



The Research Council  
of Norway

Member Organisation Forum | European Alliance on Research Career Development

International Workshop  
**DEVELOPING RESEARCH CAREERS IN AND BEYOND EUROPE**

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**CONCLUSIONS FROM BREAK-OUT GROUPS**

**Overall Conclusions**

- the need for **new, flexible concepts of mobility**, including combined/part-time positions and flexible financial mechanisms – to facilitate research collaboration across fields, sectors and countries, evaluated by scientific outcome
- the need for a **pilot** (well planned and well distributed across Europe, across disciplines, across research performing organisations of different 'nature') on researchers' careers tracking, with emphasis on the cost effectiveness of the process
- the need for developing an authentically European **researchers' professional development framework**, taking into account the work already done and avoiding to reproduce fragmentation or duplication



**Short reports from each Break-Out Group:**

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## Break-Out Group 1: Bringing further the New Concepts of Mobility

Moderator: Hans Borchgrevink

What we have NOT included

- *Discussions about ineffective labour markets and the use of fixed term employment as a mobility forcing dynamic*
- *Between job ('non-negotiable) mobilities*

### MAIN DISCUSSION POINTS

#### Objectives

Generate and apply new knowledge to contribute to inter-disciplinary, inter-sectoral and international research collaboration

#### Aim

To promote effective and innovative knowledge exchange through the fostering of communication and collaboration

Implies investment in excellent researchers (and individual research 'journeys') and (facilitative) environments:

Intervention 'nested' at interleaving 'levels'

- Group
- Institutional
- National Systems
- European /International

#### Mechanism

**co-presence to build trust and manage risks in research collaborations**

Operationalisation of a needs-based assessment /justification (taking into account the need for strong relationships based on trust and taking account of risks)

#### Communication Tools

- Given the possibilities of new methods of communication (including the raft of remote/virtual tools)
- Promote dynamic instruments to facilitate field changing opportunities demanding:
- Flexible financial mechanisms to facilitate:
- Flexible positions
- Flexible mobilities (such as combined and complex positions, exploratory visits, short stays, sabbaticals, team building, etc.)

## Break-Out Group 2: Setting the European Platform on Career Tracking

Moderator: Maresi Nerad | Rapporteur: Beate Scholz

### Career Tracking Pilot Project

- **Ad hoc mapping exercise by the breakout group**
  - Common interest of participants in tracking of postdoctoral researchers: Career trajectories
  - Tracking to see the impact of funding schemes & for evidence based programme & policy planning
- **Project Rationale**
  - Tracking of postdocs: the « unknown group » => career transitions, mobility patterns; unstructured career phase
  - Understanding impact of schemes on later career
- **Definition of target group 'postdocs'**
  - R 2 according to European Framework on Research Careers
  - Persons who are not yet PIs/group leaders (with limited or without people or budget management)
  - On temporary positions
  - Fellowship holders
- **What to address?**
  - Career transitions/perspectives
  - Impact of training measures
  - National/international comparison
  - Focus groups, involving control group

### Next Steps

1. **By end 07/13: Refinement of core questionnaire** in view of postdocs as target group & rationale of the project
  - Provide a precise target group definition
2. **By end 07/13: Call for expression of interest** in participating in pilot
  - Requirement for workshop participation (see: 4.)
3. **By 09/13: Survey** among registered participants
  - What do they want to get out of the pilot?
4. **End of 09/13: Workshop**
  - Definition of Terms of reference for the pilot
5. **End 12/13: Commitment** for participation & contribution to pilot (incl. Funding)

## Break-Out Group 3: Developing a European Researcher Development Framework (RDF)

Moderator: Anjana Buckow | Rapporteur: Gordon Dalton

### Main Discussion Points

- Short term contracts and the RDF → conflict
- How to convince researchers of the usefulness of the RDF in careers outside academia?
- Lack of Infrastructure in Higher Education institutes (HEI) to promote RDF
  - Qualified personnel, cost for licence, ...
- RDF as a strategy tool for HEI and governments
  - for capacity management, etc.

### Other Tools

There are a number of other tools which are (at least partly) similar to the Vitae RDF (<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/428241/Researcher-Development-Framework.html>). However, a complete survey is not available. Here are some examples which may differ in their aims and their usage (**Homework:** Please, add all other tools you know of!)

- ADOC (<http://www.adoc-tm.com/fr/>)
- MyIDP (<http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>)

There are a number of organisations or entities which are in the process of developing such tools, some examples (**Homework:** Please, try to find as much information as possible about further initiatives in your country!)

- UniWIND (The German University Association of Advanced Graduate Training is a network of 32 universities that share the common objective of advancing the quality of academic education for early stage researchers in Germany)
- EU Working Group on Research Careers (Chair: Fulvio Esposito)

### How to promote RDF in your country

- Euraxess
- Workshops – different communities using different tools
  - Bottom up
  - Several tools in parallel
- Use postdocs as advertisers and multipliers (or start with doctoral students?)
- Funder-Driven (in smaller countries?)
  - Work into contract
- Compulsory?

### 3 main recommendations

- **Exchange with EU Steering Group on RDF**
  - As recommended by Fulvio Esposito
- **Promote 10 Recommendations [link to document]**
  - Science Europe
  - Rectors' Conferences
  - Community of practice
  - database of case studies
  - ESF/Vitae
  - Policy Reference documents (f.i. C&C)
- **Find best practice examples for each point (Homework)**

## Break-Out Group 4: Open space on new Challenges (e.g. Excellence, Gender & Diversity)

Moderator: Iain Cameron

### Main Discussion Points

- **Personal and diversity issues**
  - National actions on gender and diversity in research (survey)
  - Dealing with career breaks in peer review
  - Return to research after breaks
- Availability and quality of (national) data
- Attracting into and continuity of positions
  - Dual career issues
  - **Attracting and retaining the best** (the best whatever background)
  - Bridging between grants
    - Precariousness of positions
  - Sustainability of funding – centres of excellence
  - **Obstacles for third country researchers**
    - Legal barrier
      - Entry conditions
      - Interpretation of rules
    - Worse for some continents/countries e.g. Africa
- **Awareness of the charter and code**
  - **Commitment of national authorities**
  - Awareness among researchers and research institutions
- **Knowledge exchange**
  - **People and ideas**
  - **Co-operation between academy and private sector (government)**
- **Keeping space for fundamental and independent research (for the best researchers)**
  - Room for independent research topic - ? conflict with funder/organisational direction/strategy
- Career start / development
  - Starting grants (– not ERC)
  - Routes to sources of post-doctoral positions (funding)
  - Future research leaders(hip) – career development issue and who is responsible
- Problems from the financial crisis

### 3 main recommendations

- Presented a menu of possible areas for action (brainstorm)
- Some suggested points of focus (in blue)
- Sharing of ideas and common understanding is important