

RECRUITMENT AT "ȘTEFAN CEL MARE" UNIVERSITY OF SUCEAVA

USV's recruitment processes are characterized by openness, transparency and merit-based assessment (OTM-R). OTM-R processes ensure that the best person for the job is recruited and guarantees equal opportunities for all candidates.

As a holder of the **HR Excellence in Research Award**, "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava (USV) is committed to implementing the principles of **Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R)** in accordance with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

OTM-R represents a key component of the University's Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) and aims to ensure that recruitment, selection, evaluation and career development processes are fair, transparent, merit-based and attractive to talented researchers from Romania and abroad.

The implementation of OTM-R at USV is not limited to the development of a dedicated policy and procedure. It involves a broader process of reviewing and aligning institutional regulations, procedures and strategic documents with the principles of the revised Charter. This process seeks to strengthen transparency, equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion, international attractiveness, recognition of diverse career paths, research excellence and researcher career development.

Several institutional documents are currently under revision or development as part of this alignment process, including:

- **USV Charter;**
- **OTM-R Policy and Procedure;**
- **Regulation on Filling Vacant or Temporarily Vacant Teaching and Research Positions;**
- **Regulation on Filling Vacant Teaching Positions;**
- **Regulation on the Evaluation of Researchers' Scientific Performance;**
- **Regulation on the Evaluation of Academic Staff Performance;**
- **Internal Regulations;**
- **Strategy for Preventing and Combating Plagiarism and for Verifying Compliance with University Ethics and Deontology in the Preparation of Doctoral Theses;**
- **Guide for Researchers;**
- **Strategic Plan for Academic and Research Career Development;**
- **Co-authorship Procedure.**

The need for these measures was initially identified through the HRS4R Gap Analysis and subsequently confirmed by the results of the **HRS4R Survey conducted in 2026**. The survey highlighted the importance of transparent recruitment procedures, fair and balanced evaluation systems, career development opportunities, mentoring and coaching services, and measures aimed at reducing administrative burdens and increasing the attractiveness of research careers.

In response, USV has already implemented several actions, including the publication of academic and research vacancies on the **EURAXESS portal**, the development of the institutional OTM-R framework, the strengthening of mentoring and career support services through the **COACH USV Centre**, the development of postdoctoral opportunities, and the revision of evaluation and recruitment regulations. Additional measures will continue to be implemented throughout the current HRS4R Action Plan period (2024–2029). Through these efforts, USV seeks to create a recruitment and career development environment that is transparent, inclusive, internationally attractive and fully aligned with European standards for research-performing organisations.



Attracting and Recruiting Researchers	Selection and Evaluation	Appointment, Integration and Career Development
USV is currently strengthening its recruitment framework through the development and implementation of an institutional OTM-R Policy and Procedure, designed in accordance with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. To increase transparency and international visibility, academic and research vacancies are published on the EURAXESS portal. At the same time, several key regulations governing recruitment are under revision, including the Regulation on Filling Vacant or Temporarily Vacant Teaching and Research Positions, the Regulation on Filling Vacant Teaching Positions, and related institutional recruitment procedures. These revisions aim to ensure transparent recruitment processes, equal opportunities, wider international outreach, and a merit-based assessment of candidates' qualifications, achievements, competencies and potential.	USV is currently revising its researcher and academic staff evaluation framework in order to better reflect the principles of excellence, fairness, transparency and recognition of diverse research careers promoted by the Charter. Particular attention is being given to the revision of the Regulation on the Evaluation of Researchers' Scientific Performance and the Regulation on the Evaluation of Academic Staff Performance. The objective is to move towards a broader and more balanced assessment of researchers' contributions, taking into account research achievements, innovation activities, knowledge transfer, international cooperation, Open Science practices, mentoring activities and institutional engagement. This process directly addresses findings of the 2026 HRS4R Survey, where respondents highlighted the need for greater fairness across disciplines and evaluation mechanisms extending beyond traditional publication-based indicators. In parallel, OTM-R principles are being integrated into institutional quality assurance mechanisms, while training activities are planned for staff involved in recruitment and evaluation processes.	USV considers recruitment as the starting point of a long-term career development pathway. Several institutional documents have been developed or are currently under approval to support researchers throughout their careers. These include the Guide for Researchers, the Strategic Plan for Academic and Research Career Development and the Co-authorship Procedure. Together, these instruments provide clearer guidance regarding career opportunities, research responsibilities, intellectual property, authorship practices, Open Science principles, research integrity and professional development opportunities. At the same time, broader institutional documents are being updated to ensure alignment with Charter principles, including the USV Charter, Internal Regulations and the Strategy for Preventing and Combating Plagiarism and for Verifying Compliance with University Ethics and Deontology. Researchers also benefit from mentoring, coaching and career guidance services through the COACH USV Centre, support for doctoral and postdoctoral development, access to mobility opportunities through NEOLAiA and EURAXESS, and increasing access to modern research infrastructure developed through the USV Digital project. Through these measures, USV aims to create an integrated and supportive environment in which researchers can develop their careers in a transparent, inclusive and internationally competitive framework.

OTM-R at USV – From Identified Challenges to Institutional Solutions

Identified issue	USV response through the HRS4R Action Plan	Current status
Lack of a dedicated OTM-R policy and procedure	Development of an institutional OTM-R Policy and OTM-R Procedure aligned with Charter and Code principles	Developed and currently under institutional approval
Limited visibility of recruitment opportunities	Publication of academic and research vacancies on the EURAXESS portal	Implemented immediately after obtaining the HR Excellence in Research Award
Need for a dedicated HRS4R information area	Creation of the HRS4R section on the USV website, including strategy, action plan, progress reports and relevant documents	Implemented
Recruitment regulations requiring alignment with Charter principles	Revision of recruitment regulations and minimum standards for academic and research positions	Ongoing
Need for greater transparency and fairness in recruitment procedures	Integration of OTM-R principles into recruitment procedures and institutional quality assurance mechanisms	Ongoing
Need to attract external and international candidates	Publication of vacancies on EURAXESS, participation in NEOLAiA and international academic networks, development of postdoctoral programmes and mobility opportunities	Partially implemented and continuously developed
Need to promote diversity, equal opportunities and inclusion	Implementation of the Gender Equality Plan, Gender Equality Committee, inclusion of equal opportunity principles within OTM-R documents	Implemented and continuously monitored
Lack of specific training for recruitment committees and staff involved in selection	Development of dedicated OTM-R training activities for staff involved in recruitment and selection procedures	Planned for implementation
Need to ensure balanced and objective evaluation procedures	Revision of researcher evaluation regulations and introduction of broader evaluation criteria beyond publication indicators	Ongoing
Need for improved communication with candidates throughout recruitment procedures	OTM-R procedure includes provisions regarding transparency of recruitment stages, communication of results and handling of appeals	Included in the OTM-R framework
Need to ensure fair treatment of complaints and appeals	Strengthening institutional mechanisms through updated procedures and the future establishment of the Ombudsman structure	Ongoing
Need to create an attractive working environment for researchers	Development of the Strategic Plan for Academic and Research Career Development, COACH USV Centre, USV Digital project, new research centres and laboratories, financial support mechanisms and mobility opportunities	Largely implemented

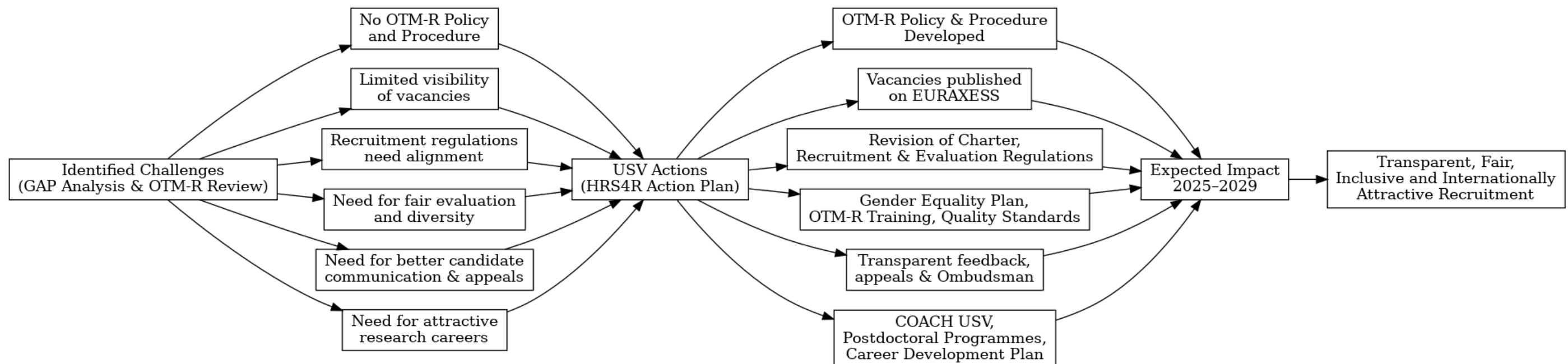
Translating OTM-R Challenges into Institutional Actions and Expected Impact

The implementation of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) at “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava (USV) is based on a continuous improvement approach promoted through the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R).

The diagram below illustrates how the challenges identified through the initial GAP Analysis and OTM-R Review have been translated into concrete actions within the HRS4R Action Plan. These actions aim to strengthen transparency, fairness, equal opportunities, diversity and international attractiveness throughout the recruitment and career development process.

Several measures have already been implemented, including the publication of vacancies on the EURAXESS portal, the development of the institutional OTM-R Policy and Procedure, the establishment of mentoring and coaching services through the COACH USV Centre, and the creation of dedicated support mechanisms for researchers. At the same time, a number of strategic and regulatory documents are currently under revision in order to ensure full alignment with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

The roadmap demonstrates how identified challenges are addressed through specific institutional measures and how these measures are expected to contribute, by 2029, to the development of a transparent, fair, inclusive and internationally attractive recruitment system that supports research excellence and sustainable researcher career development at USV.



The results of the 2026 HRS4R Survey confirm that substantial progress has already been achieved. Recruitment transparency received one of the highest levels of positive assessment among respondents, with 88.5% considering recruitment processes to be transparent. At the same time, respondents highlighted the importance of continuing efforts related to fair evaluation, career development opportunities, mentoring and the reduction of administrative burdens. These aspects are already addressed through measures included in the current HRS4R Action Plan and remain priorities for the implementation period until 2029.