

GAP ANALYSIS

Consiglio per la ricerca in agricoltura e l'analisi dell'economia agraria (Council for Agricultural Research and Economics)

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The Charter and Code were endorsed 11 July 2016 (note n. 0032351 to the European Commission, DG R&I, B2, signed by the Special Commissioner and Legal Representative of CREA).

Process

The Special Commissioner of CREA¹ signed the letter of endorsement of the Charter and Code and notified the commitment to the implementation of the HRS4R through an internal process of **Gap Analysis** and the development of an **Action Plan**. The Commissioner designated the Deputy Commissioner, Prof. Alessandra Gentile² and the Director General, Dr. Ida Marandola as "sponsors", with a duty to oversee the process.

A mixed **Working Group** had been already established by the Director General (Decree n. 444 of 6 May 2016 and subsequent integrations) including representatives of the relevant Offices of the Central Administration (Human Resources, Legal Affairs, Recruitment, International Relationships) and Researchers, both permanent and temporary staff. The Working Group was coordinated by the CREA Technical Director, Dr. Stefano Bisoffi, who reported regularly to Prof. Gentile and Dr. Marandola.

The Working Group operated both in plenary (to discuss plans, general items, overall issues) and split into subgroups; the Gap Analysis was performed by four subgroups according to the four areas (Ethics, Recruitment, Working conditions, Training), each coordinated by a Researcher, and finally discussed and refined in plenary.

An **internal Survey** was conducted on-line February-March 2017 (Limesurvey) involving all the staff of CREA (2037 persons), both permanent and temporary and receiving 1211 responses. Each question (55 questions in total) consisted of a statement regarding the actual implementation of the principles of the Charter and Code in the CREA; respondents had to state whether they were in full agreement/partial agreement/partial disagreement/full disagreement or had no opinion. The results (published on-line: http://sito.entecra.it/portale/public/documenti/carta_eur_ric/Sondaggi-HRS4R.zip) were further analysed according to: profile (Researcher, Technician, Administrative staff, Other), Type of contract, Gender, Seniority, etc. The Gap Analysis was refined accordingly.

Based on the results of the Gap Analysis and of the Survey, an Action Plan was proposed to address the issues in order of relevance. The Action Plan was discussed with the Director General and the President and finally approved by the Management Board, 26 June 2017.

¹ Now President of CREA by virtue of Decree of the President of the Republic of 27 April 2017.

² Now Member of the Management Board by virtue of Ministerial Decree n. 10888 of 29 May 2017.

The whole process was accompanied by a special webpage on the CREA site, in the Italian and the English language, dedicated to the HRS4R where the relevant document were published and made available for download:

(http://sito.entecra.it/portale/cra_carta_eur_ric.php?lingua=EN).

Based on the comments of the independent auditors received after the initial submission, a document was produced and approved with a President's Decree n. 39 of 5 October 2017 describing the policies CREA adopts to ensure that Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment principles and procedures are applied by CREA. The document is published on CREA website in the Italian and English languages.

European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers : GAP analysis overview			
Status: to what extent does this organisation meet the following principles?	<p>+ = fully implemented</p> <p>+/- = almost but not fully implemented</p> <p>-/+ = partially implemented</p> <p>- = insufficiently implemented</p>	<p>In case of -, -/+, or +/-, please indicate the actual "gap" between the principle and the current practice in your organisation.</p> <p>If relevant, please list any national/regional legislation or organisational regulation currently impeding implementation</p>	Initiatives already undertaken and/or suggestions for improvement
Ethical and Professional Aspects			
1. Research freedom	+		
2. Ethical principles	+/-	CREA has a Code of individual conduct but not a Code of ethics and professional behaviour	Code of ethics and professional behaviour to be developed

3. Professional responsibility	+/-	CREA has a Code of individual conduct but not a Code of ethics and professional behaviour	Code of ethics and professional behaviour to be developed
4. Professional attitude	+		
5. Contractual and legal obligations	+		
6. Accountability	+/-	The administrative responsibility of researchers <i>vis-à-vis</i> financial resources is not clearly specified by current CREA rules	Adoption of regulations or guidelines to specify the authority of researchers on the use of project financial resources and consequent accountability
7. Good practice in research	+/-	Guidelines for the safeguard of privacy and for personal safety in the working environment are in place. Guidelines for the protection of scientific data are missing	Guidelines for the correct use and protection of research data should be developed. Specific initiatives to increase the awareness of researchers on data protection (including those related to privacy) should be undertaken.
8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	+/-	CREA has a Code of individual conduct but not a Code of ethics and professional behaviour	Code of ethics and professional behaviour to be developed including responsibilities <i>vis-à-vis</i> dissemination and exploitation of results.
9. Public	+/-	CREA has a Code of individual conduct but not a Code of ethics and professional	Code of ethics and professional behaviour to be developed including responsibilities <i>vis-à-vis</i> public

engagement		behaviour	engagement.
10. Non discrimination	+		
11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems	-/+	<p>CREA is included in the periodical evaluation of research Institutions performed by ANVUR, based on the activity of Researchers.</p> <p>A system for the independent evaluation of individual researchers' scientific activities is not yet in existence.</p> <p>A National law (DPCM 26.01. 2011, G.U. 20.05.2011, n. 116) establishes that criteria for the evaluation of individual performance of researchers will be developed by ANVUR (National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research).</p> <p>Implementation at national level is still pending.</p>	As soon as criteria for the evaluation of individual performance of researchers are developed by ANVUR, a comprehensive and transparent process for periodical, independent and qualified evaluation will be defined.
<p>Recruitment and Selection – please be aware that the items listed here correspond with the Charter and Code. In addition, your organisation also needs to complete the checklist on Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment included below, which focuses on the operationalization of these principles.</p>			
12. Recruitment	+		

13. Recruitment (Code)	+/-	<p>Recruitment advertisements are published in the Italian language on the Official Journal of the Italian Republic (<i>Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana</i> 4° Serie Speciale - Concorsi ed Esami) and on a specific page of CREA website dedicated to job opportunities:</p> <p>http://sito.entecra.it/portale/cra_elenco_lavori.php?lingua=IT&tipo=bando&access_flag=0</p>	<p>Recruitment advertisements will be published on the CREA website also in the English version and on the EURAXESS website:</p> <p>https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/</p>
14. Selection (Code)	+/-	<p>Selection committees for Researchers are generally composed by Professors and Researchers from Italian Universities and Public Research Organisations. Relevant legislation (DPR 09.05.1994, n. 487) does not oblige to include experts from other countries or from the private sector.</p> <p>A list of external experts for selection committees is maintained by CREA since 2005 as mandated by Article 4.1.c of the internal "Organisation and Management Regulation" and regularly updated since. The list is published on CREA website and is permanently open to new applications:</p> <p>http://sito.entecra.it/portale/public/documenti/crea_register_of_experts.pdf</p>	<p>The heterogeneity of selection committees will be further implemented by increasing the number of international experts and/or members from private sectors of adequate experience.</p> <p>The application form for new candidates as experts will be translated into English [DONE]</p> <p>http://sito.entecra.it/portale/public/documenti/application_for_crea_register_of_experts.doc</p> <p>http://sito.entecra.it/portale/public/documenti/information_on_crea_register_of_experts.pdf</p> <p>Specific guidelines clarifying additional criteria (in line with the Charter and Code) to members of selection committee will be produced.</p>
15. Transparency (Code)	-/+	<p>Under current legislation, the communication of the weakness and strength elements of applications to</p>	<p>Specific guidelines clarifying additional criteria (in line with the Charter and Code) to members of selection committee will include the request to</p>

		interviewees is not mandatory, neither can negative results be made public according to legislation protecting privacy (D.Lgs. 30/06/2003, n. 196 "Codice in materia di protezione di dati individuali"). In principle each candidate can obtain access to the whole dossier of the selection process upon formal request (Law 241/1990 - Diritto di accesso agli atti amministrativi - Trasparenza; Law 33/2013 - Diritto di accesso agli atti amministrativi; D.Lgs. 97/2016 - FOIA.	provide standard individual feedback to unsuccessful candidates and a feedback to interviewees about the strengths and weaknesses of their applications
16. Judging merit (Code)	+/-	In CREA recruitment advertisements, a specific Annex is regularly included, specifying the evaluation criteria to be applied and the relative weight of different classes of criteria.	Specific guidelines clarifying additional criteria (in line with the Charter and Code and with CREA research and HR strategies) to members of selection committee will include recommendations in order to consider the whole range of experience of the candidates, balancing the use of bibliometric indices with a wider range of evaluation criteria
17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)	+		
18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)	+		
19. Recognition of	+/-	In CREA recruitment advertisements, a	Specific guidelines clarifying additional criteria

qualifications (Code)		specific Annex is regularly included, specifying the evaluation criteria to be applied and the relative weight of different classes of criteria.	(in line with the Charter and Code and with CREA research and HR strategies) to members of selection committee will include recommendations in order to consider the whole range of experience of the candidates, including non-formal qualifications and professional (especially international) mobility.
20. Seniority (Code)	+/-	<p>Selection committees for Senior Researchers are generally composed by Professors and Senior Researchers from Italian Universities and Public Research Organisations. Relevant legislation (DPR 09.05.1994, n. 487) does not oblige to include experts from other countries or from the private sector.</p> <p>Members are chosen from the register of external experts as described above</p>	<p>The heterogeneity of selection committees will be further implemented for senior researchers by increasing the number of international experts and/or members from private sectors of adequate experience.</p> <p>Specific guidelines establishing additional criteria for the selection of senior researchers (in line with the Charter and Code) will be produced.</p>
21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)	-/+	<p>Post-doctoral grant holders (typically on a fixed-term contract) have limited information about future career perspectives.</p>	<p>The Human Resources Plan, part of the Three-year Research Plan will be improved by providing indications about prospective permanent positions available (compatibly with available resources), in order to clarify concrete career opportunities for junior researchers</p>

Working Conditions and Social Security			
22. Recognition of the profession	+/-	The full recognition of the profession of Researchers is assured for positions (either permanent or temporary) falling under the provisions of the National Labour Contract for Public Research Organisations. Ph.D. students and holders of scholarships or fixed term research grants are not fully recognized as researchers because that stage is mainly considered part of the training phase	Prerogatives of Ph.D. students and scholarship or research grant holders should be further clarified.
23. Research environment	+/-		Further efforts at improving instruments for collaborative work (e.g. web-based platforms) will be undertaken
24. Working conditions	+/-	Significant flexibility is ensured within CREA by a full range of internal regulations	Guidelines or regulations on sabbatical leaves must be implemented
25. Stability and permanence of employment	-	<p>The situation of CREA is certainly not more critical than that of most Italian Research Institutions with regard to long permanence of researchers in temporary positions.</p> <p>The D.Lgs 81/2015 has regulated the procedures of recruitment, limiting the types of contracts applicable to those in line with a research environment.</p>	<p>CREA is carrying out all the necessary preliminary actions in view of the full implementation of the Law 07.08.2015, n. 124.</p> <p>The Human Resources Plan of CREA shall provide indications on permanent positions available with a multi-year perspective, as far as available resources allow, in order to clarify options available</p>

		Recent national legislation (Law 07.08.2015, n. 124 and D.lgs 25.11.2016, n. 218) are aimed at facilitating the access to permanent positions for long term beneficiaries of temporary contracts	
26. Funding and salaries	+		
27. Gender balance	+		
28. Career development	-	<p>Opportunities for career development are publicized as they occur but are not made explicit in a strategy for human resources.</p> <p>Specific guidelines about mentoring for researchers in their initial stages are available only for scholarship and research grant holders.</p>	<p>Perspectives of career development should be clarified in the Human Resources Plan.</p> <p>Mentoring duties shall be included in the code of ethics and professional conduct. Events to promote the activity of mentors, should be implemented.</p> <p>Internal competitive grants reserved to young researchers aimed at improving their research management skills shall be implemented (provided that the necessary funds be available)</p>
29. Value of mobility	-/+	CREA has in place a broad portfolio of collaboration agreements with scientific Organisations worldwide that include the possibility of staff exchange. However, actual implementation is moderate.	Internal regulations concerning the status of National Expert on Secondment and of Temporary Fellowships (outgoing and incoming) will be developed.

30. Access to career advice	+/-	CREA informs Researchers of positions available at other institutions worldwide, albeit not on a regular basis	A specific alert service is not foreseen under present circumstances. However, a web-page will be designed where links to specific websites advertising scientific positions will be provided.
31. Intellectual Property Rights	+		
32. Co-authorship	+		
33. Teaching	+		Specific guidelines clarifying additional criteria (in line with the Charter and Code) to members of selection committee will include adequate consideration of teaching, coaching and mentoring activities.
34. Complains/ appeals	+/-	CREA has established procedures and regulations, as foreseen by law, but mainly dealing with complaints about discriminations, mobbing, etc.	Actions to increase the awareness on existing conflict resolution bodies and procedures shall be specifically targeted at Researchers and Directors of Research Centres. Guidelines for conflict prevention and resolution will be developed and other initiatives explored (e.g. external peace maker).
35. Participation in decision-making bodies	+/-	Representatives of Researchers are already foreseen by the recently approved Statute of CREA as far as the Scientific Board is	CREA is going to have one elected representative of Researchers sitting in the Management Board (made of five members, including the President)

		<p>concerned (four out of twelve members). Elections are under way.</p> <p>A representative of researchers in the Management Board (Consiglio di Amministrazione) is also foreseen by the D.lgs 25 November 2016, n. 218. A corresponding modification of the Statute of CREA has been already proposed to the supervising Ministry. Pending the approval by the Minister, elections are already under way.</p>	<p>and four elected representatives of Researchers sitting in the Scientific Board (made of thirteen members, including the President)</p>
Training and Development			
36. Relation with supervisors	+/-	<p>An internal regulation of CREA (Del. CdA. n. 39 of 14.03.2013) identifies the supervisor for scholarship and research grant holders and for PhD students. No explicit provisions are made for Researchers recruited (either in a permanent or fixed term position) under the National Labour Contract for Public Research Organisations in the early phases of their career.</p>	<p>Regulations shall be improved in order to ensure that all junior Researchers, at least until completion of four years after the inception of their research career are followed by a specifically appointed experienced tutor.</p>
37. Supervision and managerial duties	+/-	<p>An internal regulation of CREA (Del. CdA. n. 39 of 14.03.2013) clearly specifies the role and functions of a supervisor for scholarship and research grant holders but not for Ph.D students and for junior researchers (see</p>	<p>Regulations shall be improved in order to make the duties of tutors towards Ph.D students and junior Researchers explicit. Agreements with Universities for Ph.D. students will include provisions for a CREA tutor in addition to those</p>

		<p>above).</p> <p>Ph.D students are under a twofold supervision; of the University providing courses and eventually issuing the Diplomas and of CREA, where research work is performed. However, the dual supervisory setting is rarely clarified in the agreements with Universities</p>	<p>appointed by the universities.</p>
38. Continuing Professional Development	+		
39. Access to research training and continuous development	-/+	<p>A periodically updated Training Plan is produced by CREA after approval by the Management Board. The selection of themes for training courses is based also on the requests of CREA personnel. However, a link with the Three-Year Research Plan is not clearly apparent.</p> <p>Resources are mainly devoted to the organisation of courses with large attendance in order to maximise efficiency of a limited budget. Both front type courses and distance learning are used. No budget is currently dedicated to the attendance of externally provided courses by researchers.</p> <p>At present scholarship or research grant holders are not eligible for attendance of</p>	<p>The upcoming revisions of the Training Plan will make a link with the Three-Year Research Plan more explicit.</p> <p>Provisions for the participation of scholarship or research grant holders in training courses will be devised.</p> <p>As long as compatible with available resources, the Training Plan will include funds for attendance of individual researchers to specialist external courses when demanded by research needs.</p> <p>The inclusion of resources for training in the budget of research projects (where appropriate and compatible with the funder rule) will be encouraged.</p>

		training courses.	
40. Supervision	-/+	Methodological guidelines to supervisory activities are currently lacking	<p>Guidelines for the performance of supervisory, tutorial, coaching and mentoring duties will be developed.</p> <p>The Training Plan will include actions aimed at improving the supervisory, tutorial, coaching and mentoring roles of senior researchers</p>
Any additional issues			

Check-list³

OTM-R checklist for organisations

	Open	Trans- parent	Merit- based	Answer: <i>Yes, completely</i> <i>Yes, substantially</i> <i>Yes, partially</i> <i>No</i>	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
OTM-R system					
1. Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, completely</i>	A specific OTM-R policy document , drawing from existing laws and regulations as applied by CREA is published on CREA website in the Italian and English languages.
2. Do we have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, partially</i>	Current practices are totally in line with existing laws and regulations (Permanent positions: D.Lgs. 30/03/ 2001, n. 165, artt. 35-38-57; D.Lgs. 27/10/2009, n.150. Temporary position: Directive 1999/70/CE of the Council, Circular 18/12/2014 n. 24) but not described in an internal specific guide. Specific CREA guidelines on OTM-R will be developed and published on the website in the Italian and English languages.
3. Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the	X	X	X	<i>Yes, completely</i>	Staff dedicated to the Recruitment process (6 personnel units) is highly skilled on laws, rules and

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/services/researchPolicies>

area of OTM-R?					procedures and have followed specific courses on transparency assurance and corruption prevention
4. Do we make (sufficient) use of e-recruitment tools?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, partially</i>	E-tools are at present limited to the submission of application by (certified) e-mail service. Further developments will be considered as far as found compatible with current legislation.
5. Do we have a quality control system for OTM-R in place?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, completely</i>	Compliance with laws, rules and procedures is ensured by an internal Office for Oversight, Transparency and the Prevention of Corruption
6. Does our current OTM-R policy encourage external candidates to apply?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, completely</i>	All selection procedures are open to applicants from outside CREA (except when a percentage of reserved positions is allowed by the law).
7. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, partially</i>	All positions are available to nationals of the EU (clearly stated in any selection advertisement) and to other nationals if compatible with Article 38 of D.lgs. 165/2001. However, advertisements are currently published only in the Italian language on CREA website and in the Official Journal of the Italian Republic. Selection advertisements to be published also in English on CREA website and on EURAXESS. Future trends in the share of applicants from abroad will be used as indicator of effectiveness.
8. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract underrepresented groups?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, completely</i>	Trend in the share of applicants show an equal distribution between men and women. Gender balance in the selection committees is mandatory, whenever compatible with required competencies.

9. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, completely</i>	Positive and increasing trend in the share of applicants from outside the organisation attests the attractiveness of working conditions in CREA
10. Do we have means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, partially</i>	The relative ranking of the winners within the scientific community at large may be estimated by such indices as the Hirsch Index, that is usually one of the elements considered in the rating process. The quality of the winners of the selection is in principle assured by the broad range of elements considered by the selection committees.
Advertising and application phase					
11. Do we have clear guidelines or templates (e.g., EURAXESS) for advertising positions?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, partially</i>	Templates for advertising position are built on the basis of relevant national legislation (D.Lgs. n. 165/2001, art. 35 and 38, comma 1). EURAXESS templates will be introduced
12. Do we include in the job advertisement references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit? [see Chapter 4.4.1 a) of the OTM-R expert report ⁴]	X	X	X	<i>Yes, substantially</i>	CREA selection advertisements clearly address all the main elements of the OTM-R toolkit (section 4.4.1), albeit in the Italian language only
13. Do we make full use of EURAXESS to ensure our research vacancies reach a wider audience?	X	X	X	<i>No</i>	Full use of EURAXESS is envisaged

4 <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/services/researchPolicies>

14. Do we make use of other job advertising tools?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, substantially</i>	CREA website and the Official Journal of the Italian Republic (Special Series 4)
15. Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate? [see Chapter 4.4.1 b) ^{45]}	X	X	X	<i>Yes, completely</i>	Relevant legislation does not superimpose administrative burden for candidates. The use of "declarations of honour" is fully accepted, subject to subsequent control
Selection and evaluation phase					
16. Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees? [see Chapter 4.4.2 a) ^{45]}	X	X	X	<i>Yes, substantially</i>	Minimum numbers (3), independence (at least 2/3 external to CREA, in some cases all), absence of conflicts of interest, gender balance, competence are ensured in the composition of committees. International dimension and the presence of non-academic representatives in the committees should be improved.
17. Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, substantially</i>	Members of the selection committees are drawn from a Register of experts (http://sito.entecra.it/portale/public/documenti/albo_experti.pdf) established as per article 4, paragraph 1, letter c) of the Regulation of Organisation and Operations of CREA. Application for the Register are evaluated according to a Decree of the Special Commissioner n. 95 of 11 November 2015
18. Are the committees sufficiently gender-balanced?	X	X	X	<i>Yes, completely</i>	D.Lgs. n. 165/2001, art. 57
19. Do we have clear guidelines for selection committees which help to judge 'merit' in a way that leads to	X	X	X	<i>Yes, substantially</i>	Clear indications of the criteria and elements to be considered in the evaluation are reported in all the selection advertisements. Additional criteria,

the best candidate being selected?					reflecting CREA research strategies and coherent human resources development strategies will be developed
Appointment phase					
20. Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process?	X	X	X	Yes, partially	<p>The list of winners (only) are published in the CREA website http://sito.entecra.it/portale/cra_elenco_lavori.php?lingua=IT&tipo=bando&access_flag=0.</p> <p>In case of a multi-step selections candidates admitted to the next phase (only) receive an individual notice. In the future, standard information by e-mail shall be sent to all applicants, individually, including unsuccessful ones.</p>
21. Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?	X	X	X	Yes, partially	Candidates admitted to an interview do not receive prior information about the strengths and weaknesses of their application. Interviewees may receive such information from the selection committees during the interview
22. Do we have an appropriate complaints mechanism in place?	X	X	X	Yes, substantially	<p>Each candidate suspecting an irregular conduct of the selection procedures can have access to the selection documents by formal request after the conclusion of the procedure (D.Lgs. n. 33/2013 art. 5, modified by D.Lgs. n. 97/2016 – FOIA). Appeals are regulated by the Code of Civil Procedure (art. 669 bis).</p> <p>Statistics on complaints should be produced.</p>

Overall assessment					
23. Do we have a system in place to assess whether OTM-R delivers on its objectives?	X	X	X	Yes, partially	<p>Formal compliance with laws, regulations and procedures is ensured by an internal competent Office.</p> <p>Substantial evaluations of the impact of OTM-R policies on quality of researchers, internationalisation, impact on research and development activities is not performed.</p> <p>However, ANVUR in its periodical evaluation of Universities and Research Institutions (VQR) rates recently enrolled researchers separately from the rest, thus providing an indirect evaluation of recruitment quality.</p>