorities	Medium-term priorities
Consolidate governance, quality management, and institutional processes.	Position ECOIND as a leading European research institute in industrial ecology.
Modernize research infrastructure and analytical capabilities.	Increase participation and leadership in Horizon Europe and other international programmes.
Expand competencies in emerging pollutants (PFAS, microplastics, pharmaceuticals), advanced monitoring, and environmental technologies.	Translate research into market-ready technologies, patents, spin-offs, and higher technology transfer.
Strengthen human resources through recruitment, training, career development, and HR Excellence implementation.	Build long-term scientific excellence through international talent attraction and stronger research networks.
Improve project management, digitalisation, and risk management.	Diversify funding by increasing competitive international funding and industrial partnerships.
Maintain accreditation, regulatory compliance, and laboratory excellence.	Develop strategic partnerships with industry and public authorities for large-scale environmental solutions.
Increase visibility through publications, conferences, and national collaborations.	Achieve greater international visibility through high-impact publications, European networks, and scientific leadership.

Key changes in priorities

- From operational excellence → strategic growth: immediate efforts focus on strengthening internal capacity, while the medium term emphasizes institutional expansion and competitiveness.
- From research capability → research impact: the focus shifts from developing methods and infrastructure to commercialization, technology transfer, and societal impact.
- From national orientation → international leadership: priorities evolve toward European projects, global collaborations, and international recognition.
- From maintaining capacity → sustainable competitiveness: greater emphasis is placed on diversified funding, innovation ecosystems, and long-term resilience.
- These changes show a progression from consolidating institutional capabilities to delivering internationally competitive research with measurable scientific, economic, and societal impact.

Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates changed and, as such, have had an impact on your strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers? (max. 500 words)

The institute has implemented several major strategic and organizational changes to strengthen its research capacity, institutional performance, and international visibility.

Key developments include:

- Implementation of the 2025–2029 Development Strategy, built around five strategic and six cross-cutting objectives aligned with the National Strategy for Research, Innovation and Smart Specialisation (2022–2027) and the Horizon Europe programme. The strategy aims to enhance institutional excellence, maintain the institute's leading position in industrial ecology and environmental protection, and strengthen collaboration with national and international stakeholders.
- Optimization of the organizational structure, approved by the Ministry of Education and Research in September 2025, to improve institutional effectiveness.
- Increased scientific visibility through the continued publication of the Romanian Journal of Ecology & Environmental Chemistry and its inclusion in major international indexing databases, including CABI, DOAJ, WorldCat, ASCI, and Scilit.
- Successful institutional accreditation following the 2019–2023 evaluation, achieving a score of 97/100 and securing accreditation for another five years.
- Introduction of a new scientific performance evaluation framework for research staff, aligned with the provisions of the 2024 Research, Development and Innovation Personnel Act.
- Maintenance and renewal of key accreditations and certifications, including:

- RENAR accreditation for testing laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025);
- Accreditation of the Technology Transfer Centre as an Innovation and Technology Transfer Infrastructure entity;
- Ministry of Health certification for drinking water quality monitoring laboratories;
- Certification as an accredited expert for environmental studies.
- Recognition of institutional excellence, with INCD-ECOIND being classified in Performance Category I in 2026 following the national performance evaluation under Law 25/2023

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

The main strategic decisions that are likely to have a direct impact on human resources (HR) at INCD-ECOIND:

Implementation of the 2025–2029 Development Strategy

- Introduction of five strategic and six cross-cutting objectives aligned with national and European research priorities.
- Requires new competencies, workforce planning, leadership development, and alignment of staff performance with strategic goals.

Optimization of the Organizational Structure (2025)

- Approval of a new organizational structure by the Ministry.
- May involve changes in reporting lines, responsibilities, staffing needs, and managerial roles.

Implementation of a Scientific Performance Evaluation Framework

- Establishment of procedures and criteria for evaluating research staff in accordance with Law 183/2024.
- Influences performance management, promotion, career progression, recognition, and rewards.

Expansion of Research Areas and International Collaboration

- Diversification of research directions and stronger international partnerships.
- Creates demand for recruitment in emerging research fields, interdisciplinary skills, mobility, and continuous professional development.

Continuous Training and Competence Development

- Institute-wide training on risk management and regular updates of management procedures.
- Strengthens employee competencies and supports organizational effectiveness.

Maintenance of Accreditation and Quality Certifications

- Renewal of laboratory accreditations (ISO/IEC 17025), Ministry of Health certification, and technology transfer accreditation.
- Requires continuous staff qualification, competency assessment, and compliance training.

Together, these decisions influence several key HR areas:

- Recruitment and selection of highly qualified researchers.
- Career development and promotion pathways.
- Performance appraisal and recognition.
- Training and continuous professional development.
- Leadership and succession planning.
- International researcher mobility and collaboration.
- Employee engagement and retention.

3. Actions

Please consult the list of all the actions you have submitted as part of your strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. Please add to the overview the current status of these actions as well as the status of the indicators. If any actions have been revised 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 ratings.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 1

Creating a section dedicated to relevant information on research freedom, limitations and opportunities on the institute's website

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 1. Research freedom	Semester 2/2024 - Semester 1/2025	Scientific Council Scientific Director	Number of documents available within section / 2 new or updated documents per year Number of users per year / 50 users per year
Current Status	Remarks		
IN PROGRESS	A section dedicated to information on research freedom, limitations and opportunities was created on the institute website https://incdecoind.ro/en/freedom-to-research/ (English) and https://incdecoind.ro/libertatea-de-a-cerceta/ (Romanian). Starting with January 1, 2026 the online access to this specific section was monitored. For the period 01.01.2026-20.08.2026 a total number of 18 active users (14 for Romanian version and 4 for English version) were registered. Indicators: • Number of documents available within section / 4 documents, an average of 2 new or updated per year • Number of users per year / 18 active users for the period 01.01.2026-20.08.2026		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 2

Supporting researchers to perform research activities in other domains than those specific to their department

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 1. Research freedom

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Semester 1/2025 - Semester 2/2025

Responsible Unit

Scientific Council
Scientific Director

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Number of researchers involved in research activities not specific to their department / 10 researchers per year
Number of projects involving collaboration between departments / 2 projects per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status

Remarks

EXTENDED

Due to specifics of institute's activity profile, all the projects involve collaboration of specialists with various backgrounds such as chemists, biologists, biotechnological engineers, chemical engineers ecologists etc. Therefore, the collaboration between departments represents a usual practice during projects implementation. From the projects implemented during the last two years that involves collaboration between various departments are mentioned: • The WaterWise Hub: An Excellence Hub on Water in the Circular Economy – WaterWise Hub, HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-ACCESS-07-01, implementation period 2025-2028, project number 101184151, departments involved: Department of Environmental Evaluation and Technologies, Department of Pollution Control, Technological Transfer Centre, Top Management, <https://waterwisehub.eu/> ; <https://incdecoind.ro/en/waterwise-excellence-hub-en/> • Fostering European Talents for Widening Circular Economy – Talent Pass, HORIZON-WIDERA-2024-TALENTS-03-01, implementation period 2025-2029, project number 101217448, departments involved: Department of Environmental Evaluation and Technologies, Department of Pollution Control, Human Resources, Top Management, <https://www.talentpass-project.eu/> ; <https://incdecoind.ro/en/talent-pass-en/> • Center of Excellence in water management, materials, by-products and waste valorisation for circular bioeconomy implementation – CERSUS, PN-IV-P6-6.1-CoEx-2024-0056, implementation period 2026-2030, departments involved Department of Environmental Evaluation and Technologies, Department of Pollution Control In relation to involvement of researchers in activities not specific to their department a good example for the analysed period is Talent Pass project dedicated to: • enhance mobility and

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
	expertise development within circular economy, focusing on researchers, innovators, and other R&I academic/non-academic talents from widening countries • build a critical mass of competent researchers with high-quality knowledge, skills, and tools to drive forward innovation and sustainability in the circular economy Within the Talent Pass project a number of 10 researchers/ innovators are involved in activities not directly specific to their department. Researchers/staff involved in Talent Pass project are part of Top management, Department of Pollution Control, Department of Environmental Evaluation and Technologies, Human Resources, IT and Marketing. Indicators: • Number of researchers involved in research activities not specific to their department / 10 researchers/innovators in 2026 • Number of projects involving collaboration between departments / 3 ongoing projects (2 started in 2025 and 1 started in 2026)

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 3

Updating the section dedicated to information on ethical principles application and Commission of ethics activity on the institute's website
<https://www.incdecoind.ro/informatii-de-interes-public-legea-nr-5442001>

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 2. Ethical principles

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously

Responsible Unit

Commission of ethics

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Number of documents available within section / Two new or updated documents per year
Number of users per year / 50 users per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	A new dedicated section to ethics and integrity was developed and it is available on https://incdecoind.ro/en/ethics-and-integrity/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/etica-integritate/ (in Romanian). The following documents were made available within the section: • Annual report 2025 harassment at work • Guide on preventing and combating sex-based harassment and moral harassment in the workplace • Code of ethical and integrity conduct ed.9/2025 • Integrity whistleblower guide 2025 • Ethics advisor report 2024 • Annual report of the Professional Ethics and Deontology Commission – ECOIND 2024 Starting with January 1, 2026 the online access to this specific section was monitored. For the period 01.01.2026-20.08.2026 a total number of 40 active users (27 for Romanian version and 13 for English version) were registered. Indicators: • Number of documents available within section / 6 documents, an average of 3 documents per year • Number of users per year / 40 active users for the period 01.01.2026 – 20.08.2026

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 4

Maintenance and further development of institutional repository ECOLIB

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility

(+/-) 11. Evaluation/appraisal systems

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025;
Continuously

Responsible Unit

ECOLIB responsible

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Number of documents available / 50 new documents per year
Number of registered users / 100 registered users per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	Since October 2024, the DSpace Cris software has been updated to version DSpace Cris 7.6.2, which has allowed the implementation of new functionalities. The upgrade was completed at the end of November 2024 and led to a virtual machine with a modern, intuitive design for searching. Among the newly introduced functionalities are: • citations for articles, mentioned in the bibliometric databases Scopus, Web of Science, PlumX, Dimensions, Almetric, Mendeley, Google Academic; • citations in Scopus, Dimensions and Google Academic are visible in real time, • the links are active and provide access to the respective bibliometric databases; • uploading of new documents using metadata from other platforms, such as Crossref, Scopus, Web of Science; • active connections between data on ECOLIB and Researcher ID (Clarivate), ORCID, Author ID (Scopus) for each researcher in ECOIND; metrics (total number of citations, Hirsh index) from Scopus and Web of Science for each researcher in ECOIND. Due to the update of software version the number of registered users can no longer be monitored. Therefore instead of this indicator the proposal is to use number of views Indicators: • Number of documents available / total 2000 documents from which 98 (2024); 98 (2025); 27 (2026) • Number of registered users / can no longer be monitored • Number of views for the period October 2024-June2026 = 13293

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 5

Development and dissemination to researchers of a guide regarding professional responsibility with accent on new tendencies related to open data, open science

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility	Semester 2/2024 - Semester 2/2025	ECOLIB responsible HRS4R Responsible	Guide on professional responsibility (both in Romanian and English) / 1 guide available and disseminated to researchers
(-/+) 28. Career development			Number of training sessions on professional responsibility guide per year / 2 training sessions per year Number of trained researchers on professional responsibility guide per year / 20 trained researchers per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
EXTENDED	The guide is available on https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-process/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/proces-de-cercetare/ (in Romanian). Training session on professional responsibility guide was organised on 12.03.2026 (24 participants). A second training was organised on 16.07.2026 (20 participants) Indicators • Guide on professional responsibility (both in Romanian and English) / 1 guide available and disseminated to researchers via institute's website https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-process/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/proces-de-cercetare/ (in Romanian) • Number of training sessions on professional responsibility guide per year / 2 training sessions (2026) • Number of trained researchers on professional responsibility guide per year / 36 trained researchers (2026)

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 6

Training courses and support for young researchers in order to submit project proposals within national and especially international competitions

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 4. Professional attitude	Semester 2/2024 - Semester 2/2025	Scientific Council	Number of training courses per year / 2 training sessions per year Number of trained researchers per year / 20 trained researchers per year

Current Status

Remarks

EXTENDED

An internal training course on submission of Horizon Europe proposals was held on 10.03.2026 with participation of 19 researchers. On the other hand, within the Talent Pass project one training topic was dedicated to Project Management comprising four training modules (22 participants): • Introduction to project management, April 14, 16, 2026 • Pre-award, April 15, 17, 2026 • Post award, April 20-21, 2026 • Transversal topics in research management, April 22-23, 2026 Indicators • Number of training courses per year / 2 training sessions (2026) • Number of trained researchers per year / 19 trained researchers (internal training); 22 trained researchers (external training) in 2026

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 7

Creating a section, on ECOIND website, dedicated to research funding process and management of research projects

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 4. Professional attitude

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Semester 2/2024 - Semester 2/2025

Responsible Unit

Scientific Council
Scientific Director

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Number of documents available within section / 2 new or updated documents per year
Number of users per year / 50 users per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	A specific section dedicated to funding process, management of research projects was created, and it is available on https://incdecoind.ro/managementul-proiectelor-de-cercetare/ (in Romanian) and https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-project-management/ (in English). The section is split in two categories: first one dedicated to announcement on project calls and the second one dedicated to sharing documents related to management of research projects. The documents available as are: • Public procurement within research projects. Short guide • ECOIND policy on intellectual property rights and exploitation of research results Starting with January 1, 2026 the online access to this specific section was monitored. For the period 01.01.2026-20.08.2026 a total number of 13 active users (8 for Romanian version and 5 for English version) were registered. Indicators • Number of documents available within section / 4 announcements on project calls and 2 document – an average of 3 per year • Number of users per year / 13 users for the period 01.01.2026-20.08.2026

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 8	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Translation to English of documents regarding contractual and legal obligations and their publication to institute's website and https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/ in order to attract researchers from abroad	(+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (+/-) 10. Non discrimination	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	HR compartment HRS4R Responsible	Documents regarding contractual obligations translated to English and published on institute's website and https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/ / 1 set of documents regarding contractual obligations translated to English and published online Trend in the share of applicants from abroad / Increasing trend of applicants from abroad

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	Law No. 183/2024 regulates the statute of research, development, and innovation personnel in Romania. Published in the Official Gazette on June 12, 2024, this legislative act establishes the legal framework for the rights, obligations, career progression, and evaluation of researchers. The Law No. 183/2024: • defines the specific categories of personnel within the national research and development (R&D) system. • outlines clear rules for promotion and achieving scientific research ranks. • sets standards for professional activities, working conditions, and researcher protection. • connects research activities directly to codes of ethics and professional conduct. In accordance with this law a new set of internal documents were developed and approved during 2025. The documents regarding contractual and legal obligations are available within the section https://incdecoind.ro/proces-de-cercetare/ (in Romanian) and https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-process/ (in English) Regarding the trend in share of applicants from abroad in the period September 2024 – July 2026 there were no applications from abroad Indicators • Documents regarding contractual obligations translated to English and published on institute's website and https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/ 1 set of documents regarding contractual obligations translated to English and published on https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-process/ • Trend in the share of applicants from abroad / only 1 candidate from abroad (2025)

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 9

Organising yearly training sessions on contractual and legal obligations within research activity

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously

Responsible Unit

Scientific Council
Juridical Office

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Number of training courses per year / 2 training sessions per year
Number of trained researchers per year / 20 trained researchers per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	Due to the change in legislation (Law No. 183/2024 regulates the statute of research, development, and innovation personnel in Romania. Published in the Official Gazette on June 12, 2024, this legislative act establishes the legal framework for the rights, obligations, career progression, and evaluation of researchers) a new set of internal documents related to contractual and legal obligations were developed during 2025. Starting with 2026 the first round of trainings started. As for 30.06.2026 an internal training was organised on contractual and legal obligations on 19.03.2026. A number of 15 researchers participated within the training. A second training is scheduled for the second semester of 2026. Indicators • Number of training courses per year / 1 training course (2026) • Number of trained researchers per year / 15 trained researchers (2026)

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 10

Maintain and develop the informatics integrated platform Microsoft Dynamics NAV

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 6. Accountability

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously

Responsible Unit

IT Compartment HRS4R Responsible

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Number of training courses per year / 3 training sessions per year Number of trained researchers employees per year / 30 trained employees per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	At the institute level, an integrated ERP-type IT Platform (Microsoft Dynamics NAV) operates, developed and updated through 2 institutional development projects (ECOSOFTIND, period 2018-2020 and ECOEFIND, period 2022-2024). The IT platform (NAV) ensures the integrated management of the operational management of INCD ECOIND both from a financial and accounting point of view and for the bureaucratic simplification of research-development and innovation activity. The 2 projects ensured the development of the platform, the necessary modules and functionalities, their testing and validation at the level of laboratories and departments within the institute and the expansion of the platform functionalities by integrating a Business Intelligence module (Microsoft Power BI). The Business Intelligence module integrated with data from the Microsoft Dynamics NAV IT platform allows the creation of reports on different departments and functional areas so as to satisfy the reporting and analysis needs in a manner structured by accessibility levels, allowing ECOIND staff to access and utilize information more easily. Trainings are provided to the newly hired staff or if any update occurs within the system. Indicators • Number of training courses per year / Training sessions after hiring or if changes occurs within the software • Number of trained employees per year / all personnel with NAV access is trained

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 11

Organising training sessions on social responsibility

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 6. Accountability	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	Scientific Council Scientific Director HRS4R Responsible	Number of training courses per year / 2 training sessions per year Number of trained researchers per year / 20 trained researchers per year
Current Status	Remarks		
IN PROGRESS	A document on principles of social responsibility in research was developed and made available to all staff (during 2025) via the institute's web page https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-process/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/proces-de-cercetare/ (in Romanian). Starting with 2026 training sessions on social responsibility were organised the first one held on 24.03.2026 with participation of 17 researchers. A second training session is scheduled for the second semester of 2026. Indicators • Number of training courses per year / 1 training (2026) • Number of trained researchers per year / 17 trained researchers (2026)		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 12

Development and dissemination to the personnel of a guide related to procurement process within research projects

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 6. Accountability

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Semester 2/2024 - Semester 1/2025

Responsible Unit

Procurement office
HRS4R responsible

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Share of researchers with access to guide on procurement process within research projects (both in Romanian and English) / 100% researchers with access to the guide on procurement process within research projects

PROPOSED ACTIONS

		Current Status	Remarks
		COMPLETED	A short guide on procurement process within research projects was developed and made publicly available on ECOIND web site at https://incdecoind.ro/managementul-proiectelor-de-cercetare/ (in Romanian) and https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-project-management/ (in English). Indicators • Share of researchers with access to guide on procurement process within research projects (both in Romanian and English) / 100% researchers with access to the guide on procurement process within research projects

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 13

Development and dissemination to researchers of a guide dedicated to good practices within research activity

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 7. Good practice in research			Share of researchers that can access the guide on good practices within research activity
(-/+) 36. Relation with supervisors		Scientific Council	(both in Romanian and English) / 100% researchers with access to the guide on good practices within research activity
(-/+) 37. Supervision and managerial duties	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2024	Scientific Director HRS4R responsible	
(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development			
(-/+) 40. Supervision			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	A guide on good practices within research activity as developed and made publicly available on ECOIND web site at https://incdecoind.ro/proces-de-cercetare/ (in Romanian) and https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-process/ (in English). Indicators • Share of researchers that can access the guide on good practices within research activity (both in Romanian and English) / 100% researchers with access to the guide on good practices within research activity		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 14

Setting up a methodology/specific procedure on data protection - GDPR

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 7. Good practice in research	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2024	Juridical Office HR Compartment HRS4R responsible	Share of employees that can access methodology/procedure on data protection — GDPR / 100% employees with access to GDPR methodology/procedure
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	A revised working procedure PL-RPD-01 was developed and applied starting with 30.06.2025. According to ECOIND internal procedure the PL-RPD-01 was disseminated to the whole ECOIND staff. Indicators • Share of employees that can access methodology/procedure on data protection – GDPR / 100% employees with access to GDPR methodology/procedure		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 15

Organising training sessions on response in case of disasters, work safety and prevention of risks

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 7. Good practice in research	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	Work safety and health specialist HRS4R Responsible	Number of training courses per year / 2 training sessions per year Share of trained researchers per year / 100% researchers trained
Current Status	Remarks		
IN PROGRESS	All personnel is trained on regular basis on work safety issues, risks prevention and response in case of disaster. For each person is available a fiche of work safety including all the relevant trainings undergone. Indicators • Number of training courses per year / at least two training sessions per year depending on the workplace • Share of trained researchers per year / 100% researchers trained		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 16

Training sessions on introduction to market of new technologies / products / services based on research results

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	CTT-ECOIND HRS4R Responsible	Number of training courses per year / 2 training sessions per year Number of trained researchers per year / 20 trained researchers per year
Current Status	Remarks		
IN PROGRESS	Starting with 2026 training sessions on introduction to market of new technologies / products / services based in research results were organised the first one held on 03.07.2026 with participation of 21 researchers. A second training session is scheduled for the second semester of 2026. Indicator(s)/target(s) • Number of training courses per year / 1 training session (2026) • Number of trained researchers per year / 21 trained researchers (2026)		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 17

Creating a section on CTT-ECOIND website dedicated to support commercialisation of research results and engagement of general public

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 9. Public engagement	Semester 1/2025 - Semester 2/2025	CTT-ECOIND HRS4R Responsible	Section on CTT-ECOIND website on commercialisation of research results and engagement of general public / 1 section on CTT – ECOIND website Number of users per year / 100 users per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
EXTENDED	The whole CTT-ECOIND website was updated/restructured during the reporting period. The research results are available on https://www.cttecoind.ro/rezultate-cdi-obtinute-din-proiecte-contracte-de-cercetare/ (in Romanian) and https://www.cttecoind.ro/rd-results-obtained-from-research-projects-contracts/ (in English). The patented research results are available on https://www.cttecoind.ro/rezultate-cdi-brevetate/ (in Romanian) and https://www.cttecoind.ro/en/rd-breveted-results/ (in English). The News section is dedicated to engagement of general public and is available on https://www.cttecoind.ro/en/news/ (in English) and https://www.cttecoind.ro/noutati/ (in Romanian) Due to the technical constraints the number of individual users could not be monitored and therefore was replaced with the number of visits. Monitoring of this indicator started in July 2025 Indicators • Section on CTT-ECOIND website on commercialisation of research results and engagement of general public / 1 section on CTT – ECOIND website • Number of users per year / 2252 visits per year (July 2025-June 2026)

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 18

Development and implementation of a specific procedure related to the way of signalling possible discrimination regardless of their type

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 10. Non discrimination	Semester 1/2025 - Semester 2/2025	Department of Management Systems Commission of ethics HRS4R Responsible	Share of staff with access to procedure on signalling possible discriminations / 100% employees with access to procedure on signalling possible discrimination
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	The following documents were developed and implemented during the initial review period: • Guide on preventing and combating sex-based harassment and moral harassment in the workplace • Code of ethical and integrity conduct ed.9/2025 • Integrity whistleblower guide 2025 All documents are publicly available at https://incdecoind.ro/en/ethics-and-integrity/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/etica-integritate/ (in Romanian) Indicators • Share of staff with access to procedure on signalling possible discriminations / 100% employees with access to procedure on signalling possible discrimination		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 19

Development of an online platform for filling in, handling and aggregation of self-assessment form

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 11. Evaluation/
appraisal systems

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Semester 2/2024 -
Semester 1/2025

Responsible Unit

IT
Compartment
Scientific
Council
Scientific
director

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Share of
researchers
with access to
online self-
assessment
platform / 100%
of researchers
with access to
online self-
assessment
platform

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
EXTENDED	Due to the fact that only in December 2025 were established procedures and criteria for evaluating research staff in accordance with Law 183/2024 the present action was extended. According to this new Law the evaluation of research staff is performed on a period from 3 to 5 years (4 years in the case of ECOIND). The first evaluation has to be performed at the end of 2029. The internal regulations are available on https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-process/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/proces-de-cercetare/ (in Romanian) On the other hand within ECOIND is implemented a periodic reporting system via institute's intranet. Every three months researchers has to report using a specific Excel file tailored to each research department specifics. Indicators • Share of researchers with access to online self-assessment platform / no online self- assesment form yet but 100% of researchers with access to intranet reporting files

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 20	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Elaboration of OTM-R policy	(-/+) 12. Recruitment	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025	HRS4R responsible HR compartment Scientific Council Steering Committee	OTM-R strategy/policy available both in Romanian and English / 1 OTM-R strategy / policy developed OTM-R strategy/policy published on HRS4R section on institute's website / 1 OTM-R strategy / policy publicly available Number of training courses for OTM-R / Two training sessions per year Number of staff following training in OTM-R / 20 trained researchers per year Quality
	(-/+) 13. Recruitment (Code)			
	(-/+) 14. Selection (Code)			
	(-/+) 15. Transparency (Code)			
	(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)			
	(++) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)			
	(-/+) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)			
	(+/-) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)			
	(++) 20. Seniority (Code)			
	(-/+) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)			
	(++) 27. Gender balance			

PROPOSED ACTIONS

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
			control system outlined within OTM-R policy / 1 revision of quality control system outlined with OTM-R policy OTM-R policy to include statement on the need for gender balanced commissions / 1 Statement on gender balanced commissions included within OTM-R policy

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	OTM-R Policy was developed and published on ECOIND website at https://incdecoind.ro/en/career/hrs4r-en/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/cariera/hrs4r-ro/ (in Romanian. First training course was held in 2025 on November 6 and November 12 with a total number of 13 participants. The second training course took place on March 17, 2026 with a number of 14 participants. A second training course for this year is scheduled for the second semester of 2026. The quality control system was revised in order to be in accordance with OTM-R policy and a statement of need for gender-balanced commissions was included within the OTM-R policy. Indicators • OTM-R strategy/policy available both in Romanian and English / 1 OTM-R strategy / policy developed • OTM-R strategy/policy published on HRS4R section on institute's website / Publicly available OTM-R strategy / policy on https://incdecoind.ro/en/career/hrs4r-en/ and https://incdecoind.ro/cariera/hrs4r-ro/ • Number of training courses for OTM-R / 1 training session (2025), 1 training session (2026) • Number of staff following training in OTM-R / 13 trained researchers (2025), 14 trained researchers (2026) • Quality control system outlined within OTM-R policy /Revised quality control system • OTM-R policy to include statement on the need for gender balanced commissions / Statement on gender balanced commissions included within OTM-R policy

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 21	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Regular use of https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/ not only in the case of vacant positions within research projects but for all available job positions.	(-/+) 12. Recruitment	Semester 2/2024 - Semester 2/2025	HRS4R responsible HR compartment	Documents regarding personnel recruitment/selection translated to English and published on institute's website and https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/ / 1 set of documents regarding contractual obligations translated to English and published online Web-based tools used for recruitment when a job vacancy is advertised (at least https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/ and https://jobs.mcid.gov.ro/) / 100% of job positions adverts published on web recruitment tools Share of job adverts posted on EURAXESS / 100 % of job adverts posted on EURAXESS
	(-/+) 13. Recruitment (Code)			
	(-/+) 14. Selection (Code)			
	(-/+) 15. Transparency (Code)			
	(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)			
	(++) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)			
	(+/-) 19. Recognition of			

PROPOSED ACTIONS

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
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qualifications
(Code)

Current Status	Remarks
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EXTENDED

Since the first trimester of 2025 almost all job adverts were translated to English and published on <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu> . Job adverts are published at least on ECOIND website, <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu> and <https://jobs.mcid.gov.ro>. Indicators • Documents regarding personnel recruitment/selection translated to English and published on institute's website and <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/> job adverts published on Euraxess • Web-based tools used for recruitment when a job vacancy is advertised (at least <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu> and <https://jobs.mcid.gov.ro>)/ 0% (2024), 100% (2025), 100% (2026) of job positions adverts published on web recruitment tools • Share of job adverts posted on EURAXESS / 0 % (2024), 80% (2025), 92% (2026) of job adverts posted on Euraxess

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 22	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)			
	GAP Principle(s)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	
Revising of PS-05 Human resources and IL-17 – Recruitment of research personnel procedure. Revisions are needed in some areas such as: upgrading the template of job adverts (to include data in future development perspectives), feedback given to unsuccessful candidates, setting up selection commissions, defining mentoring activities.	(-/+) 12. Recruitment	Department of Management Systems HRS4R responsible HR compartment	Share of staff with access to revised PS-05 Human resources and IL 17- Recruitment of research personnel procedures (date of last update, ensure that is sent to all staff) / Revised procedures , 100% researchers with access to revised procedures Number of training sessions on PS-05 Human resources and IL 17- Recruitment of research	
	(-/+) 13. Recruitment (Code)			
	(-/+) 14. Selection (Code)			
	(-/+) 15. Transparency (Code)			
	(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)			
	(++) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)			
	(+/-) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)			
	(++) 20. Seniority (Code)			
	(-/+) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)			

PROPOSED ACTIONS

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
			personnel procedures / 2 training sessions , 100% researchers trained

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
COMPLETED	Human resources related procedures were revised / modified in 2025. A new set of procedures are available to all researchers: • PL-RESU-01 Edition 1 Revision 0 / 10.02.2025 – Staffing plan • PL-RESU-02 Edition 1, Revision 2 / 20.03.2026 – Individual working contract • PL-RESU-03 Edition 1, Revision 0 / 29.08.2025 – General register of employees • PL-RESU-04 Edition 1, Revision 0 / 28.03.2025 - Organization and conduct of the competition to fill vacant positions • PL-RESU-05 Edition 1, Revision 0 / 28.11.2025 – Timesheet • PL-RESU-06 Edition 1, Revision 0 / 17.03.2025 – Delegation • PL-RESU-07 Edition 1, Revision 0 / 30.06.2025 – Trial period • PL-RESU-09 Edition 1, Revision 0 / 19.12.2025 – Activities planning • PL-RESU-10 Edition 1, Revision 0 / 28.11.2025 – Competence, training and awareness All personnel was trained on the newly adopted procedures. Indicators • Share of staff with access to revised PS-05 Human resources and IL 17-Recruitment of research personnel procedures (date of last update, ensure that is sent to all staff) / Revised procedures , 100% researchers with access to revised procedures • Number of training sessions on PS-05 Human resources and IL 17-Recruitment of research personnel procedures / 100% researchers trained in revised procedures

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 23	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Revising administrative tasks of human resources compartment in line with OTM-R mandatory requirements	(-/+) 12. Recruitment	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2024	Department of Management Systems HR compartment	Revised administrative tasks of human resources compartment in line with OTM-R mandatory requirements (date of last update, ensure that is sent to all staff) / 1 Revised administrative tasks for HR personnel Number of training courses for HR staff / 2 training sessions per year
	(-/+) 13. Recruitment (Code)			
	(-/+) 14. Selection (Code)			
	(-/+) 15. Transparency (Code)			
	(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)			
	(+++) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)			
	(+/-) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)			

PROPOSED ACTIONS

		Current Status	Remarks
		EXTENDED	All Human Resources related procedures (see action 22) were revised also in order to adapt administrative tasks of human resources compartment in line with OTM-R requirements. Two persons for HR compartment participated and successfully completed external accredited by the Romanian Ministry of Work and Ministry of Education trainings. Indicators • Revised administrative tasks of human resources compartment in line with OTM-R mandatory requirements (date of last update, ensure that is sent to all staff) / Revised administrative tasks for HR personnel • Number of training courses for HR staff / two persons trained

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 24

Developing evaluation competences of selection commissions members (trainings, courses)

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 14. Selection (Code)	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	Scientific Council HR compartment HRS4R responsible	Number of training courses on competences evaluation for selection commissions members / Two training sessions per year Number of staff following trainings on competences evaluation / 10 trained researchers per year on competences evaluation Statistics on the composition of commissions / 1 statistic per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status

Remarks

NEW

Due to the newly adopted Law 183/2024, Action 24 was revised and new internal regulations on procedure for hiring and promotion of research staff were developed at the end of 2025 and are available <https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-process/> (in English) and <https://incdecoind.ro/proces-de-cercetare/> (in Romanian) According to this new regulations and requirements of Law 183/2024: Recruitment Commission • The Scientific Director proposes the members of the Recruitment Commission and the Appeals Commission. • Both commissions are approved by the Scientific Council and formally appointed by decision of the General Director. • For R4 and R3 positions, the Recruitment Commission consists of five scientific researchers or university professors, plus a secretary. At least three members must be external to INCD ECOIND and hold an academic/research rank equal to or higher than the advertised position. • For R2 and R1 positions, the Commission consists of three members, including a Chair, plus a secretary. • Members must have recognized professional integrity, appropriate academic/professional rank, and no conflicts of interest or incompatibilities. • Individuals with disciplinary sanctions or personal, financial, or family relationships with candidates are excluded. • Any conflict of interest must be declared immediately, and affected members are replaced. Promotion Examination Commission • The Scientific Director proposes the members, who are approved by the Scientific Council and appointed by the General Director. • For R4 and R3 promotions, the Commission consists of five members, at least three from outside INCD ECOIND. • For R2 and R1 promotions, the Commission consists of at least three members, including a Chair. • Decisions are taken by open vote.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status

Remarks

Indicators • Statistics on the composition of commissions / 1
statistic per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 25

Creating a section on the institute's website dedicated to mobility opportunities

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	Scientific Council Scientific director IT department HRS4R responsible	Website section of mobility opportunities / 1 website section on mobility opportunities
(-/+) 29. Value of mobility			Number of documents available within website section / 10
(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development			new/updated documents on mobility opportunities per year Number of users per year / 50 users per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	Due to the redesign of the ECOIND website the section dedicated to mobility opportunities was launched at the end of 2nd semester of 2025. As for 30.06.2026 the section comprises only two mobility opportunities linked with Talent Pass project https://www.talentpass-project.eu/ However, it should be mentioned that within this particular project, in 2026, ECOIND participated onsite to: • training modules dedicated to Project Management (2 participants) and Digital Skills (4 participants) • secondments (4 participants). In terms of individual participants to training modules and secondments there are: 2 administrative staff and 7 researchers Starting with January 1, 2026 the online access to the mobility opportunities section was monitored. For the period 01.01.2026-20.08.2026 a total number of 15 active users were registered. Indicators • Website section of mobility opportunities / 1 website section on mobility opportunities https://incdecoind.ro/mobilitati/ (in Romanian) and https://incdecoind.ro/en/mobilities/ (in English) • Number of documents available within website section / 2 mobility opportunities announcements, 9 participants to mobility (2026) • Number of users per year / 15 users for the period 01.01.2026-20.08.2026

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 26	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Increasing researchers number by attracting additional funding, other national and European funding	(+) 22. Recognition of the profession	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	HR compartment HRS4R responsible Selection commissions	Trend in the share of applicants from outside ECOIND / Share of applicants from outside ECOIND calculated on yearly basis, positive trend in the share of applicants from outside ECOIND Document the list of candidates that applied to advertised positions, their compliance to selection criteria / 1 document per year Evaluation of job advertisements in order to ensure that they are clear, concise and outline the specific requirements and benefits of the advertised position / 1 updated template for job adverts per year Number of locations where job vacancies are advertised / at least 3 locations for each job advert: https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu , https://jobs.mcid.gov.ro/ and ECOIND website Feedback given to candidates on the

PROPOSED ACTIONS

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
			strengths and weaknesses of their application / 100% of candidates to receive feedback on their application

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	Between October 2024 and July 2026 a total number of 65 job adverts were published: Year Total job announcements Euraxess website https://jobs.mcid.gov.ro/ ECOIND website 2024 (oct-dec) 14 - - 14 2025 25 20 25 25 2026 (jan-july) 26 24 26 26 The list of candidates was documented and job adverts are published on https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu, https://jobs.mcid.gov.ro/ and ECOIND website. A guide on Euraxess use tailored to ECOIND needs was developed and used for publishing of job adverts. According to the new set of HR procedures feedback is given to candidates. Indicators • Trend in the share of applicants / 25 candidates (September – December 2024), 49 candidates (2025), 20 candidates (January – July 2026) • Document the list of candidates that applied to advertised positions, their compliance to selection criteria / 1 document per year • Evaluation of job advertisements in order to ensure that they are clear, concise and outline the specific requirements and benefits of the advertised position / guide on publishing job adverts on Euraxess • Number of locations where job vacancies are advertised / https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu, https://jobs.mcid.gov.ro/ and ECOIND website • Feedback given to candidates on the strengths and weaknesses of their application / HR procedures modified in order to offer feedback to candidates on their application

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 27

Development of an internal regulation on remote working for research activities

GAP Principle(s)

Timing (at least
by year's
quarter/semester)

Responsible
Unit

Indicator(s) /
Target(s)

(+/-) 23. Research
environment

Semester 1/2024 -
Semester 2/2024

Department
of
Management
Systems HR
compartment

(-/+) 24. Working conditions

Share of
researcher with
access to
internal
regulation on
remote working
(both in
Romanian and
English) / 1
internal
regulation
developed and
implemented,
100% of staff
with access to
internal
regulation on
remote working

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
COMPLETED	According to article 13 of Collective Labour Contract for the period 2025-2027: The employer may introduce individualised working arrangements for all employees, including those on carers' leave, either at the employer's initiative or at the employee's request, for a limited period of time. These arrangements may include flexible working hours, combining a fixed period during which all employees are present at work with a variable period allowing employees to choose their start and finish times, while completing their daily working hours. Individualised working arrangements require the approval of the Institute's management, based on the employee's request and the agreement of the direct supervisor. Any refusal must be justified in writing within five working days of receiving the request. Where such arrangements are agreed for a limited period, employees are entitled to return to their original working schedule at the end of the agreed period or earlier if the circumstances that justified the flexible arrangement change. Flexible working arrangements may include remote work, flexible schedules, individualised working hours, or reduced working time. Indicators Share of researcher with access to internal regulation on remote working (both in Romanian and English) / art 13 of Collective Labour Contract for the period 2025-2027, 100% of staff with access to internal regulation on remote working

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 28

Development on an internal regulation on sabbatical leave

GAP Principle(s)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Responsible Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

(-/+) 24. Working conditions

Semester 1/2025 - Semester 2/2025

Department of Management Systems HR compartment

Share of staff with access to internal regulation on sabbatical leave (both in Romanian and English) / 1 internal regulation developed and implemented, 100% of staff with access to internal regulation on sabbatical leave

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
COMPLETED	According to article 36 of Collective Labour Contract for the period 2025-2027: Employees may be granted unpaid leave, upon request and with the employer's approval, for personal reasons, for a maximum of 30 working days per year. This leave may be taken independently of annual paid leave and may be granted in separate periods. The 30-day limit does not apply in the following cases: • caring for a sick child over the age of three, provided the other parent is not taking unpaid leave for the same reason; • medical treatment abroad or accompanying a spouse or close family member (child, sibling, or parent) receiving treatment abroad, subject to the required legal documentation; • participation in study scholarships or professional training programmes abroad that are relevant to the employee's work, subject to the recommendation of the relevant manager and approval by the General Manager In exceptional and duly justified cases, the General Manager may approve unpaid leave exceeding 30 working days, up to a maximum of one year. Indicators • Share of staff with access to internal regulation on sabbatical leave (both in Romanian and English) / art 35 of Collective Labour Contract for the period 2025-2027, 100% of staff with access to internal regulation on sabbatical leave

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 29

Assuring suitable working conditions for researchers, including for disabled researchers

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 24. Working conditions	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	HR compartment HRS4R responsible Selection commissions	1 annual survey among ECOIND staff on working conditions quality / 90% of ECOIND staff satisfied with provided working conditions

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status

Remarks

IN PROGRESS

One survey per year was carried out and the results are available on <https://incdecoind.ro/en/career/hrs4r-en/> (in English) and <https://incdecoind.ro/cariera/hrs4r-ro/> (in Romanian). The following standard questions were selected from Internal Survey October 2024 to calculate the Employee Satisfaction Index (ESI)

- Question no. 6: On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with your work experience?
- Question no. 8: On a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent does the job meet your expectations?
- Question no. 9: On a scale of 1 to 10, how close is your current job to your ideal one?

ESI was calculated as $[(\text{Mean Score}-1)/9] \times 100$. ESI value for October 2024 internal survey was 73.17% (41 respondents) Questions were modified for the following surveys in order to obtain an accurate value for ESI. The following questions were selected from Internal Survey March 2025

- Question no. 49: Please rate the following statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree: INCD ECOIND provides a stimulating research environment by offering equipment, facilities, and opportunities, including for remote collaboration within research networks
- Question no. 50: Please rate the following statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree: INCD ECOIND ensures compliance with health and safety regulations in its research activities
- Question no. 51: Please rate the following statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree: INCD ECOIND ensures appropriate working conditions for researchers and offers flexibility for high-performance research, in accordance with existing legislation and the provisions of the collective labour agreement.

ESI was calculated as $[(\text{Mean Score}-1)/4] \times 100$. ESI value for March 2025 internal survey was 75.18% (45

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
	respondents) For the Internal Survey February 2026 the following questions were selected to determine the ESI: • Question no. 18: Please rate on a scale of 1 to 5—where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree—the development of a research career development policy. • Question no. 22: Please rate the following statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree: INCD ECOIND provides a stimulating research environment by offering equipment, facilities, and opportunities, including for remote collaboration within research networks. • Question no. 23: Please rate the following statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree: INCD ECOIND ensures appropriate working conditions for researchers and offers flexibility for high-performance research, in accordance with existing legislation and the provisions of the collective labour agreement. ESI was calculated as $[(\text{Mean Score}-1)/4] \times 100$. ESI value for March 2025 internal survey was 78.44 % (75 respondents) Proposed indicator(s)/target(s) • Annual survey among ECOIND staff on working conditions quality / Employee Satisfaction Index 73.17% (2024), 75.18% (2025), 78.44% (2026)

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 30	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Elaboration of a guide dedicated to development opportunities for ECOIND researchers career	(+/-) 25. Stability and permanence of employment	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	Scientific council Scientific director HR compartment HRS4R responsible	Share of researchers with access to the guide dedicated to development opportunities for ECOIND researchers (both in Romanian and English)/ 1 guide developed and spread among ECOIND researchers, 100 % of researchers with access to the guide Share of women applicants / Share of women applicants calculated on a yearly basis (not a target indicator, the results will be used for monitoring purposes) Share
	(++) 27. Gender balance			
	(-/+) 28. Career development			
	(-/+) 30. Access to career advice			
	(-/+) 36. Relation with supervisors			
	(-/+) 37. Supervision and managerial duties			
	(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development			
	(-/+) 40. Supervision			

PROPOSED ACTIONS

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
			of applicants from ethnic minorities / Share of ethnic minorities applicants calculate on a yearly basis (not a target indicator, the results will be used for monitoring purposes) Trend in the share of applicants among underrepresented groups / Share of applicants from underrepresented groups (ethnic minorities, disabled persons, foreign researchers) calculated on a yearly basis, positive trend in the share of applicants among underrepresented

PROPOSED ACTIONS

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
			groups (not a target indicator, the results will be used for monitoring purposes)
Current Status	Remarks		
IN PROGRESS	A guide on research development career opportunities was developed and made publicly available on https://incdecoind.ro/en/hr-policies/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/politici-hr/ (in Romanian). Regarding the share of women applicants to jobs or promotions within ECOIND the results are 20 (from 25) for 2024, 34 (from 53) for 2025 and 12 (from 20) for 2026. There were no applicants from ethnic minorities or underrepresented groups. Only 1 foreign researcher applied in 2025 Indicators • Share of researchers with access to the guide dedicated to development opportunities for ECOIND researchers (both in Romanian and English) / 1 guide developed and spread among ECOIND researchers, 100 % of researchers with access to the guide • Share of women applicants / 80% (2024), 64% (2025), 60% (2026) • Share of applicants from ethnic minorities / no applicants • Trend in the share of applicants among underrepresented groups / only 1 foreign researcher applied in 2025		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 31

Periodic negotiation of individual labour contracts in order to minimise inflation negative effects and/or to financially stimulate researchers

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 26. Funding and salaries	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	Top management HR compartment	Trend in researchers salaries / Yearly increase of average salaries per category of employees (R1 to R4 and technical/administrative personnel, positive trend of staff salaries

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
IN PROGRESS	The average salaries for years 2024 and 2025 per category of employees are presented below (data extracted from ECOIND activity reports available in Romanian at https://incdecoind.ro/raport-de-activitate/): Average staff salary: 2024 (9254 RON) and 2025 (9514 RON) □ increase 2.81% • R4 (CS I) – 19002 RON (2024) – 18674 (2025) □ decrease 1.73% • R3 (CS II) – 13117 RON (2024) - 13624 (2025) □ increase 3.86% • R2 (CS III) – 11843 RON (2024) – 11855 (2025) □ increase 0.10% • R1 (CS) – 7342 RON (2024) – 7961 (2025) □ increase 8.43% • R1 (Assistant Researcher/ACS) – 7423 RON (2024) – 7761 (2025) □ increase 4.55% • Auxiliary staff / R&D Activity – 6420 RON (2024) – 6783 (2025) □ increase 5.66% • Administrative (High Education) – 9747 RON (2024) – 11990 (2025) □ increase 23.01% • Administrative (Medium Education) – 6431 RON (2024) – 6801 (2025) □ increase 9.96% • Technician (T I) – 6986 RON (2024) – 7127 RON (2025) □ increase 2.02% • Technician (T II) – 6573 RON (2024) – 6832 RON (2025) □ increase 3.94% • Technician (T III) – 5787 RON (2024) – 6535 RON (2025) □ increase 12.93% • Technician (TS) – 5687 RON (2024) – 5819 (2025) □ increase 2.32% Indicators • Trend in researchers salaries / yearly calculation of average salaries per category of employees (R1 to R4 and technical/administrative personnel) for 2024 and 2025, positive trend of staff salaries +2.81%

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 32		Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Elaboration of a policy on research career development including: Development of a draft framework and content for an individual development plan for research staff that is flexible enough to take into account individual qualification levels, subject specifics and the individual needs of research staff; Development of a plan to strengthen the management skills of research staff who are new to management positions, taking into account the specifics of the different levels of management; Implementation of individual development plans and their use in regular staff appraisals and the provision of two-way feedback between supervisor and employee	GAP Principle(s)			
	(-/+) 28. Career development			Share/number of researchers with access to documented policy on research career development (available both in Romanian and English) / 1
	(-/+) 30. Access to career advice			developed documented policy spread to all researchers
	(-/+) 33. Teaching			Career advice system in place / 1 implemented
	(-/+) 36. Relation with supervisors	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025	Scientific council Scientific director HRS4R responsible	career advice system, 10 researchers per year benefits from implemented career advice system
	(-/+) 37. Supervision and managerial duties			
	(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development			
	(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development			
	(-/+) 40. Supervision			

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
EXTENDED	A documented policy on research career development was developed is publicly available to all researchers at https://incdecoind.ro/en/hr-policies/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/politici-hr/ (in Romanian). The revision of HR procedures led to the update of job description and experienced researchers has now in their job description responsibilities for advising, supporting and mentor early career researchers (especially ECOIND employees that are PhD students). The following researchers are benefited during the initial review period from support for their PhD studies: • Serban Gabriel Valentin • Ion Daniela • Cojocaru Victor Constantin (also secondee within Talent Pass project) • Cimpean Ioana Antonia • Cernica Georgiana • Constantinov Florenta Daniela • Petre Valentin Andreea • Manea Nicoleta Ana-Maria • Ana-Maria Fulgheci • Laura Feodorov • Anca Maria Patrascu • Cristian Constantin (also secondee within Talent Pass project) • Simona Mariana Calinescu • Gheorghita Tanase • Gavrilă Olguta • Buse Tatiana • Diana Maria Puiu Indicators • Share/number of researchers with access to documented policy on research career development (available both in Romanian and English) / 1 developed documented policy posted on ECOIND website • Career advice system in place / Job descriptions for senior researchers revised in order to include responsibilities on advising early career researchers, 17 researchers per year benefits from implemented career advice system

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 33		Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Elaboration of an procedure/internal regulation focussed on mentors activity in each stage of research career including: Setting up the framework for selection of mentors (from R4 researchers) Types of mentoring activities Setting up the framework for monitoring and evaluation	GAP Principle(s)			
	(-/+) 28. Career development			Share/number of researchers with access to internal procedure/regulation focussed on
	(-/+) 30. Access to career advice		Scientific council	mentors activity in each stage of
	(-/+) 33. Teaching		Scientific director	research career / 1 developed
	(-/+) 36. Relation with supervisors	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025	Department of Management Systems HRS4R responsible	procedure, 100% of researchers with access to the
	(-/+) 37. Supervision and managerial duties			procedure, 10 young researchers per year benefits from mentor support
	(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development			
	(-/+) 40. Supervision			

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
EXTENDED	A guide on mentorship was developed and made publicly available on https://incdecoind.ro/politici-hr/ (in Romanian) and https://incdecoind.ro/en/hr-policies/ (in English). Starting with beginning of 2026 a number of 5 secondees were selected by Talent Pass project and are benefiting of mentors both in host and home institution: • Ioana Alexandra Ionescu - researcher • Cristian Constantin – researcher • Victor Constantin Cojocaru – researcher • Corina Alexandra Stoian – administrative staff • Leonard Virgiliu Paun – administrative staff On the other hand, the heads of laboratories / departments have the responsibility to mentor young early stage researchers from their departments especially advising the mentees during their PhD studies. The following researchers are benefited during the initial review period from support for their PhD studies: • Serban Gabriel Valentin • Ion Daniela • Cojocaru Victor Constantin (also secondees within Talent Pass project) • Cimpean Ioana Antonia • Cernica Georgiana • Constantinov Florenta Daniela • Petre Valentin Andreea • Manea Nicoleta Ana-Maria • Ana-Maria Fulgheci • Laura Feodorov • Anca Maria Patrascu • Cristian Constantin (also secondees within Talent Pass project) • Simona Mariana Calinescu • Gheorghita Tanase • Gavrilă Olguta • Buse Tatiana • Diana Maria Puiu Indicators • Share/number of researchers with access to internal procedure/regulation focussed on mentors activity in each stage of research career / 1 developed guide on mentorship, 100% of researchers with access to the guide, 19 researchers and 2 administrative staff benefits from mentor support during the initial review period

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 34

Organising training courses on research methodologies, planning of research projects, ethical aspects of research projects

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 28. Career development			
(-/+) 30. Access to career advice			Number of training courses per year / 2
(-/+) 36. Relation with supervisors	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025;	Scientific council	training sessions per year
(-/+) 37. Supervision and managerial duties	Continuously	Scientific director	Number of trained researchers per year / 20
(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development			trained researchers per year
(-/+) 40. Supervision			

PROPOSED ACTIONS

		Current Status	Remarks
		IN PROGRESS	A training module on ethical aspects of research projects was organised in April 2026 (within the Talent Pass project) – Transversal Topics in Research Management with the participation (both onsite and online) of 22 researchers. Another training dedicated to research methodologies was internally organised on 23.07.2026 with participation of 23 researchers. Indicators • Number of training courses per year / Two training sessions (2026) • Number of trained researchers per year / 37 trained researchers (2026)

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 35

Elaboration of a documented ECOIND policy on intellectual property rights and exploitation of research results

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights	Semester 1/2025 - Semester 2/2025	Scientific council Scientific director Department of Management Systems Juridical Office CTT-ECOIND	Share or researchers with access to documented policy on IPR and exploitation of research results (both in Romanian and English) / 1 developed documented policy, 100% of researchers with access to the policy
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	The document is publicly available on https://incdecoind.ro/en/research-project-management/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/managementul-proiectelor-de-cercetare/ (in Romanian). Indicators • Share or researchers with access to documented policy on IPR and exploitation of research results (both in Romanian and English) / 1 developed documented policy, 100% of researchers with access to the policy		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 36

Training of early stage researchers on intellectual property rights and exploitation of research results

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights	Semester 1/2025 - Semester 2/2025	Scientific council Scientific director Department of Management Systems Juridical Office CTT-ECOIND	Number of training courses per year / 2 training sessions per year Number of trained researchers per year / 20 trained researchers per year
Current Status	Remarks		
EXTENDED	Training session on intellectual property rights and exploitation of research results was organised on 03.07.2026 (21 participants). A second training is scheduled for the second semester of 2026 Indicators • Number of training courses per year / 1 training session (2026) • Number of trained researchers per year / 21 trained researchers (2026)		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 37

Elaboration of a ECOIND internal procedure on co-authorship

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 32. Co-authorship	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2024	Scientific council Scientific director Department of Management Systems	Share of researchers with access to internal procedure on co-authorship (both in Romanian and English) / 1 developed procedure, 100% of researchers with access to procedure
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	The Co-authorship guide is publicly available on https://incdecoind.ro/en/freedom-to-research/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/libertatea-de-a-cerceta/ (in Romanian). Indicators • Share of researchers with access to internal procedure on co-authorship (both in Romanian and English) / 1 guide, 100% of researchers with access to procedure		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 38

Training for implementation of co-authorship procedure

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 32. Co-authorship	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025	Scientific council Scientific director Department of Management Systems	Number of training courses per year / 2 training sessions per year Number of trained researchers per year / 20 trained researchers per year
Current Status	Remarks		
EXTENDED	The first training course on co-authorship guide took place on 20.11.2025 with participation of 15 researchers. The second one took place on 24.03.2026 with participation of 17 researchers. A second training for 2026 is scheduled for the second semester of the year Indicators • Number of training courses per year / 1 training (2025), 1 training (2026) • Number of trained researchers per year / 15 trained researchers (2025), 17 trained researchers (2026)		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 39

Developing professional trainings and learning packages specific to each career stage

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 33. Teaching			Professional training packages specific to each career stage (available both in Romanian and English) / 2
(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Semester 2/2024 - Semester 1/2025	Scientific council Scientific director	professional training packages per year, 100% of researchers with access to training packages

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
EXTENDED	A special open shared folder was created in the intranet for professional trainings and learning packages. The following support materials are available: • Professional responsibility for researchers (in English) (R1-R4) • Horizon Europe applications (in English) (R1-R2) • Guide on Euraxess (in Romanian) (R1-R4) • Mentorship (in English) (R1-R4) • Research methodologies (in English) (R1-R2) • Sampling and measurement of air samples (in Romanian and English) (R1-R2) The folder is accessible via local network for all ECOIND personnel. Indicators • Professional training packages specific to each career stage (available both in Romanian and English) / 5 professional training packages, 100% of researchers with access to training packages

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 40

Organising training sessions on the internal regulations and structure responsible for solving complains/appeals

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	Top management Commission of ethics Scientific council HRS4R responsible	Number of training courses per year / 2 training sessions per year Number of trained researchers per year / 50 trained researchers per year Statistics on complaints / 1 statistic per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
EXTENDED	The following documents were developed and implemented during the initial review period: • Guide on preventing and combating sex-based harassment and moral harassment in the workplace • Code of ethical and integrity conduct ed.9/2025 • Integrity whistleblower guide 2025 All documents are publicly available at https://incdecoind.ro/en/ethics-and-integrity/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/etica-integritate/ (in Romanian) On the other hand four new internal procedures were developed for: • Solving appeals PL-PRMK-02 Edition 3, Revision 0 / 28.11.2025 • Signalling irregularities PS-24 Edition 1, Revision 0 / 28.05.2025 • Management of deviations PS-25 Edition 3, Revision 0 / 31.10.2025 • Investigation, treatment and reporting of incidents PS-38 Edition 3, Revision 0 / 22.05.2025 All ECOIND personnel was trained on the above mentioned documents and on modalities to complain or appeal. Yearly statistics are presented within annual reports available on the same links. Indicators • Number of training courses per year / Annual training sessions • Number of trained researchers per year / all researchers trained • Statistics on complaints / 1 statistic per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 41

Organising periodic information sessions on results of information, consultation and decision making bodies

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025; Continuously	Top management Commission of ethics Scientific council HRS4R responsible	Number of information sessions per year / 2 information sessions per year, 100% of staff with access to information sessions
Current Status	Remarks		
EXTENDED	Each structural unit of the institute is represented within the Steering Committee which meet at regular basis (at least once per month) Their representatives communicate all Steering Committee decisions to the entire personnel after each meeting. On the other hand, each research structure is represented within the Scientific Council and its decisions are also communicated / disseminated / discussed by the representatives in their specific research structure. The representatives of employees are present to each meeting of the Administration Council and are communicating decisions to the employees. Indicators • Number of information sessions per year /at least 1 per month, 100% of staff with access to information sessions		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 42

Setting up and operationalise institute's ombudsperson (external actor)

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025

Responsible Unit

Top management

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Ombudsperson documented responsibilities and rights / 1 ombudsperson status, 100% of staff with access to ombudsperson status
Operationalised institutional ombudsperson / 1 institutional ombudsperson

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
COMPLETED	An institutional ombudsperson (external actor) was appointed:: attorney Cornelia Beatrice Gabriela Dinu. The ombudsperson responsibilities and rights were developed and published on the insititute web-siet (both in Romanian and English) on https://incdecoind.ro/cariera/ombudsman-ul-incd-ecoind/ (Romanian version) and https://incdecoind.ro/en/career/ombudsman-of-the-incd-ecoind/ (English version) assuring 100% of staff access to ombudsperson status Indicators: Documented responsibilities and rifhts / Ombudsperson status published on institute's website, 100% staff with access to ombudsperson status Operationalised institutional ombudsperson / Attorney Cornelia Beatrice Gabriela Dinu appointed as ECOIND ombudsperson

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 43

Review and enhance the existing HR policy and performance evaluation system to embed a talent management function. Framework and tools to attract, develop, and retain foreign researchers

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 12. Recruitment	Semester 1/2024 - Semester 2/2025	HRS4R responsible HR compartment Scientific Council Steering Committee	Revised HR policy available on institute's website (both in Romanian and English)/ 1 revised HR policy published on institute website
(-/+) 13. Recruitment (Code)			Selected tools for attracting foreign researchers / Set of tools available, 1 attracted foreign researcher per year List of Romanian diaspora researchers in order to enhance collaboration and facilitate their recruitment / 1 updated list

PROPOSED ACTIONS

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
			of Romanian researchers per year, 1 attracted Romanian researcher from diaspora per year

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
EXTENDED	A revised HR policy was developed for the period 2025-2029 and is publicly available on https://incdecoind.ro/en/hr-policies/ (in English) and (in Romanian) including: • Human Resources Strategy • Human Resources Objectives • Human Resources Action Plan However there was only 1 applicant from abroad registered in 2025 even if the job adverts were posted on Euraxess, national website for research jobs and ECOIND website. A list of Romanian diaspora researchers is still missing and will be developed in the near future. Even if through various international events were used to advert career opportunities in ECOIND there is no interest for Romanian diaspora to come back to national research system. Proposed indicator(s)/target(s) • Revised HR policy available on institute's website (both in Romanian and English)/ 1 revised HR policy published on institute website • Selected tools for attracting foreign researchers / use of Euraxess, national website for research jobs and ECOIND website, no foreign researcher was attracted • List of Romanian diaspora researchers in order to enhance collaboration and facilitate their recruitment / not achieved

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 44

Development of Gender Equality Strategy and Gender Equality Plan for the period 2026-2029

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 10. Non discrimination	Semester 1/2026	Committee for Gender Equality	Gender Equality Strategy and Plan for the period 2026-2029 / 100% of staff with access to Gender Equality Strategy and Plan
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW	A new version of the Gender Equality Strategy and Plan was developed for the period 2026-2029. The strategy and plan were published on institute's website https://incdecoind.ro/strategia-de-egalitate-de-gen-si-planul-de-egalitate-de-gen/ (Romanian) and https://incdecoind.ro/en/gender-equality-strategy-and-gender-equality-plan/ (English). Indicator Gender Equality Strategy and Plan approved by the Board of Administration on 26 February 2026 / Gender Equality Strategy and Plan published on institute's website assuring 100% staff access		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 45

Development of a guide on preventing and combating sex based harassment and moral harassment in the workplace

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 10. Non discrimination	Semester 2/2025	Commision of Ethics	Guide on preventing and combating sex based harassment and moral harassment in the workplace / published on institute's website assuring 100% staff access, annual report for 2025 available
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW	A guide on preventing and combating sex based harassment and moral harassment in the workplace was developed in 2025 and made publicly available on https://incdecoind.ro/en/ethics-and-integrity/ (in English) and https://incdecoind.ro/etica-integritate/ (in Romanian) Indicator Guide on preventing and combating sex based harassment and moral harassment in the workplace / published on institute's website assuring 100% staff access, annual report for 2025 available		

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 46

Organise yearly info session by the institutional ombudsperson

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals	Semester 2/2026 - Semester 1/2029	Ombudsperson	Ombudsperson yearly activity report / 1 info session per year
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW	Description Organising yearly info session on institutional ombudsperson activity Indicator Ombudsperson yearly activity report / 1 info session per year		

Unselected principles:

The extended version of the reviewed strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers in your organisation over the next three 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. Multiple links must be comma separated. *:

URL *:

<https://incdecoind.ro/en/career/hrs4r-en/> (<https://incdecoind.ro/en/career/hrs4r-en/>)

Please also indicate how your organisation is working towards / has developed an open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment policy (OTM-R). Although there may be some overlap with the range of actions listed above in the action plan (as they emerged from the gap analysis), please provide a short commentary demonstrating the progress made.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (initial phase)

The recruitment and selection process of ECOIND research personnel is respecting national legislation and internal regulations (IL – 17 Recruitment of research personnel procedure) taking into consideration transparency, non-discrimination, equal opportunities principles and quality standards specific to the job position. GAP analysis identified the need to revise both PS-05 Human resources and IL-17 Recruitment of research personnel procedures as well as to revise administrative tasks of human resources compartment in line with OTM-R mandatory requirements. Since ECOIND has not yet a documented OTM-R strategy/policy in place, the implementation period for the initial action plan will be mainly devoted to the elaboration of OTM-R policy/strategy, its implementation and also development/implementation of additional documents/methodologies/procedures (described within the actions sections) needed for smoother implementation of OTM-R strategy. Internal training on OTM-R policy and principles as well as for all related documents / procedures will also be organised. All proposed actions attempt a coherent approach that derive from the results of the stakeholder consultations, GAP analysis and OTM-R checklist.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (internal review for interim assessment)

The implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan has progressed well during the initial review period. A significant number of actions have been completed or are currently being implemented according to the established timetable. Particular progress has been achieved in updating the institutional regulatory framework to align with the new Romanian Law No. 183/2024, strengthening transparency and accessibility through the development of dedicated website sections, publishing policies and guidance documents in both Romanian and English, and expanding training activities for researchers and administrative staff.

The institute has also made substantial progress in implementing Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) principles by revising recruitment procedures, adopting a dedicated OTM-R policy, improving the composition and governance of recruitment and promotion commissions, and increasing the publication of vacancies through EURAXESS and other international platforms.

Several actions have already been completed, particularly those related to developing institutional guides, implementing GDPR and anti-discrimination procedures, establishing the institutional ombudsperson, and improving access to policies and procedures. Other actions remain in progress because they require longer implementation periods, depend on the availability of longitudinal data (e.g. recruitment trends, mobility, performance evaluation), or are linked to the gradual implementation of the new legislative framework.

Overall, the implementation confirms the institute's strong commitment to continuously improving human resources management in research, strengthening research integrity and transparency, supporting researchers' career development, and fostering an attractive and supportive research environment. During the next implementation period, efforts will focus on completing the remaining actions, monitoring the impact of the newly adopted policies through measurable indicators, further increasing international recruitment and mobility, and evaluating the long-term effectiveness of the implemented measures.

On the other hand it should be mentioned that the implementation team was modified in early 2026 in order to better assure:

- Broad institutional representation: The team includes members from scientific, administrative, and support functions, ensuring that HRS4R implementation considers all institutional perspectives.
- Strong management commitment: Senior management is actively involved through the Scientific Director, Economic Director, and department heads, demonstrating institutional ownership of the process.
- Balanced researcher representation: Researchers from all four European research career stages (R1–R4) are represented, allowing the Action Plan to reflect the needs of early-career and experienced researchers alike.
- Gender balance: The team includes both women and men across scientific and administrative positions, contributing to diverse perspectives in decision-making.
- Cross-functional expertise: The inclusion of HR, legal, finance, IT, procurement, ethics, technology transfer, and occupational health and safety supports comprehensive implementation of the HR Strategy.
- Inclusion of branch offices: Representation from the Râmnicu Vâlcea and Timișoara branches helps ensure that HRS4R implementation addresses the needs of the entire institute rather than only the headquarters.

Ideally, the extended version of the reviewed OTM-R policy and actions should be published on your organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the OTM-R dedicated web page(s) if it differs from the one where the reviewed strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers is located. Multiple links must be comma separated.

URL:

<https://incdecoind.ro/en/career/hrs4r-en/>, <https://incdecoind.ro/cariera/hrs4r-ro/> (<https://incdecoind.ro/en/career/hrs4r-en/>,
<https://incdecoind.ro/cariera/hrs4r-ro/>)

4. Implementation process

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

The implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan at the National Research and Development Institute for Industrial Ecology – ECOIND has been carried out through a structured, institution-wide process based on continuous monitoring, stakeholder involvement, and regular evaluation of progress. The internal review demonstrates that implementation has focused on translating the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers into concrete institutional policies, procedures, training activities, and digital tools.

Implementation has been coordinated through a comprehensive Action Plan comprising 43 initial actions, complemented by three new actions introduced during the review period to address emerging priorities, particularly gender equality, prevention of workplace harassment, and strengthening the institutional ombudsperson function.

The implementation process follows a systematic approach:

- Planning: Each action includes clearly defined objectives, responsibilities, measurable indicators, target values, and implementation timelines.
- Implementation: Actions are delivered through the development of institutional policies and procedures, creation of new website sections, publication of guidance documents, organisation of training sessions, implementation of digital tools, and revision of HR practices in accordance with national legislation and HRS4R principles.
- Monitoring: Progress is regularly assessed using quantitative indicators such as numbers of documents published, researchers trained, website users, participation in mobility programmes, recruitment statistics, and implementation of institutional procedures. Where necessary, indicators have been adapted to reflect changes in legislation or technical constraints while preserving the original objectives.
- Continuous improvement: Actions are reviewed periodically and classified as Completed, In Progress, Extended, or New. Completed actions are embedded into institutional practice, while extended or new actions respond to legislative developments, organisational needs, and recommendations arising during implementation.

A strong emphasis has been placed on stakeholder engagement throughout the implementation process. Researchers at all career stages, management, Human Resources, IT, legal, ethics, technology transfer, and administrative departments contribute to implementing and monitoring the Action Plan. Training activities, internal consultations, dissemination of guides, and transparent publication of policies ensure that HRS4R principles are integrated into everyday institutional practice. This collaborative approach has supported the successful implementation of numerous actions, including the development of new HR policies, the OTM-R policy, research integrity resources, mentoring arrangements, mobility opportunities, and career development tools.

Overall, the implementation process demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement rather than one-off compliance. Regular monitoring, evidence-based reporting, adaptation to legislative changes such as Law No. 183/2024, and the introduction of additional actions ensure that the HRS4R strategy remains an active management tool supporting excellence in human resources and research.

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 justification (max. 500 words)

Preparation for the internal review was organised as a structured, evidence-based process involving all relevant institutional stakeholders. The HRS4R implementation team coordinated the collection of information from scientific, administrative, and support departments to evaluate progress against each action included in the Action Plan. For every action, evidence was gathered regarding implementation status, achieved indicators, supporting documentation, and measurable outcomes.

The preparation process included:

- Reviewing the implementation of all actions by comparing planned objectives, indicators, and targets with the results achieved during the reporting period.
- Collecting documentary evidence, including newly adopted policies, internal procedures, guides, regulations, website content, training materials, attendance lists, statistics, and institutional reports that demonstrate implementation of each action.
- Gathering quantitative data such as numbers of trained researchers, website usage statistics, recruitment data, participation in mobility programmes, implementation of training activities, and completion of institutional procedures to assess progress against predefined indicators.
- Consulting responsible departments and action owners to validate the reported information, update implementation status, and identify actions requiring continuation, extension, or modification.
- Assessing compliance with new national legislation, particularly Law No. 183/2024, and incorporating the resulting changes into institutional policies, HR procedures, recruitment practices, and researcher evaluation systems.
- Identifying areas requiring further development, which resulted in extending several actions and introducing new actions related to gender equality, prevention of harassment, and the institutional ombudsperson.

The internal review was therefore not limited to reporting completed activities but also served as an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the Action Plan, identify remaining gaps, and update priorities for the next implementation period. This evidence-based approach ensured that the review accurately reflected institutional progress while supporting continuous improvement of ECOIND's Human Resources Strategy for Researchers.

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



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

The implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan has been carried out through the active involvement of the research community and the institute's main stakeholders. Researchers participated directly in the development and implementation of many actions through the Scientific Council, Ethics and Commission, Human Resources Department, ECOLIB team, Technology Transfer Centre, and project management structures.

Researchers were regularly consulted during the development of new policies, procedures, guides, and internal regulations related to research ethics, professional responsibility, career development, recruitment, research management, intellectual property, and open science. Feedback obtained during training sessions, information meetings, and institutional discussions was used to improve these documents and adapt them to researchers' needs.

Implementation relied on broad participation across departments through interdisciplinary projects such as WaterWise Hub, Talent Pass and CERSUS, which involved researchers, management, HR, IT, marketing, and technology transfer staff. These collaborative projects strengthened cross-departmental cooperation and promoted stakeholder engagement beyond individual research units.

The institute also organised numerous training sessions and information events covering Horizon Europe proposal preparation, research management, professional responsibility, contractual obligations, ethics, social responsibility, and project management. These activities involved a significant proportion of the research staff and provided continuous opportunities for dialogue, feedback, and capacity building.

External stakeholders also contributed to implementation through international research collaborations, Horizon Europe projects, partnerships with universities, industry, public authorities, and European organisations, as well as through international trainers and experts involved in researcher development activities. This continuous interaction has helped ensure that the HRS4R process reflects both institutional priorities and the expectations of the wider research community.

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



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

Yes. On the beginning of 2026 the composition of Implementation Committee was modified in order to better reflect the structural changes in the organisational chart from the end of 2025.

The composition of the implementation committee is as follows:

Name	Position	Department
Lucian Alexandru Constantin (M) (R3)	HRS4R Responsible	Department of Environmental Evaluation and Technologies
Olga Tiron (F) (R3)	Scientific Director	Top Management
Iulia Ungureanu (F)	Economic Director	Top Management
Mihai Nita Lazar (M) (R4)	Head of Department	Department of Environmental Evaluation and Technologies
Florentina Laura Chiriac (F) (R4)	Head of Laboratory	Department of Pollution Control / Laboratory for Water, Soil, Waste Pollution Control
Mariana Simona Calinescu (F) (R2)	Head of Laboratory	Department of Pollution Control / Laboratory for Air Pollution Control
Alina Banciu (F) (R2)	Head of Laboratory	Department of Pollution Control / Laboratory for biotests and biological analysis / President of Ethics Commission
Catalin Manea (M) (R1)	Head of Ramnicu Valcea Subsidiary	Ramnicu Valcea Subsidiary
Iasmina Rus (F) (R1)	Head of Timisoara Subsidiary	Timisoara Subsidiary
Alina Tanasescu (F)	Specialist	Human Resources
Ioana Iulia Mihai (F) (R2)	Director	Technological Transfer Centre
Corina Alexandra Stoian (F)	Specialist	Procurement / Marketing
Anda Condur (F)	Specialist	Juridical Office
Leonard Paun (M)	Specialist	IT
Cristian Gheorghe Serbanescu (M)	Specialist	Emergency situations, work safety and health
Crina Nicolae (F)	Specialist	Planning - Technical
Marius Negut (M)	Specialist	Administrative

Name	Position	Department
Lidia Kim (F) (R4)	Experienced researcher	Department of Environmental Evaluation and Technologies
Gabriela Geanina Vasile (F) (R4)	Experienced researcher	Department of Pollution Control / Laboratory for Water, Soil, Waste Pollution Control
Gheorghita Tanase (M) (R2)	Researcher	Department of Pollution Control / Laboratory for Air Pollution Control
Gabriel Valentin Serban (M) (R2)	Researcher	Department of Pollution Control / Laboratory for Water, Soil, Waste Pollution Control
Tatiana Buse (F) (R1)	Researcher	Deopartment for Environmental Evaluation and Technologies

As for the Steering Committe is the one existing within the ECOIND organisational chart. The composition and modifications are presented within ECOIND yearly activity reports available on insitute's website.

Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HR award? For example, is the HR award recognised in the organisation's research strategy or overarching HR policy?

*



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

Yes. The HR Excellence in Research Award is explicitly integrated into both the institute's strategic development agenda and its human resources framework.

At the strategic level, the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the HR Excellence in Research process is identified as a priority for strengthening human resources, improving researcher career development, and increasing the institute's international competitiveness. The interim review states that one of ECOIND's short-term priorities is to "Strengthen human resources through recruitment, training, career development, and HR Excellence implementation," demonstrating that the HR Award is embedded within the organisational development strategy rather than treated as a separate initiative.

The institute also reports that the 2025–2029 Development Strategy and related strategic decisions require workforce planning, leadership development, performance management, recruitment, training, and career development aligned with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. These strategic decisions directly influence recruitment, career progression, performance appraisal, recognition, professional development, international mobility, and staff engagement.

At the HR policy level, the organisation has incorporated the Charter principles into its internal HR framework through regulations governing recruitment, performance evaluation, ethics, equal opportunities, collective labour agreements, and working conditions. The interim review highlights that the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and achievement of the HR Excellence in Research Award demonstrate the institute's commitment to improving researchers' working environment, career development, and continuous improvement of HR practices.

Furthermore, the institutional self-evaluation report submitted for research organisations performance assessment (2026) confirms that joining the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (2022) and obtaining permission to use the HR Excellence in Research logo (2024) are recognised among the institute's major strategic milestones, alongside institutional development and internationalisation initiatives.

This provides strong evidence that the HR Excellence Award is strategically aligned with ECOIND's research strategy and organisational HR policies, supporting institutional objectives related to researcher recruitment, career development, internationalisation, and continuous organisational improvement.

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



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

ECOIND has put in place governance, monitoring, and management mechanisms to ensure that the HRS4R Action Plan is implemented effectively.

Responsibility for each action has been clearly assigned to specific organisational units or individuals, with defined timelines, measurable indicators, and implementation status documented in the HRS4R Action Plan. Progress is monitored through periodic internal reviews, allowing completed actions to be recorded, ongoing actions to be updated, and new objectives to be introduced where necessary.

Implementation is supported by the institute's strategic planning process. The 2025–2029 Development Strategy identifies human resources development, recruitment, training, career development, and HR Excellence implementation among the institute's short-term strategic priorities, ensuring that HRS4R actions are embedded within broader institutional objectives rather than managed as separate activities.

In addition, strategic decisions adopted by the institute—including the implementation of the new Development Strategy, organisational restructuring, the scientific performance evaluation framework, expansion of international collaboration, continuous staff training, and maintenance of quality accreditations—provide the institutional framework and resources needed to implement the HRS4R actions. These decisions directly influence recruitment, career development, performance appraisal, training, leadership development, international mobility, employee engagement, and retention, thereby reinforcing the delivery of the Action Plan.

Finally, implementation is supported by ECOIND's integrated management system and comprehensive internal governance framework, which includes documented procedures, quality management, ethics, performance evaluation, and regular institutional monitoring. This ensures that HRS4R actions are incorporated into routine management processes and subject to continuous evaluation and improvement.

How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?*



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

Progress is monitored through a structured implementation and review process based on defined timelines, responsibilities, and measurable indicators.

Each action in the HRS4R Action Plan includes a planned implementation period (by semester or quarter), clearly assigned responsible persons or organisational units, measurable performance indicators, and a section recording the current implementation status and any revisions. This enables systematic monitoring of progress against the planned timetable and facilitates regular updates during internal reviews.

Monitoring is complemented by periodic institutional reviews conducted as part of the HRS4R process, during which completed actions, ongoing activities, and new priorities are assessed. The Action Plan is updated where necessary to reflect organisational developments and changing strategic priorities, ensuring continuous improvement rather than a one-off implementation exercise.

In addition, progress is monitored through ECOIND's integrated management and governance framework. Human resources activities, performance evaluation, training, ethics, quality management, and organisational procedures are subject to regular monitoring and review within the Integrated Management System, providing an institutional mechanism for tracking the implementation of HRS4R-related actions and ensuring alignment with the institute's strategic objectives.

How will you measure progress (indicators) for the next assessment?*



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

Progress towards the next assessment will be measured using a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators linked to the implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan and the institute's strategic objectives.

Each action includes predefined performance indicators and target values, such as the number of procedures or policy documents developed or updated, participation rates in training activities, implementation of new HR procedures, use of institutional resources, and completion of planned activities within the established timeframe. Progress will be assessed against these indicators during regular internal monitoring and periodic reviews of the Action Plan.

At institutional level, progress will also be measured through broader HR and organisational indicators, including:

- implementation of the European Charter for Researchers principles across HR policies and procedures;
- recruitment and retention of researchers, particularly early-career and international researchers;
- participation in training, mentoring, mobility, and career development activities;
- implementation of the scientific performance evaluation framework;
- improvements in researcher satisfaction and working conditions;
- increased international collaboration and participation in European research programmes; and
- completion of strategic HR objectives identified in the 2025–2029 Development Strategy.

The institute will continue to monitor these indicators through its integrated management system, documented procedures, and periodic management reviews, enabling evidence-based evaluation of progress and the identification of any corrective actions required.

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



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

ECOIND will prepare for the external review through a structured self-assessment process, evidence-based documentation, and broad internal engagement to demonstrate the effective implementation and impact of the HRS4R Action Plan.

Prior to the review, ECOIND will conduct an internal evaluation of all actions included in the HRS4R Action Plan, assessing their implementation status against the defined objectives, timelines, and performance indicators. Supporting evidence—including updated policies and procedures, HR documentation, records of training activities, recruitment practices, performance evaluation processes, and examples of good practice—will be compiled to demonstrate progress and compliance with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

Preparation will also include consultation with the management team, HR staff, researchers, and other relevant stakeholders to review achievements, identify remaining challenges, and validate the effectiveness of the implemented measures. Feedback from these discussions will be used to update the self-assessment and identify priorities for the next phase of continuous improvement.

The organisation will ensure that the external review reflects the integration of HRS4R within the institutional strategy by demonstrating how the implementation of the 2025–2029 Development Strategy, the scientific performance evaluation framework, organisational development, and HR policies support researcher recruitment, career development, training, internationalisation, and continuous improvement.

Finally, ECOIND will use its integrated management system and established governance mechanisms to verify that all relevant documentation is current, evidence is complete and consistent, and progress can be clearly demonstrated during discussions with the external reviewers.

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

ECOIND considers the implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan as a continuous improvement process rather than a stand-alone project. The Action Plan is fully integrated into the institute's strategic objectives, human resources policies, and quality management framework, ensuring its long-term sustainability. Regular monitoring, stakeholder involvement, and periodic reviews will enable the organisation to evaluate progress, identify emerging needs, and adapt actions where necessary. The external review will be regarded as an opportunity to validate achievements,

receive expert feedback, and further strengthen the institute's HR practices in line with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. ECOIND remains committed to fostering an open, transparent, and attractive research environment that supports researcher career development, internationalisation, and organisational excellence.