



HRS4R

**THE HUMAN RESOURCES  
STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS**

# HRS4R Internal Review 2022

SLOVAK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

## Internal Review

**Case number:** 2018SK336383

**Name Organization under review:** Slovak Academy of Sciences

**Organization's contact details:** Štefánikova 49, Bratislava, 814 38

**Submission date to the European Commission:** 16/08/2022

## 1. Organisational Information

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

| STAFF & STUDENTS                                                                                                                                 | FTE  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *               | 1765 |
| Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *                                                                                           | 176  |
| Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *                                                            | 60   |
| Of whom are women *                                                                                                                              | 928  |
| Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. * | 1269 |
| Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *                                                             | 823  |
| Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *                                                                 | 462  |
| Total number of students (if relevant) *                                                                                                         | 0    |
| Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *                                                      | 3030 |

| RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)                                                                                           | €         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Total annual organisational budget                                                                                                               | 101945904 |
| Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)                                                                        | 89459789  |
| Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding) | 12155409  |
| Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research                                                                     | 330706    |

## ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

The Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS) is a leading research-implementing organization in Slovakia. It is the founder of 45 scientific Institutes that carry out research across a wide range of scientific fields - from physical, engineering, life and medical sciences to social sciences and humanities. The SAS is one of the key players in science and research policy and regularly conducts research performance assessment and analysis. SAS representatives participate as advisors to state authorities, as members of the Science, Technology and Innovation Council, as well as other bodies involved in decision-making processes.

## 2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Ethical and professional aspects

### Strengths

Research freedom is respected to a high degree, research topics are most often given by upcoming and implemented projects – thanks to the International Advisory Board, established after the 2019 Regular Evaluation of SAS Research Institutes, several Institutes started to follow their own research strategy according to which they select the research topics. Ethical aspects are covered by the SAS, which has also adopted the Code of Ethics for the entire academy. There is a new formalized procedure to address ethical issues and to settle them. Individual SAS Institutes have a relatively large freedom to set their own processes. After 2016 Regular Evaluation, individual SAS Institutes prepared their strategic and action plans, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and defining the strategic areas of their research for the near future. Individual SAS Institutes and their employees adhere to ethical practices and principles of scientific work and responsibly approach the publication of research results and related issues of co-authorship, plagiarism and intellectual property protection. SAS employees actively engage in popularization activities and public relations. In most cases, SAS Institutes have comprehensive employee assessment systems in place.

### Weaknesses

Overall, there is still no strategic approach towards the selection of research topics which are often selected on an ad hoc basis with no systemic approach. Similarly, the SAS Institutes are not following a coherent approach and they do not align their processes often which leads to inconsistencies and double work. Procedures within SAS Institutes are not unified, there is a lack of best practice sharing. Employees are not aware of their rights with regards to the Code of Ethics which is in place but not adequately implemented. Even though much has been done, multiple documents in English are still missing, which reduces the openness of organizations to foreign employees. Popularization activities are not updated and brought to the 21st century. Direct and active public engagement is not well developed.

### Remarks

Several of the identified weaknesses are being targeted within the Action Plan but many of them are systemic problems which cannot be improved with single targeted actions. This issue is highlighted by missing internal funding for HRS4R activities which had been planned on a low cost basis which should have benefited from other ongoing activities within SAS which include several measures similar or identical to the Action Plan. This approach has, however, its limits which are becoming more visible especially in more systemic problems identified within the GAP analysis (especially OTM-R policy).

## Recruitment and selection

### Strengths

Working conditions are in accordance with the applicable Slovak legislation. Researchers are recognized as experts and treated accordingly. SAS Institutes' infrastructure and equipment are at a high level. SAS Institutes try to balance career and family life. In general, there is a gender balance among employees, although less in decision making bodies. The Gender Equality Policy was introduced in 2022. SAS Institutes recognize and support employee mobility. Intellectual property rights are respected, co-authorship is perceived positively. Internal rules on intellectual property rights have been approved. Many employees participate in the teaching process at universities. Employees have opportunities to participate in decision-making processes – they could participate in the election of both Institutes directors and members of SAS Presidium. Employees can also complain via formalized procedures for complaints and appeals.

### Weaknesses

Many regulations and documents are still available only in the Slovak language, foreign employees can hardly become familiar with them. And even if the English documents are available, communication with administrative and technical staff is often limited to the Slovak language. There are no language courses in place or anyhow supported. Gender representation in decision-making bodies and management is unbalanced, to the detriment of women. Gender balance among employees is not result of targeted approach but more an unintended result and an outcome of lower salaries in SAS when compared to the other employers in Slovakia – which consequently attract more women in a society with its own gender equality problems. A career development strategy and a strategy to support and consider mobility are absent.

### Remarks

The Gender Equality Policy (GEP) and its adoption is a nice example of how things work in SAS. Up until the moment, when it was a requirement of some higher entity (the European Commission in this case) and when there was an available funding (a Horizon 2020 project ATHENA in this case) or a threat to a future one (GEP as a condition for Horizon Europe program), not much had been done. The SAS GEP was prepared because it was required by an external entity who linked this requirement to a condition for funding in Horizon Europe program. These incentives move the activities forward and the employees could benefit from them. This example is similar to other non-directly-research-related areas, including HRS4R. SAS is missing a genuine approach to these kinds of issues which often come at the last place in a list of priorities – unless it is linked to funding of any sort. This is probably a mirror problem of low public funding of science in Slovakia, too.

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## Training and development

### Strengths

Employees can advance their professional development and education. Teams/departments meet regularly, report on work progress and results; their staff get feedback. PhD students can contact their supervisor or scientific secretary of the organization. Qualified advisors are assigned to PhD students. Individual training of employees is supported. There are training schemes in place – for management skills, gender policy, ethical issues and PhD students.

### Weaknesses

Procedures are not formalized but based on “this is how it was always done”. Advisory process for PhD students is not formalized, nor is management training for (senior staff) employees. There are not enough trainings in place and those which are held are not being attended by enough participants – especially the training on ethical issues. Generally, there is a low interest in non-directly-research-related areas – which can be an outcome of abundance of research tasks and no motivation to participate in these trainings.

### Remarks

Thanks to the fact that trainings on various topics are part of the Action Plan, several of them have been organized recently – but only if they were also part of some other policy as there was no assigned funding within HRS4R for these activities. In doing so, trainings for management skills are part of the recommendation by the International Advisory Board. Trainings on gender policy are funded from the Horizon 2020 project ATHENA. Training on ethical issues are organized by the Ethics Committee but they suffer the most from the lack of participants – maybe also linked to the fact that the Ethics Committee lack appropriate resources to perform this task, too. Lastly, within the CARLIS project, several trainings for future careers have been organized for PhD students.

Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed?

The priorities of HRS4R have remained the same. The major change which is under way is that we have realized that some actions simply cannot be done properly without sufficient resources. Especially given that the workload of the Department of Research and Development – which oversees the whole process via the Working Group / Implementation Committee – has significantly increased over the last year. Therefore, we have asked for additional resources from the Ministry for Education, Science, Research and Sport which has put in place a funding scheme for HRS4R institutions in Slovakia. This funding scheme was introduced only after SAS received the HR Excellence Award so we could not have planned for it before. Moreover, the scheme was originally intended for the organizations which had not started the HRS4R process at that time so SAS was not eligible at the beginning. This has, fortunately, changed and also the organizations who have already started the process can ask for HRS4R-related funding. These resources will be used for several HR supporting activities, such as, among other things, to employ a HR specialist who will be tasked with several activities from the Action Plan. We believe that especially more robust and resource-demanding activities will be accelerated this way.

Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates, changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy?

There have been four major changes that influenced the process of HRS4R since its beginning in July 2020:

1. Transformation of SAS research institutes from budgetary organizations to public research institutions in 2021 – a change which should ease the administrative constraints for recruiting new employees and for management of resources. In relation to HRS4R, this process could on one hand ease some of the planned activities, but, on the other, it could also complicate their implementation as some SAS institutes need an adjustment period in order to be fully operational under the new rules.
2. Adoption of Gender Equality Policy in 2022 – a change which should ease several gender-related activities in the Action Plan. This policy is a result of both pressure from the European Commission to adopt such policy in order to get funding from the Horizon Europe program, and also a result of the Horizon 2020 project ATHENA which is currently being implemented by the SAS Institute for Research in Social Communication and its goal was to establish a gender equality policy.
3. Covid-19 Pandemic has significantly altered the life of the whole society in the years of 2020 and 2021. When preparing the Action Plan, we did not take into consideration several consequences that needed to be addressed in this regard as we could not have anticipated them. We all had to change the way of working immediately and to deal with completely new life situations. Unfortunately, this fact also affected our project in

4. several aspects. Not just in terms of deadlines, but also concerning staff members working on this project.
5. Considering the number of projects that are being implemented in the Department of Research and Development, our department was severely undersized and had not enough employees to perform all assigned responsibilities. The situation was escalated to the SAS Presidium and our department was gradually reinforced with more experienced and skilled colleagues. Nevertheless, this has also negatively impacted the implementation of HRS4R.

Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan?

We are awaiting the decision on funding from the Ministry for Education, Science, Research and Sport which is due in coming days (September 2022). This decision will have a major impact on the very implementation of the Action Plan especially in the times of increased expenses on energy as HRS4R is not a priority in terms of internal funding. If we receive the requested funding, we will be able to hire a HR specialist and implement more resources-demanding activities of the Action Plan. If not, we will have to continue in the low-cost approach which could mean that some planned action would be postponed again or done only partially because of insufficient financial and personal resources currently available at SAS.

### 3. Actions

**Action 1: To translate the SAS Code of Ethics into English and publish it on the SAS website**

**Completed** The SAS Code was translated and published on the website on 10th September 2019: [https://www.sav.sk/php/download\\_doc.php?doc\\_no=9079](https://www.sav.sk/php/download_doc.php?doc_no=9079)

**Action 2: To conduct regular ethics trainings**

**Completed** Ethics trainings are regularly organized by the SAS Ethics Committee [https://www.sav.sk/?lang=sk&doc=sas-commission&commission\\_no=16](https://www.sav.sk/?lang=sk&doc=sas-commission&commission_no=16)

Training on scientific integrity and ethics of scientific work – attending of this training is one of the eligibility criteria for all grant applicants within the Grant programme for SAS PhD Students: <https://doktogrant.sav.sk/CurrentCall>

**Action 3: To establish ethics committees in individual SAS Institutes**

**In Progress** This task is also performed by the SAS Ethics Committee and is ongoing. In 2021, a questionnaire was prepared for the SAS research institutes in order to understand the current status of this issues within the SAS research institutes. **Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.**

**Action 4: To adopt internal ethical rules**

**Completed** This task was performed by the SAS Ethics Committee. The document with implementation of ethical principles have been produced and published online: [https://www.sav.sk/?lang=sk&doc=sas-commission&folder\\_no=104](https://www.sav.sk/?lang=sk&doc=sas-commission&folder_no=104)

**Action 5: To formalize the procedure for ethical issues complaints and appeals**

**Completed** This task was also performed by the SAS Ethics Committee. The form for reporting ethical issues is now available online: [https://www.sav.sk/?lang=sk&doc=sas-commission&folder\\_no=562](https://www.sav.sk/?lang=sk&doc=sas-commission&folder_no=562)

**Action 6: To prepare a welcome information package both in Slovak and English**

**Completed** The Slovak and English version of the information package has been prepared and is being sent to new employees via email. It will be also published online: [Recruitment – HRS4R – Human Resources Strategy for Researchers \(sav.sk\)](#)

**Action 7: To prepare a feasibility study of the central data storage system**

**Completed** The study was done and published on the website: [https://csc.sav.sk/wp-content/uploads/uploaded/download/studia-uskutocnitelnosti/SU\\_FINAL\\_web\\_pages.pdf](https://csc.sav.sk/wp-content/uploads/uploaded/download/studia-uskutocnitelnosti/SU_FINAL_web_pages.pdf)

Repository of Slovak Academy of Sciences can be accessed online:  
<https://uk.sav.sk/pre-vedcov/open-access/institucionalny-repozitar-sav/>

**Action 8: To translate important documents, regulations and templates into the English language**

**In Progress** This is an ongoing effort – several key documents have been already translated into English: SAS Code of Ethics, SAS Gender Equality Policy, welcome information package, etc.  
**Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.**

**Action 9: To provide active support for management of international and European projects**

**Completed** There are several project schemes for this purpose:  
 IMPULZ – <https://impulz.sav.sk/en>  
 MoRePro – <https://www.sav.sk/?lang=en&doc=educ-morepro>  
 SASPRO 2 – <https://saspro2.sav.sk/indexEn.html>  
 Doktogranty – <https://www.doktogrant.sav.sk/en>  
 Štefan Schwarz Fund – <https://schwarz.sav.sk>  
 Euraxess point SAS – <https://euraxesspoint.sav.sk/domov-english/>

**Action 10: To prepare a feasibility study of the online tool for project management and financial reporting**

**In Progress** A new EU Project Support Office was created in April 2022 at the Department of Research and Development which is currently working on this task. Moreover, a new financial coordinator will be hired in September 2022.  
[EU project \(sav.sk\)](#)  
**Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.**

**Action 11: To create a project management guide**

**In Progress** A new EU Project Support Office was created in April 2022 at the Department of Research and Development which is currently working on this task.  
[EU project \(sav.sk\)](#)  
**Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.**

**Action 12: To create a strategy and internal rules for secure data backup**

**Completed** A guideline for network usage was prepared and published online:  
[https://www.sav.sk/php/download\\_doc.php?doc\\_no=10486](https://www.sav.sk/php/download_doc.php?doc_no=10486)

A guideline for use of repository is also available online: <https://uk.sav.sk/pre-vedcov/open-access/institucionalny-repozitar-sav/>

Repository of Slovak Academy of Sciences can be accessed online: <https://uk.sav.sk/pre-vedcov/open-access/institucionalny-repozitar-sav/>

**Action 13: To disseminate Open Access news and updates**

**Completed** The SAS Central Library is organizing training for open access news and updates: <https://uk.sav.sk/pre-vedcov/open-access/>

**Action 14: To prepare a concept of public engagement activities**

**Completed** The 2021 questionnaire included questions about public engagement activities. The Department of Research and Development is regularly participating on citizen engagement projects either within Slovakia (e.g. 2021-2022 project on Citizens Vision of Future of Europe) or wider European community (e.g. 2015-2018 project CIMULACT).

**Action 15: To engage in communication activities**

**Completed** Different SAS entities engage in number of communication activities:

- Science cafe in Košice (Biomedical Centre SAS)
- Young Scientists Roadshow around Slovakia (Department for communication and media SAS)
- Science Slam SAS in Bratislava (Young Scientists SAS)
- COVID-19 press conferences (Biomedical Centre SAS)
- Filming exclusive videos of COVID-19 testing samples (Biomedical Centre SAS)
- SAV educates students - educational videos published on the SAS YouTube channel (Department for communication and media SAS)
- SAS home-office popularization videos (Department for communication and media SAS)
- Videos about SAS institutes and their research (Department for communication and media SAS)
- SAVinci workshops (Department for communication and media SAS)
- Science in the Theater about the COVID-19 (Department for communication and media SAS)
- SpaceLab Summer School (Institute of Experimental Physics SAS)
- SAS Science Podcast (Department for communication and media SAS)
- Science for two minutes at Funradio (Department for communication and media SAS)
- Continual dissemination of these activities on SAS website and social media channels (Facebook, Instagram) (Department for communication and media SAS)

**Action 16: To inform about options of the commercial exploitation of research results**

**Completed** This task is being performed by the SAS Technology Transfer Office and can be accessed online: <https://ktt.sav.sk/en/for-scientists/services/>

**Action 17: To provide support for language courses for administrative and technical staff**

**Extended** Delivery of the item is delayed and moved to the 2022-2025 cycle.

**Action 18: To unify researcher evaluation practices**

**Completed** Rules are standardized and published on the website of each SAS institute.

**Action 19: To unify recruitment practices - OTM-R**

**Extended** A dedicated member of the SAS Presidium is responsible for this task. We are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task.  
Delivery of the item is delayed and moved to the 2022-2025 cycle.

**Action 20: To make recommendations about prevention of conflicts of interest in recruitment**

**Extended** A dedicated member of the SAS Presidium is responsible for this task. We are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task.  
Delivery of the item is delayed and moved to the 2022-2025 cycle.

**Action 21: To develop career development plans for each type of researcher positions**

**In Progress** Individual development plan for experienced researchers are already prepared. This task is also treated within a project CARLIS: <https://carlis.saia.sk/> Moreover, we are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task.  
Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.

**Action 22: To provide training on OTM-R for members of recruitment committees and team leaders/heads of departments**

**Extended** We are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task.  
Delivery of the item is delayed and moved to the 2022-2025 cycle.

**Action 23: To increase awareness of international qualifications**

**In Progress**

This task is treated within a project CARLIS: <https://carlis.saia.sk/> - establishing trainings structure for PhD students: pilot trainings will take place in October 2022. Moreover, we are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task. **Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.**

**Action 24: To modify postdoctoral status and recruitment procedures internally**

**Extended**

We are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task. **Delivery of the item is delayed and moved to the 2022-2025 cycle.**

**Action 25: To propose principles for efficient management of publicly funded infrastructure**

**In Progress**

A new EU project support office was created in April 2022 at the Department of Research and Development which is currently working on this task. [EU project \(sav.sk\)](#) **Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.**

**Action 26: To support sharing of best practices between SAS Institutes**

**In Progress**

There are already some activities for sharing best practices, such as Facebook group “SAS Parents” for sharing factual information and contacts (e.g. regarding doctors, kindergartens, schools, etc.). **Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.**

**Action 27: To prepare a feasibility study on a daycare center / kindergarten**

**In Progress**

A feasibility study on a daycare center / kindergarten for SAS employees on the campus in Bratislava is a part of the SAS Gender Equality Policy within Goal 1: SAS actively supports the work-life balance and is currently being prepared: [https://www.sav.sk/php/download\\_doc.php?doc\\_no=10827](https://www.sav.sk/php/download_doc.php?doc_no=10827) **Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.**

**Action 28: To prepare a feasibility study on barrier-free buildings**

**In Progress**

This task will be treated within an architectural study for the new SAS campus which is currently being prepared. **Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.**

**Action 29: To initiate a discussion on changes in researcher remuneration system**

**Completed** A remuneration reform was approved by the SAS Presidium and published online. There was also a change of the legal status of the academy which change to public research organization - the fact which also improved the conditions for better remuneration of researchers in SAS.

**Action 30: To analyze options of the meal allowances for employees**

**Completed** A new regulation was approved on the state level, which says that if employer does not provide meals in its facility, employees can choose between a gastro ticket and a meal allowance: <https://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2001-311#cast7>

**Action 31: To analyze options of a gender balanced composition of the SAS governing and decision-making bodies**

**Completed** This task is being treated in the SAS Gender Equality Policy ([https://www.sav.sk/?lang=en&doc=services-news&source\\_no=20&news\\_no=10099](https://www.sav.sk/?lang=en&doc=services-news&source_no=20&news_no=10099)) and within the H2020 project Athena (<https://www.athenaequality.eu/>). In 2022, there have been several trainings for research team leads and Institutes management dedicated to the implementation of a gender perspective in management: [https://www.sav.sk/?lang=sk&doc=services-news&source\\_no=20&news\\_no=10333](https://www.sav.sk/?lang=sk&doc=services-news&source_no=20&news_no=10333)

**Action 32: To outline a career development plan for employees**

**Extended** We are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task.  
Delivery of the item is delayed and moved to the 2022-2025 cycle.

**Action 33: To adopt a new internal regulation, or to amend the existing decree of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences no. 55/1977 Coll.**

**In Progress** This task needs to be treated in cooperation with the Ministry for Education and the National Council of the Slovak Republic (Parliament) which is a long-term process. The SAS Office and SAS Presidium are currently working on this task. Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.

**Action 34: To outline a support mechanism for mobility and networking**

**Completed** This task is treated within a project CARLIS: <https://carlis.saia.sk/>. Moreover, there are several mobility programs: <https://oms.sav.sk/en/programmes-and-scholarships/mobility-programme/>

**Action 35: To raise awareness on the principles of social security contributions in other countries and their portability**

**In Progress**

This task is partly treated within a project CARLIS: <https://carlis.saia.sk/>. Moreover, we are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task.

Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.

**Action 36: To adopt an internal regulation on intellectual property rights**

**Completed**

The internal direction was approved and published online:

[https://ktt.sav.sk/wp-content/uploads/Zasady\\_06\\_zverejnene\\_ENG\\_ed\\_v2.pdf](https://ktt.sav.sk/wp-content/uploads/Zasady_06_zverejnene_ENG_ed_v2.pdf)

**Action 37: To conduct trainings on the intellectual property rights**

**Completed**

This task is being performed by the Technology Transfer Office of SAS. Trainings on the intellectual property rights are organized at least once a year and disseminate online: <https://ktt.sav.sk/en/>

**Action 38: To sign framework contracts with relevant universities on the involvement of SAS staff in the teaching process**

**Extended**

We are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task.

Delivery of the item is delayed and moved to the 2022-2025 cycle.

**Action 39: To include teaching activities in the evaluation of researchers**

**Extended**

We are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task.

Delivery of the item is delayed and moved to the 2022-2025 cycle.

**Action 40: To adopt internal regulations on processing complaints and appeals**

**In Progress**

This task is also performed by the SAS Ethics Committee and is ongoing.

Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.

**Action 41: To outline a code of conduct for project leaders and project collaborators**

**In Progress**

A new EU project support office was created in April 2022 at the Department of Research and Development which is currently working on this task.

Partially completed and moved on the next cycle 2022-2025.

**Action 42: To develop a mentoring scheme****Extended**

We are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task.

Delivery of the item is delayed and moved to the 2022-2025 cycle.

**Action 43: To develop a management training scheme****Completed**

The management training scheme has been developed by the dedicated member of the SAS Presidium and the trainings are being regularly organized on topics such as: megatrends in science, science diplomacy, strategic and action planning in the implementation of research, skills and trends in research and people management, soft skills etc.

**Action 44: To analyze suitable educational online platforms****Extended**

We are currently in process to employ a HR specialist who will be dedicated to HRS4R and who will also perform this task.

Delivery of the item is delayed and moved to the 2022-2025 cycle.

**Action 45: To include evaluation criteria for advisors in the quality assessment of PhD study****Completed**

SAS Presidium was responsible for this task. The evaluation criteria for advisors were included in the PhD Studies Quality Assurance Policy and published online: [https://www.sav.sk/php/download\\_doc.php?doc\\_no=8632](https://www.sav.sk/php/download_doc.php?doc_no=8632) During the implementation phase, SAS Research Institutes included this policy in their own internal quality assurance policies, which were approved by the SAS Council for Education and Doctoral Studies.

## Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal Review for Interim Assessment)

From the beginning, the implementation of the OTM-R principles was planned for the second half of the first four-year period of the implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan. These measures have been known to be much more demanding in the current setting of SAS. There is a need for a dedicated HR specialist who would take ownership of this task and provide professional approach. Currently, we do not have such a person at SAS. As we need additional resources for employing the HR specialist, we have asked the Ministry for Education, Science, Research and Sport for funding and we are currently awaiting the decision. Provided that we receive the funding, we will employ the HR specialist who will be responsible for OTM-R.

Out of the previously listed actions, we have been able to implement the following ones:

- f) To advertise job postings on the EURAXESS website,
- g) To advertise job postings at other portals in order to reach a broader audience,
- k) To formalize transparent complaints procedures.

## 4. Implementation process

General overview of the implementation process:

In order to harmonize procedures in the individual SAS Institutes with the principles of the Charter and the Code, implementation is being carried out in the above-mentioned 45 actions. The compliance rate varies from the SAS Institute to the SAS Institute, so the implementation of the action plan needs to be tailored to the real needs of the particular SAS Institute. A great emphasis is placed on sharing best practices between the SAS Institutes.

Officially, the participation of SAS Institutes in the SAS HRS4R process has to be approved by the SAS Presidium. Only those SAS Institutes that have developed a gap analysis and an action plan participate in the HRS4R SAS implementation process and can use the “HR Excellence in Research” logo. As for today, there are 25 participating SAS Institutes:

Scientific Section 1:

1. Institute of Electrical Engineering SAS
2. Institute of Physics SAS
3. Institute of Geography SAS
4. Mathematical Institute SAS

5. Institute of Experimental Physics SAS
6. Institute of Geotechnics SAS
7. Institute of Hydrology SAS
8. Institute of Materials and Machine Mechanics SAS
9. Institute of Construction and Architecture SAS
10. Astronomical Institute SAS

Scientific Section 2:

1. Biomedical Research Center SAS
2. Institute of Chemistry SAS
3. Institute of Neuroimmunology SAS
4. Institute of Parasitology SAS
5. Institute of Inorganic Chemistry SAS
6. Institute of Forest Ecology SAS

Scientific Section 3:

1. Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences SAS
2. Institute of Philosophy SAS
3. Ludovit Stur Institute of Linguistics SAS
4. Jan Stanislav Institute of Slavistics SAS
5. Institute for Sociology SAS
6. Institute of Musicology SAS
7. Institute of Oriental Studies SAS
8. Institute of State and Law SAS
9. Institute of Ethnology and Social Anthropology SAS

The goals we want to achieve by following these steps:

- To be more open to foreign employees by translating the necessary regulations, documents, forms into English, improving the communication skills in English for technical and administrative staff;

- To unify and formalize certain procedures by filing and investigating ethical issues, dealing with complaints, appeals, backing up data, storing and sharing data, evaluating researchers, recruiting and selecting researchers, preparing the necessary internal rules (e.g. on ethical issues), intellectual property rights, etc.);
- To support career development and counselling and continuous education by preparation and publication of career plans, career development strategies, career guidance schemes and mentoring, management training;
- To make all necessary documents available to (new) staff and raise awareness of employees by preparation of a bilingual welcome information package, training of scientists on ethical issues, intellectual property rights;
- To harmonize the recruitment process with the OTMR principles - by developing a SAS OTM-R policy, preparing the necessary templates, manuals, documents, training for relevant persons, using different forms of recruitment;
- To analyze the options of improving working conditions for researchers with a special emphasis on selected groups by improving remuneration schemes, facilitating public procurement conditions, balancing family and career life, enabling better access for disabled researchers, creating posts for doctoral students and postdocs.

In order to ensure proper implementation, a HRS4R Working Group was created at the Department of Research and Development of the SAS Office which work closely with the SAS Presidium, SAS Institutes, and various departments or divisions within the SAS Office. The Working Group meets regularly at least each 3 months, so far it met on these days: 17/7/2020, 28/8/2020, 17/12/2020, 22/2/2021, 31/5/2021, 15/11/2021, 17/2/2022, 9/6/2022 and 4/8/2022. The meeting minutes are published online: <https://www.sav.sk/?lang=sk&doc=activity-hrs4r>

Most of the measures taken at central level have a framework or recommendation character and the SAS Institutes are left free to take their own measures to match their current situation and needs. The SAS Institutes are provided with the necessary synergies and methodological support. The implementation plan, as well as check of achieved objectives is being controlled quarterly by the HRS4R Working Group.

A steering committee was created at the SAS Presidium and consists of SAS Vice-Presidents for Research and Development and for three Scientific Sections. The steering Committee was set up to monitor and supervise the implementation and to be regularly informed by the Working Group about the achievements of sub-objectives and / or sub-objectives changes in the action plan and etc. Individual researchers are also regularly informed about the implementation process and are actively involved in the consultation process via a HRS4R Contact Group which consists of representatives from all the participating SAS Institutes.

It will also be necessary to use the services of external bodies and organizations to achieve individual objectives, especially concerning OTM-R. For these purposes, SAS has asked for additional funding from the Ministry for Education, Science, Research and Sport and is currently awaiting the decisions.

The initial Action Plan was drawn up for a period of 4 years - from Q3 2020 to Q2 2024. After two years, the Action Plan was revised and modified.

How have you prepared the internal review?

The 2022 Internal Review was prepared by the HRS4R Working Group / Implementation Committee at the Department of Research and Development, the SAS Office. The Working Group consists of seven people who meet regularly to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan. The Internal Review was drafted at two meetings of the Working Group on 9th June and 4th August 2022 up - internal review. It was consulted with the Steering Committee and all relevant actors. The Internal Review was based on the interim reports prepared continually since the start of the HRS4R process at SAS in July 2020.

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

The research community was involved in the implementation process as follows:

- Involved in the trainings on management skills, gender policy and ethical issue.
- Consulted via the Questionnaire which covered several ongoing issues.
- Informed via the Steering Committee and the SAS Presidium about the ongoing activities.

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

The Implementation Committee (Working Group) is located at the Department of Research and Development, the SAS Office, and consists of seven people who meet regularly to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan. The Steering Group consist of the Vice President for the Research and Development and three Vice Presidents for Scientific Sections of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. They are regularly consulted, at least once in six months, about the current issues.

Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? For example, is the HRS4R recognized in the organisation's research strategy, overarching HR policy.

At SAS, HRS4R was designed from the onset to be aligned with several other organizational policy in order to compensate for the insufficient funding of the individual activities. In doing so, HRS4R is particularly aligned with:

- Recommendations by the International Advisory Board to the leadership of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, which includes several actions of HRS4R, such as:
  - Training of PhD candidates and careers of post-doctoral fellows
  - Diversity of academic staff
  - Academic leadership and sharing of best practice
  - Strategy planning
  - Publication practices and incentives, and outreach
  - Use of intellectual property rights
- Gender Equality Policy, which covers all the gender-related activities of HRS4R
- Activities of the SAS Ethics Committee, which covers most of the ethics-related activities of HRS4R

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

One of the main drivers of the HRS4R is its alignment with the other over-arching SAS policies, such as the SAS development strategy based on the Recommendations by the International Advisory Board, Gender Equality Policy and Ethics Policy. All of these policies are implemented by the SAS Presidium and SAS Office which work closely together and interact on a regular basis. The HRS4R Working Group / Implementation Committee oversees the Action Plan and assures that the responsible persons perform the tasks assigned to them. The Steering Group initiates the formal decision-making processes of the SAS Presidium if necessary in order to perform the particular activities.

How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?

In order to monitor the progress of the Action Plan, there is a master document that includes the list of all the actions together with their task owners and the current status of the particular tasks. This document is regularly updated by the Implementation Committee during their meetings.

How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?

For each action in the Action Plan, there is a set of predefined indicators according to which we measure progress. Some of the activities are definitive (one time), others are continual. For the continual ones, the Working Group will regularly ask the responsible persons for updates and include this information into the monitoring report.

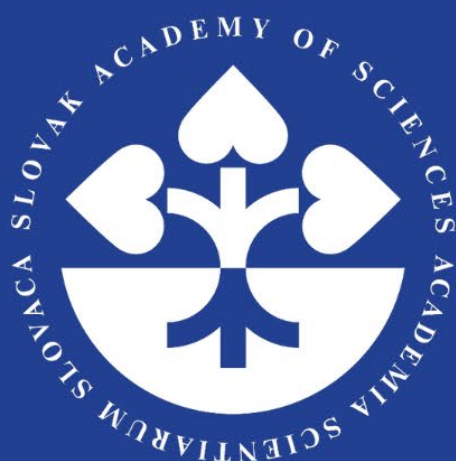
How do you expect to prepare for the external review?

We will continue implementing the Action Plan as before. We expect to employ a HR specialist who will cover more systemic tasks of the Action Plan (especially OTM-R) and who will be responsible for overall alignment of HRS4R priorities with the HR excellence in research. This person will work on a daily basis on HRS4R activities and will communicate with all the involved stakeholders – either on the management side (SAS Presidium, SAS Office, etc.) or on the researchers' side (SAS Institutes).

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process:

The proposed action plan was prepared to be implemented over the 4 years with the option of revision after 2 years. The implementation of the individual actions will ensure the compliance of the HR policies of SAS and its individual Institutes with the principles of the Charter and the Code.

Implementation will be ensured in a cooperative manner at multiple levels - the SAS Office, SAS Presidium, SAS Institutes, other bodies / organizations. The Steering Committee will supervise the proper implementation according to the approved schedule.



SLOVAK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

