

# Renewal Phase Assessment With Site Visit - EC Consensus Report

Case number

2021PL685924

Name Organisation under assessment

Institute of Geophysics Polish Academy of Sciences

Organisation's contact details

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Submission date of the Internal Review

16/02/2022

Submission date to the European Commission

12/01/2023

Need Help?

renewal assessment

Detailed assessment

## a. Quality assessment

**The quality assessment evaluates the level of ambition and the quality of progress intended by the organisation.**

**If any statements have prompted a "no" or "partly" in the evaluation, please provide recommendations:**

YES / NO / PARTLY      Recommendations

**Has the organisational information been sufficiently updated to understand the context in which the HR Strategy is implemented?**

PARTLY

Being a small institution some processes need to be formalised to be better understood.

Additionally, there is no data on research funding for IG-PAS. There are no figures provided for total annual organizational budget, government funding for research, competitive government or private funding for research. This makes it difficult to fully understand the context in which the HR Strategy is implemented.

**Does the narrative provided list goals and objectives which clearly indicate the organisation's priorities in HR-management for researchers?**

PARTLY

Many actions in the action plan what makes difficult to see which the priorities are.

**Has the organisation published an updated HR Strategy and Action Plan been updated with the actions' current status, additions and/or modifications?**

YES

There are many actions in the Action Plan. However many actions are normal business activity of the institute.

More details should be provided on the indicators/targets for each of the Actions. Some are really well presented such as Action 85 or 86, these are very specific on what the targets are. But some are very loosely defined, such as Action 91, the indicator/target is the number of implemented modules.

On the other hand, The HRS4R website is very well laid out. It has all documentation from the Initial Phase, through to the Implementation Phase and Renewal Phase documentation

**Is the implementation of the HR strategy and Action Plan sufficiently embedded within the organisation's management structure (e.g. steering committee, operational responsibilities) so as to guarantee a solid implementation?**

PARTLY

The Steering Committee includes the Director of the Institute, Deputy Scientific director, Deputy Technical Director and the Deputy Director of Admin and Finance. In addition, there is a Commission with representatives from the scientific, PhD and administrative community, including HR and the Research Office.

Efforts should be made during the next period to ensure that actions from the action plan become embedded within the normal business of the Institute to guarantee there is a real cultural change. It is especially important to link priorities of the action plan with the strategic plan which is under construction.

**Is the OTM-R policy in place and publicly available?**

YES

A new OTM-R policy was introduced in 2021 setting out clear recruitment procedures and practices for research positions. This policy is publicly available on the website.

**During the transition period special conditions apply:**

Institutions having started the HRS4R implementation prior to the publication of the OTM-R toolkit and recommendations by the European Commission (2015) may not have prioritised actions implementing the OTM-R principles yet. In this case, they should not be penalised but strong recommendations should be made to address these principles appropriately.

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

How does communication through the hierarchy (top-bottom, bottom-up) work in everyday business?

What is the status of the scientific staff also associated with the universities? What is their principal working place?

Does the institution actively advocate for attracting foreign researchers?

Does gender (dis) balance reflect daily business at the institution? How is the implementation of the gender equality plan? How is recruitment according to gender?

Where is the position of IG PAN in the Polish Academy of Sciences framework (scientifically, in public awareness and opinion, and financially...)?

Does the institution align its strategy with other Polish Academy of Sciences members also holding the HR logo?

How is the process of discussion with researchers where new proposals for action should arise?

How does the data portal work for researchers?

Why only 8 R1 researchers and two doctoral schools?

Why the strategic plan 2020-2025 was not finally in place?

Why are there some Actions that are still in progress despite being instigated since many years ago? i.e. action 17 and action 44.

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

The state of HR process integration within the institution's daily business.

The status of researchers engaged in teaching activities outside the institution.

The effects of the GEP act in everyday business.

Top three priorities in the next assessment period.

How the OTM-R policy and the gender equality plan are implemented

The level of ambition of the actions

Evidences of impact (numbers and concrete data coming out from the indicators)

Company social benefits fund

How and how many mentors for young researchers are appointed

Monitoring of OTM-R

Do the researchers including PhD students have the opportunity to help to develop the Actions for the HRS4R Action Plan?

**b. SITE-VISIT BASED**

AssessmentPlease provide a brief answer to the following questions:

Note:Click on each question to open the editor.

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

Partly

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

Although IG-PAS is a relatively small Institute, having the HRS4R award has enabled the bringing together of all those involved in the research environment to implement processes and procedures for the benefit of the research community, and to enhance the working environment for researchers at the Institute.

National evaluation, placing this instititon in the 3rd place in overall HE institutions (A+), speaks in favour of excellent achievements and groundbreaking activities in field of research, doctoral education and working conditions.

One of the consequences is the increased internal collaboration. Also the existence of clear policies and procedures, as well as the good support for research. IGPAS reaches easily EU funding. Scientific infrastructures are excellent and the work atmonsphere is really good, as well as the working conditions.

In recruitment all positions are now open and the processes transparent.

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

The institute has clearly progressed after the years and they keep ambitious in being one of the leader institutions in Poland. The action plan has a good set of relevant new actions that will even improve IGPAS after implementation.

Still IGPAS needs to finish its strategic planning for the next period and include there the main challenges and policies related to HRS4R.

HR strategy needs to be refined to improve some actions based on the normal business activity of the institute.

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

IGPAS has an ethics committee to assess scientific issues and in addition they have in place an anti-mobbing committee too.

There are several activities, measurable and quantifiable policies, documents, practices that are speaking in favour of achievements in this field:

Ethical Guidelines along with Ethical Committee (dealing with antimobbing policies as well),

Dspace repository and Data steward,

Scientific reporting sessions,

downside - national regulations denies spin-offs, but IP is regulated.

Researchers are happy working at the institute. There is a generalised complain about low salaries, although this seems to be common all over the country. On the other hand for some years it has been not too difficult to get a permanent contract at IGPAS.

Gender is still an issue in the top researchers categories. new imaginative actions are required (i.e. Scientific advisory board could easily become gender balanced)

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

There has been an improvement in recruitment opening all the positions in Euraxess. IGPAS is compliant with many recruitment standards, although there is yet room for improvement (training of the members of the committees, gender in recruitment, avoiding conflict of interest). There is a need to provide more legal support to extra EU researchers to obtain a Visa.

there is an OTM-R policy already in place.

It remains a challenge to recruit young EU researchers. Low salaries could be a strong constraint. It seems there is a lack of interest, since the field is very narrow and national regulations provide low salaries for the institution.

Also, the institution does not use software for recruiting process - recommendation to take into consideration,

It was noted that the current deadline for submitting documents for interview is 14 days which may result in a lower number of completed applications for positions, so this is currently being reviewed

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

Interviews with R1, R2 and R3-R4 researchers reveals a very good working environment. Salaries are low and it is now worst after the war in Ukraine since the availability and price for accomodation is now difficult. The city has hosted a big wave of migrants from Ukraine. Salaries can be complemented by getting a certain income by participating in research projects.

Needed infrastructure, software and systems are also provided accordingly with IT support etc.

The institions provides cofunding for sports and culture activities, childcare cofunding, additional healthcare, integration events... There is a company to provide social benefits to workers.

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

Mentoring actions are not yet in place although some informal mentoring from supervisors is provided. The perception is that young researchers expect mentoring.

There is a good support to learn Polish.

Training activities should grow in general. IP training required especially for young researchers. R2 claim for more training

Data management training is already provided.

It is clear that a large number of training programmes have taken place to date, with further training identified, such as project management, copyrights, anti-discrimination training, etc.

There are few chances available for mobility, only those linked to research projects.

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

1. financial bonus for research activities (papers and projects)
2. home-like atmosphere and working environment
3. Local language and integration activities
4. Data steward
5. Repository for research data and publications
6. PhD schools closely related to ongoing projects, practices and activities
7. Full support to manage EU projects
8. Scientific infrastructures available (Spitzbergen Hornsund polar station, Antarctica polar station, vessels, etc.)
9. Periodic surveys to better know the needs and opinions of the scientific community about HRS4R actions and challenges

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

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

IGPAS is a small organisation and it seems there could be a need to formalise some processes. The important thing here is to clarify how new actions are born after a participative process and how the working group and steering committee take decisions.

As a positive asset the Institute has an important level of internationalisation according to figures. Also women researchers are well represented considering the discipline, although more information is required about women in researchers categories, specially Group leaders.

They have reached the point to have an OTM-R institutional policy. Even so there are issues to be solved as the very short deadline in recruitment (14 days) what makes things difficult for foreigners to apply. recruitment process still does not use benefits of IT solutions in this field

IT innovative solutions are introduced

Institution is aware that it is important to improve social and comfort conditions

The communication strategy remain open question for future time

A number of actions relate to the preparation and publication of the annual report in 2018, 2019 and 2020. How does this enhance the working environment or recruitment and selection process at IG-PAS?

Action 5 Indicators/targets which is marked as completed states "An action that undoubtedly requires improvement in the field of recruitment and selection at IG PAS is providing feedback for candidates - they are informed about the results of the recruitment process, but there is no reference to their strengths and weaknesses." This is not the completion of the action. The Action should only be marked as completed when the system has been put in place where applicants get feedback to include the S&W of their application.

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

Still some quantitative indicators could be added to some actions (33, 39, 43, 44, 61, 82). When the Action relates to a new policy or a survey, launching the policy or carrying out the survey is not the end, in fact it's only the beginning. Three follow up steps are necessary for each new policy or procedure and should be added to the action plan under the indicators/targets: training, compliance monitoring, effect monitorin

Some actions seem to be repeated or unnecessarily expanded (i.e. 33 and 83, 39 and 88, 38 and 89, 99). Please revise if some of those should be continuous or not.

Some actions are quite broad and vague, for example, 15 and 16

There is a need to better explain where new actions come from, and what's the level of participation of researchers in the new action plan.

Budget information is missing, and should be present in order to understand the environment in which the organization works

**General Assessment**

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

**Accepted**

Pending minor modifications

Pending major revisions

### **Explanation:**

**Accepted:** The organisation is progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan. There is evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded. The next assessment will take place in 36 months.

**Pending minor modifications:** The organisation is, for the most part, progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan, but could benefit from alterations as advised through the Assessment process. There is some evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.

The institution is requested to submit within 2 months a revised file taking into account the recommendations of the assessors.

**Pending major revisions:** The organisation is not deemed to be implementing appropriate and quality actions and this raises some concern for the future efforts to implement actions closely aligned to the Charter and Code. There is a lack of evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.

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

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

### **General Recommendations**

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

If the general assessment is "pending minor modifications" the recommendations are split into:

Immediate mandatory recommendations (to be implemented for award renewal, resubmission within 2 months)

Other recommendations (to be carried out during the award renewal phase).

If the general assessment is "pending major revisions" the recommendations are split into:

Mandatory recommendations (to be implemented for award renewal, resubmission within 12 months)

Other recommendations

## Recommendations \*

In general, review the Action Plan and make it more coherent - according to presented activities and state of play,

Some (repeated) actions in the action plan should be merged. It's not necessary that the action plan is a very long document. Also indicators could be refined to become more quantitative.

In order to link actions and policies related to HRS4R in IGPAS it would be recommended to finish the strategic planning of the Institute with institutional consensus for the next period and include there the main challenges and policies of Human Resources.

New imaginative actions are required to contribute to gender balance at different levels.

Non EU researchers need legal advice to normalise their situation in Poland. Explore how much support IGPAS could provide to them. An effort should be done in the recruitment of young EU researchers. Some of the scientific infrastructures at IGPAS are unique and they could help on this.

Try to adjust training to the needs and requests of the different categories of researchers.

think of improving mentoring activities for R1 groups, and think of using software for workflow in the recruitment process

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

IGPAS is a well organised institution fulfilling high international standards in research. They show the aim to improve all the time. It's worth mentioning the effort they have done in Doctoral schools and Data management policy and support to researchers.

They offer a full and effective support to manage EU projects, where they become successful. They maintain valuable Scientific infrastructures (Spitzbergen Hornsund polar station, Antarctica polar station, vessels, etc.) which could be used to attract talent.

The institution uses its own staff and resources to develop new tools, services and improve working conditions