

**THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR RESEARCHERS
AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS**

**HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY
FOR RESEARCHERS (HRS4R)
GAP ANALYSIS AND ACTION PLAN**

May 2016

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1. FEW WORDS ABOUT ADAM MICKIEWICZ UNIVERSITY (AMU)

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań is a major academic institution in Poznań and one of the top Polish universities. Its reputation is founded on tradition, the outstanding achievements of the faculty and attractive curricula offered to students.

In addition to its facilities in Poznań, it has campuses in Gniezno, Kalisz, Piła and Słubice/Franfurt-Oder. The University currently employs nearly 3,000 teaching staff, including over 260 tenured professors, almost 450 associate professors and over 1600 adjunct professors with the Ph.D. title and senior lecturers. The University was founded in 1919 and currently its student population is nearly 49 000 students (over 1000 are international students).

The mission of the University is to advance knowledge through high quality research and teaching in cooperation with business, the professions, public services and other research and educational providers. In 2002-2013 our professors coordinated or were partners in over 40 research projects funded by the European Union Framework Program for Research and Technological Development. AMU is a member of: EUA - European University Association, EUCEN - European University Continuing Education Network, The Compostela Group of Universities, The Santander Group - European University Network, European Chemistry Thematic Network and other European Research Networks.

The University is a centre of academic excellence, where research and teaching are mutually sustaining, and where research is conducted and knowledge is sought and applied in international as much as regional and national context. The University continuously extends and updates research programs and contents of study curricula, with special emphasis on their interdisciplinary and international character.

2. AMU AND THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR RESEARCHERS AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS

The principles of the Charter and the Code are in line with AMU policy aiming to increase University's attractiveness to researchers by offering them a favorable working environment, enhancing the quality of research and innovation and boosting international mobility. By implementing the Charter and the Code AMU intends to foster international collaboration and contribute to the development of an open and attractive European market for researchers.

When the decision had been made, the Rector of AMU signed the declaration of support for the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (February 2015) (https://pracownicy.amu.edu.pl/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/267099/Deklaracja-wsparcia-dla-Europejskiej-Karty-Naukowca.pdf)

A working group was established comprising key stakeholders (authorities, academic staff, HR managers, PhD students).

AMU European Charter and Code Implementation Working Group:

prof. Andrzej Lesicki – Vice Rector for Staff and AMU Development

prof. Jacek Witkoś – Vice-Rector for Research and International Cooperation

prof. Izabela Nowak – Faculty of Chemistry

prof. Hanna Koćka-Krenz - Faculty of Historical Studies

prof. Jan Grad – Faculty of Social Sciences

drlwona Chmura-Rutkowska – Faculty of Educational Studies

dr Robert Jagodziński – Faculty of Geographical and Geological Studies

dr hab. Agnieszka Jelewska – Faculty of Polish and Classical Studies

mgr Natalia Chromińska – Director of the Rector's Office

dr Aleksandra Bocheńska – Deputy Head of Human Resources and Organisation Department

mgr Marcin Dokowicz – PhD Students' Union.

Implementation process timeline:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| February 2015 | – declaration of support for the Charter and the Code |
| April 2015 | – first meeting of the Implementation Working Group |
| April – December 2015 | – internal gap analysis (template for internal gap analysis and staff survey) |
| February 2016 | – approval of action plan and its publication |
| March 2016 | - the consensus report form with the experts' evaluation was received |
| April-May 2016 | - preparation of the revised action plan and resubmission to EU |
| Second quarter of 2018 | – self-assessment |
| Second quarter of 2020 | – external evaluation |

3. THE HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS (HRS4R) 5-STEP PROCEDURE

To implement the principles and recommendations of the Charter and the Code a voluntary 5-step procedure was proposed – the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R):

Step 1: Internal gap analysis

Step 2: Action plan

Step 3: “HR excellence in research” award

Step 4: Self-assessment

Step 5: External assessment by peer review.

Step 1 is the stage where the institution assesses what is currently in place against the set of C&C requirements. Each requirement is compared to the present state/policy (what is currently done) and assessed whether some recovery measures/corrective actions are needed. A very helpful and practical tool was set up – a template for the internal gap analysis, where all 40 C&C recommendations were grouped in 4 areas (I: Ethical and professional aspects, II: Recruitment, III: Working conditions and social security, IV: Training).

Step 2 involves online publishing of “Human Resources Strategy for Researchers” – the results of internal gap analysis and the action plan to be executed in order for the institution to align more with the C&C principles.

Step 3 – once the first 2 steps are formally approved, the European Commission awards “HR Excellence in Research” logo.

Step 4 – self-assessment of implementation is conducted every two years to identify risks and threats and to assess progress.

Step 5 – External assessment by peer review; it takes place every four years – the institution prepares a progress report assessed by external peers.

4. INTERNAL GAP ANALYSIS

The remit of the Implementation Working Group was to carry out the implementation of the principles and recommendations of the Charter and the Code. The members of the Implementation Working Group were in contact and met regularly throughout the year 2015 to plan, prepare and execute phases of implementing the C&C. The following general rules were established:

- all key stakeholders should be involved,
- top-down and bottom-up approach should be adopted,
- level of importance should be taken into account,
- affected groups should be identified.

In 2015 a thorough gap analysis was carried out by the Implementation Working Group. At this stage, the remit of the Working Group was to map the Charter and Code against existing legislation (national, sectorial, internal regulations), guidelines and good practice at AMU in order to provide a comprehensive gap analysis. This work was intended to help to identify where our university stands in relation to the documents and what actions might need to be taken to align with the principles in the Charter and Code.

It was decided that two tools would be used: the template for the internal analysis and the questionnaire staff survey.

Template for the internal analysis

Internal gap analysis required the use of the template recommended by the EU (Example of standard template for the internal analysis). Each member of the Implementation Working Group filled in the template. The members of the Implementation Group were made familiar with a SWOT analysis and it was recommended as an auxiliary tool should be used in order to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Both the level of importance and the groups affected were taken into consideration. Later, discussions within Working Group followed and a single final document was drafted.

It was concluded that, generally, AMU policy is in compliance with the recommendations and principles of the Charter and Code. The strengths were far more obvious than the weaknesses. No legal regulation was identified as a serious impediment to the implementation process. The existing Polish labour law, together with sector-specific regulations as well as internal regulations and policies allowed AMU to fulfill and, in some cases, exceed the Charter and Code's requirements (especially with reference to research freedom and ethical principles, research and working conditions, funding and salaries, relations with supervisors). However, some weaknesses were recognized within the following areas:

- (1) data protection;

- (2) some aspects of recruitment process;
- (3) career development and access to career advice;
- (4) non-discrimination policy.

List of relevant national legislation:

- Act of 27 July 2005 on higher education (Official Journal of Laws of 2005, No. 164, item 1365).
- Act of 14 March 2003 on academic degrees and academic title and degrees and title in art (Official Journal of Laws of 2014, item 1852)
- The Labour Code of 26 June 1974 (Official Journal of Laws of 1974, No. 24, item 141)

Internal law:

- AMU statute
- AMU Senate resolutions
- Rector's decrees

Staff opinion survey

In order to involve all stakeholders in the project, a bottom-up approach to the problem was adopted and staff opinion survey was carried out. All Implementation Working Group members recognized it as an important source of suggestions on what seems problematic. It was viewed as great opportunity to encourage an internal debate. The aim of the survey was to collect data concerning the opinions of the academic staff and PhD students about whether AMU fulfills the principles and requirements of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first one collected information about the participant's sex, age, academic group and academic degree. The second contained 36 statements, directly connected with the principles and requirement of the Charter and the Code (some simplifications as regards the length of the principles were introduced). The respondents were given 5 possible answers and asked to pick one: (1) "I strongly agree", (2) "I agree", (3) "It is difficult to say", (4) "I disagree", (5) "I strongly disagree". The respondents have also a possibility to comment on the subject of the survey.

Procedure

It was decided to use an on-line questionnaire in order to secure the highest feedback possible. The questionnaire was posted on AMU website and was available online for a month. The academic staff and PhD students were informed via e-mail about the questionnaire and its aim.

Participants

The sample consisted of 363 academic staff and PhD students who completed an online questionnaire. 163 women (44.90%) and 200 men (55.10%) participated. 30.85% of the respondents fell into the age range of 24-30 years (112 respondents). 74 respondents (20.39%) were in the age range of 31-35, 60 respondents (16.53%) were in the age range of 36-40, 49 respondents (13.50%) were in the age range of 41-50 and 68 respondents (18.73%) were in the age range of 50 and older. Almost 38% of respondents (137) held a doctor's degree. 119 respondents had a master's degree (32.78%), 70 respondents had a 'doktor habilitowany' degree (19.28%) and 37 respondents had a professor degree (10.19%). The majority of the participants identified themselves as research and teaching staff (59.23%). 108 respondents were PhD students (29.75%), 20 respondents were teaching staff (5.51%) and the same number of research staff participated in the survey (20).

In analysing the data provided by the survey it was decided that an attention should be directed at areas with a high percentage of answers "difficult to say". Admittedly, it can be interpreted as lack of knowledge, but it can be also seen as a sign that transparency in AMU policies and practices should be improved.

Results

The staff opinion survey, similarly to the internal gap analysis, revealed areas for enhancements. Generally, the internal gap analysis together with the survey revealed five areas, where existing practice or policy should be improved:

- 1) institution's assistance in successful fulfilling various roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers;
- 2) selected aspects of recruitment;
- 3) balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties;
- 4) evaluation/appraisal systems;
- 5) non-discrimination.

Recommendations of the EU assessors:

In March 2016 the consensus report form with the evaluation was received, where the following recommendations were given:

- results given on Gap Analysis outcome are quite vague;
- it seems that early stage researchers were not really consulted (no strategic approach on the career plan development for young employees);
- a more comprehensive (thorough) Gap Analysis results would help assess whether the action plan is clearly linked to the observations made in the Gap Analysis;
- a Gantt chart with a clear timeline at the end to summarize the Action plan would be useful, together with a description of the monitoring of the action plan,

It was also pointed out that none of the assessors had not been able to find the HRS4E on the website, which was rather unexpected as it was published with all other necessary information at the website of the Adam Mickiewicz University in February 2016 (<https://amu.edu.pl/prawa-kolumna/europejska-karta-naukowca/informacje>). It can be easily found on the Polish as well as English version of the AMU website.

In order to implement the experts' recommendations a range of changes were introduced in the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) – Gap Analysis and Action Plan. The changes included:

- in order to avoid being vague some statements and Gap Analysis results were re-written and re-edited;
- as far as the remarks considering young researchers are considered – more detailed information on the consultations that were carried out was provided in the document;
- some changes in a structure of the document were introduced in order to establish a clear link between the results of the Gap Analysis and the action plan;
- a Gantt chart together with a description of the monitoring of the action plan was added at the end of this document.

Consultations with young researchers

Additionally to the gap analysis and on-line survey the consultations on the HR strategy were held with the representatives of the PhD Students' Union. As a result, the Implementation Working Group received a document called "Set of proposals on HR strategy". PhD students, as well as other young researchers (early stage researchers), were also encouraged to include comments on their situation and problems in the on-line questionnaire. The Working Group analysed all remarks, comments and proposals concerning early stage researchers and the conclusions were included in the final version of the HR strategy.

1. Institution's assistance

The Implementation Working Group decided to include a few issues in this category:

1.1. institution's assistance within the following areas:

1.1.1. getting all necessary approvals before starting research;

1.1.2. researchers' awareness of the national, sectorial or institutional regulations governing training and/or working conditions;

1.1.3. accountability rules;

1.2. data protection;

1.3. stability and permanence of employment;

1.4. career development and access to career advice.

1.1. Institution's administrative assistance

AMU recognises the institution's supporting and monitoring role within the areas of researchers' accountability, professional attitude and contractual and legal obligation. This attitude is reflected in the organisational structure of AMU. There are several central administrative departments that undertake a wide variety of supportive, administrative, secretarial, financial and human resources tasks within our institution. The effective cooperation between researchers and non-academic staff is an important factor of successful fulfilling of various roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers.

When asked about the institution's support/assistance, members of academic staff and PhD students indicated that they felt it was insufficient with regard to 3 aspects: (1) getting all necessary approvals before starting research; (2) awareness of the national, sectoral or institutional regulations governing training and/or working conditions; (3) accountability rules (results of the staff survey – see Table no. 1 and Charts no. 1, 2 and 3).

The Implementation Working Group analysed the existing AMU policy within these areas. Contractual and legal obligations as well as accountability rules are generally made clear in several, easily accessible sources: whether it's national, sectoral or institutional regulations (e.g. employment contract, labor regulations, conditions of the funding agencies, etc.). The AMU website provides detailed information on internal general and internal regulations, e.g. on managing budgets and financial systems to be followed.

Table no. 1 – Institution's assistance (overall results – 363 respondents)

Statement	I strongly agree	I agree	Difficult to say	I disagree	I strongly disagree	no answer
1. The university provides assistance in getting all necessary approvals before starting research or accessing the resources provided.	38 10.47%	134 36.91%	87 23.97%	74 20.39%	27 7.44%	3 0.82%
2. The university provides assistance to raise researchers' awareness of the national, sectoral or institutional regulations governing training and/or working conditions.	43 11.85%	118 32.51%	102 28.10%	67 18.46%	25 6.88%	8 2.20%
3. The university provides assistance and supervises researchers in their accountability towards the employer, funders or other related bodies, especially accountability for financial management.	55 15.15%	127 34.99%	97 26.73%	59 16.25%	21 5.78%	4 1.10%

Chart no. 1 – institution’s administrative assistance

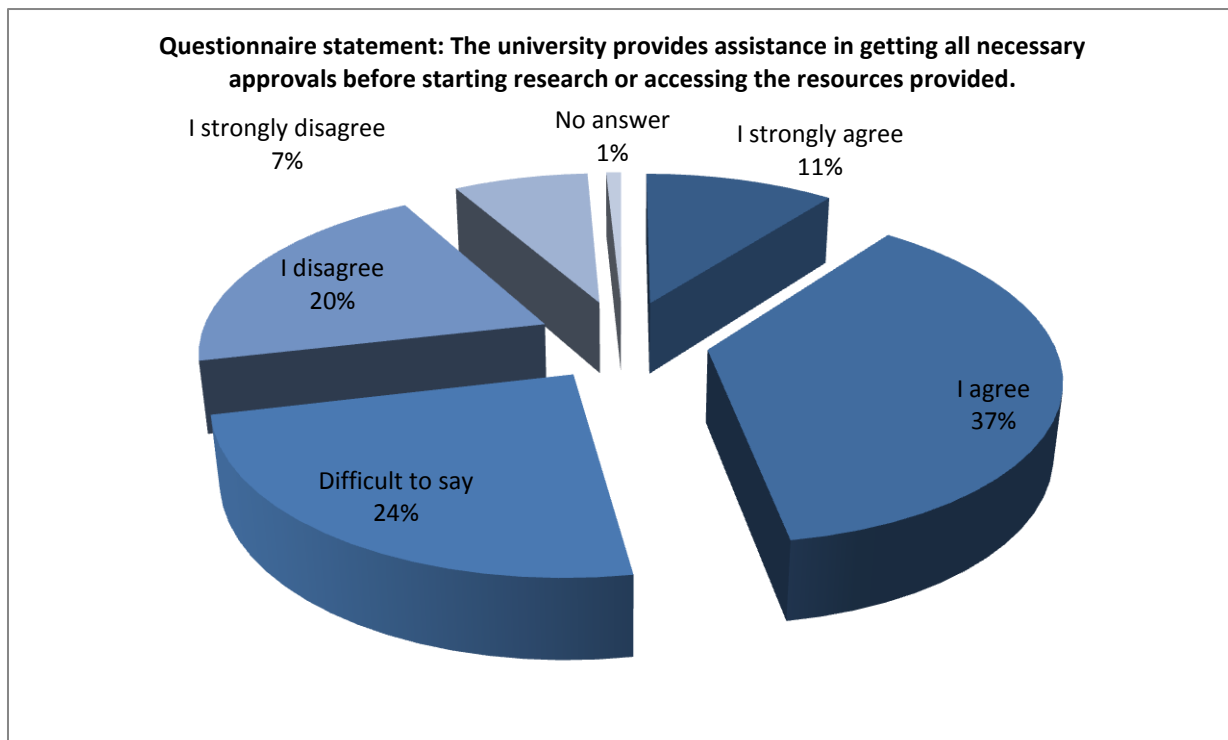


Chart no. 2 – institution’s administrative assistance

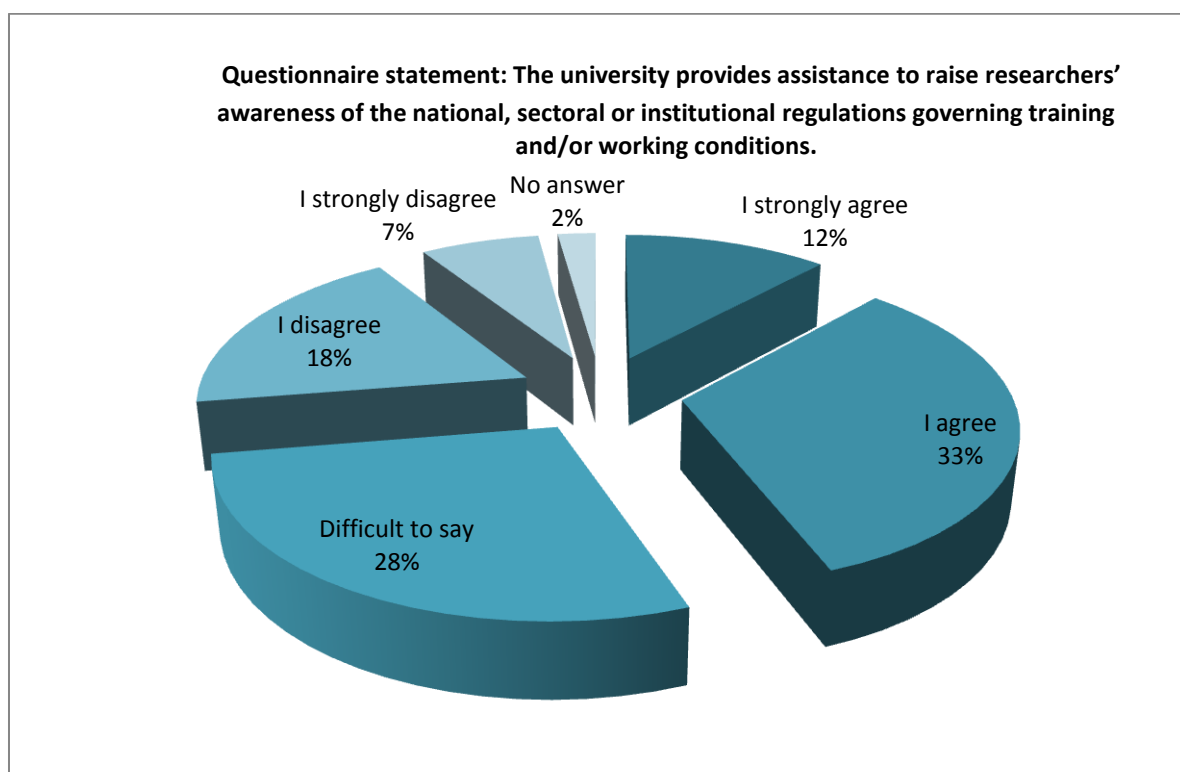
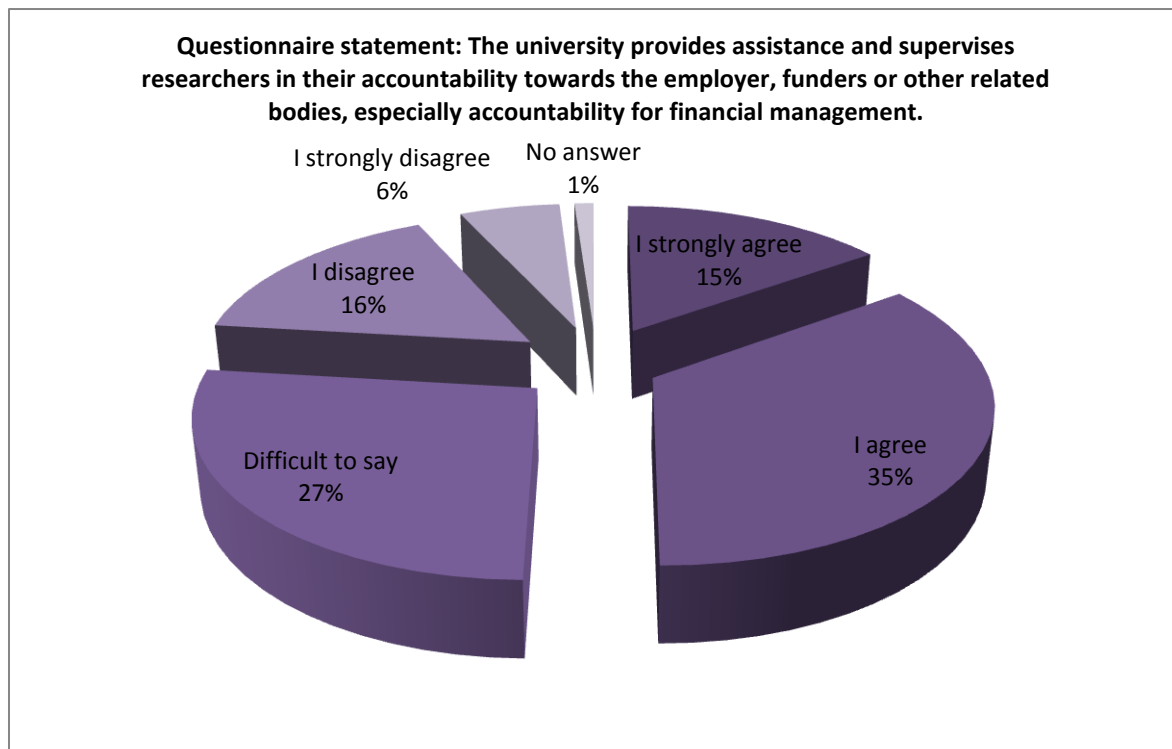


Chart no. 3 – institution’s administrative assistance



Conclusions

Taking into account the survey results, it was proposed that some modifications in existing administrative procedures need to be made in order to improve the institution’s assistance in successful fulfilling various roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers. The Implementation Working Group decided that researchers need to get as much institutional support as it is possible. In addition to existing procedures, a new information policy needs to be developed and implemented.

Actions to be taken concerning institution’s administrative assistance:

An introduction of **a new strategy on information** in order to enhance the researchers’ abilities to meet all sorts of formal requirements, including:

- (1) courses covering researcher’s responsibilities (national, sectoral and institutional regulations) – at the beginning of employment,
- (2) courses of relevant legal regulations and administrative procedures with regard to managing projects and finances – when receiving access to financial resources,
- (3) guidance materials provided on AMU website on internal administrative procedures,
- (4) management workshops for researchers who feel they need to improve their management skills,

- (5) assistance for non-Polish speaking researchers (cooperation with EURAXESS Services Centre for Mobile Researchers; relevant documents to be translated to English, e.g. employment documents).

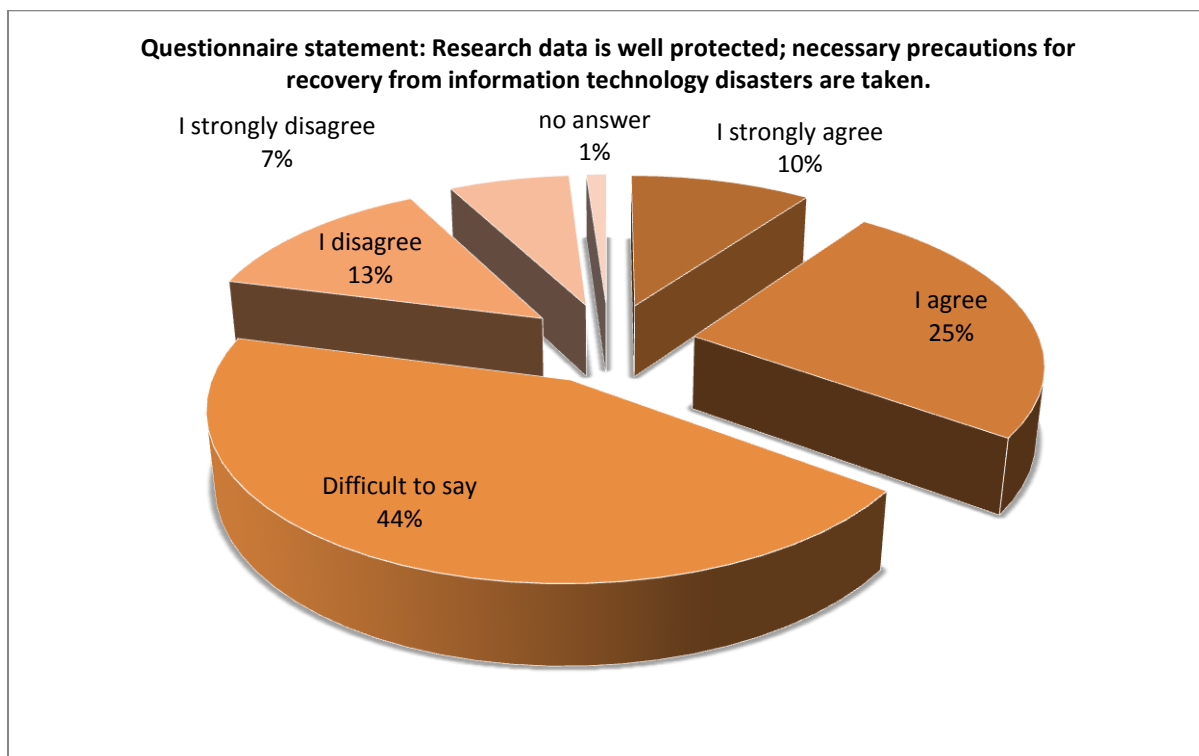
1.2. Data protection

The internal gap analysis as well as the survey results revealed that there was a need to improve **data protection** and take the necessary precautions for recovery from information technology disasters. No internal regulations exist in AMU to ensure data protection. The survey showed that 72 out of 363 respondents (19.83%) think that their research data is not protected at all, and 160 respondents (44.07%) assess that it is difficult to say whether research data is properly protected (Table no. 2; Chart no. 4).

Table no. 2 – Data protection (overall results – 363 respondents)

Statement	I strongly agree	I agree	Difficult to say	I disagree	I strongly disagree	no answer
Research data is well protected; necessary precautions for recovery from information technology disasters are taken.	36	91	160	48	24	4

Chart no. 4 – Data protection



Conclusion

In light of the results of the gap analysis and the results of the on-line survey the Implementation Working Group suggested that a back-up strategy is needed that will include principles of good information handling.

Actions to be taken concerning data protection:

- (1) a back-up strategy will be outlined;
- (2) training in IT skills will be provided for those researchers who feel they need it;

1.3. Stability and permanence of employment

Another issue under scrutiny was **stability and permanence of employment**. An in-depth analysis of the present employment regulations and AMU employment policy was performed by the Implementation Working Group. Internal gap analysis showed that the existing labour law, both national and sectoral, created favourable conditions for permanence of employment. Although the existing employment regulations (AMU statute) allow AMU to employ academic staff under fixed-term contracts, it is the University policy to employ academic staff under indefinite contracts. It is treated as the usual and standard form of employment. Fixed term contracts are rarely used only where there are necessary and objective reasons for doing so (e.g. employment for posts where funding is short-term). Additionally, the Polish employment law provides strong employee protection in terms of stability of employment– it is obligatory to make a third contract permanent if a person is continuously employed.

The survey results, on the other hand, indicated that quite a number of employees felt insecure about their permanence of employment – 115 respondents out of 363 disagreed with the statement “The stability of employment is ensured” and additional 74 persons indicated “Difficult to say” which together stood for 52,06% of the entire sample (Table no. 3; Chart no. 5). The groups most concerned about employment stability were PhD students (results of the survey – Table no. 4; Chart no. 6) and those among academic staff who were employed as research and teaching staff (result of the survey – Table no. 5; Chart no. 7).

It was presumed that the insecurity within the group of research and teaching staff results from the obligation to obtain post-doctoral academic degrees in a specified period of time (8 years to obtain “doctor habilitowany” (dr hab.) degree; 12 years to obtain “profesor” (prof.) degree). If an employee fails to do so, the institution has sufficient legal grounds to make the employee redundant.

As far as PhD students are concerned, the majority of PhD students have student status, rather than being employed. This is a result of Poland signing up the Bologna Accords and accepting the framework of three cycles of higher education qualifications (bachelor’s degree, master’s degree and doctoral degree). Student status is largely seen as beneficial to

the students for financial reasons (no income tax), although at the same time they are unable to benefit from social security and pension rights. This situation was identified as the only one where the national law can hinder the implementation process.

Conclusion

Given the results both of the internal gap analysis and the survey, it was proposed to undertake actions aiming at creating favourable work conditions for effective scientific development. The members of the Implementation Work Group agreed that there is need to increase support to early stage researchers by reinforcing the use of the already existing instruments in favour of early stage researchers.

Actions to be taken concerning stability and permanence of employment:

Flexible employment policy needs to be introduced in order to create favourable conditions for researchers who are obliged to obtain post-doctoral academic degrees within a specified maximum period (8 years to obtain “doctor habilitowany” degree; 12 years to obtain “professor” degree), including such elements as:

- granting paid sabbatical leaves
- allowing teaching load to be reduced to increase research efficiency.

Table no. 3 – Stability and permanence of employment (overall results – 363 respondents)

Statement	I strongly agree	I agree	Difficult to say	I disagree	I strongly disagree	no answer
The stability of employment is ensured.	64	105	74	77	38	5

Chart no. 5 - Stability and permanence of employment (overall results – 363 respondents)

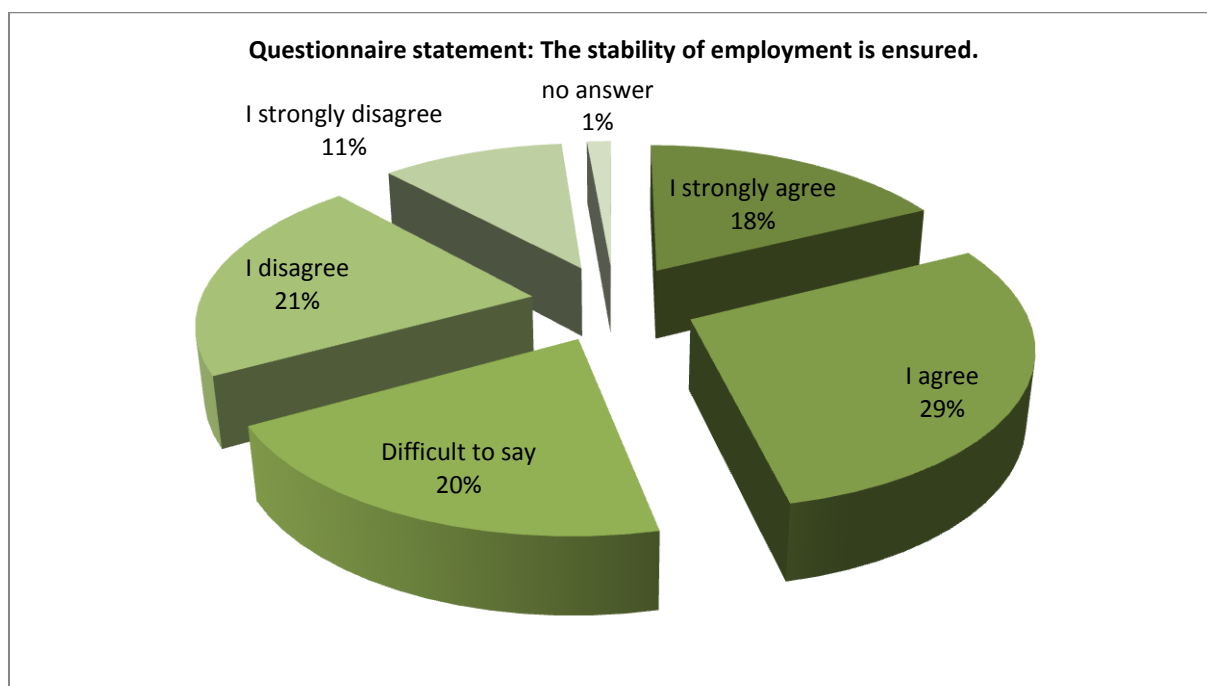


Table no. 4 - Stability and permanence of employment (PhD students – 108 respondents)

Statement	I strongly agree	I agree	Difficult to say	I disagree	I strongly disagree	no answer
The stability of employment is ensured.	8	19	30	29	21	1

Chart no. 6 - Stability and permanence of employment (PhD students – 108 respondents)

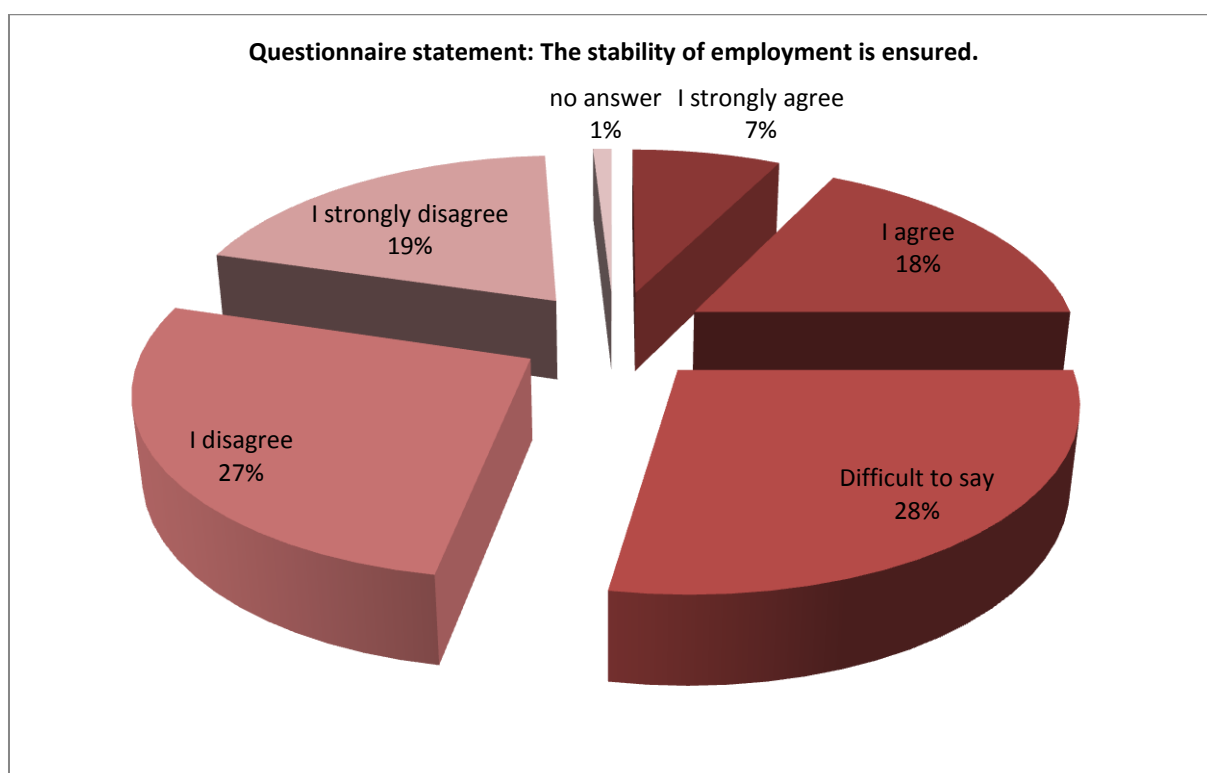
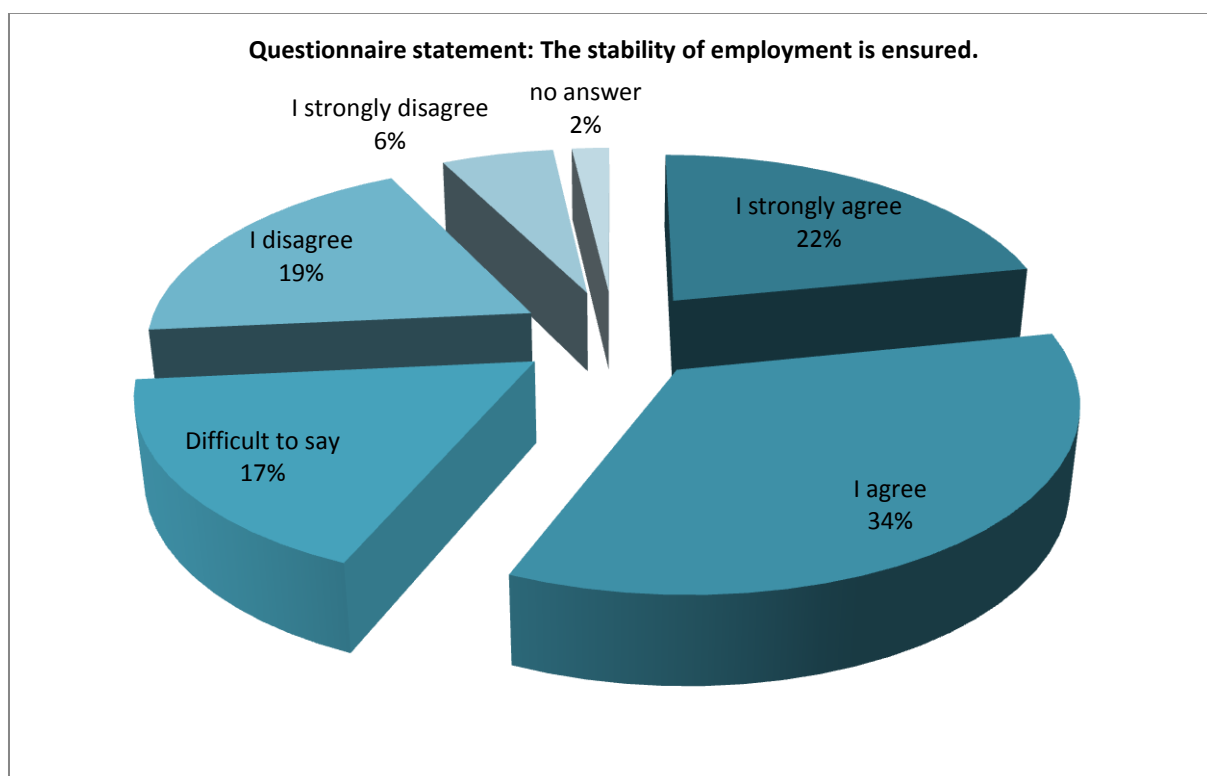


Table no. 5 - Stability and permanence of employment (scientific and didactic workers – 215 respondents)

Statement	I strongly agree	I agree	Difficult to say	I disagree	I strongly disagree	no answer
The stability of employment is ensured.	47	74	37	41	12	4

Chart no. 7 - Stability and permanence of employment (scientific and didactic workers – 215 respondents)



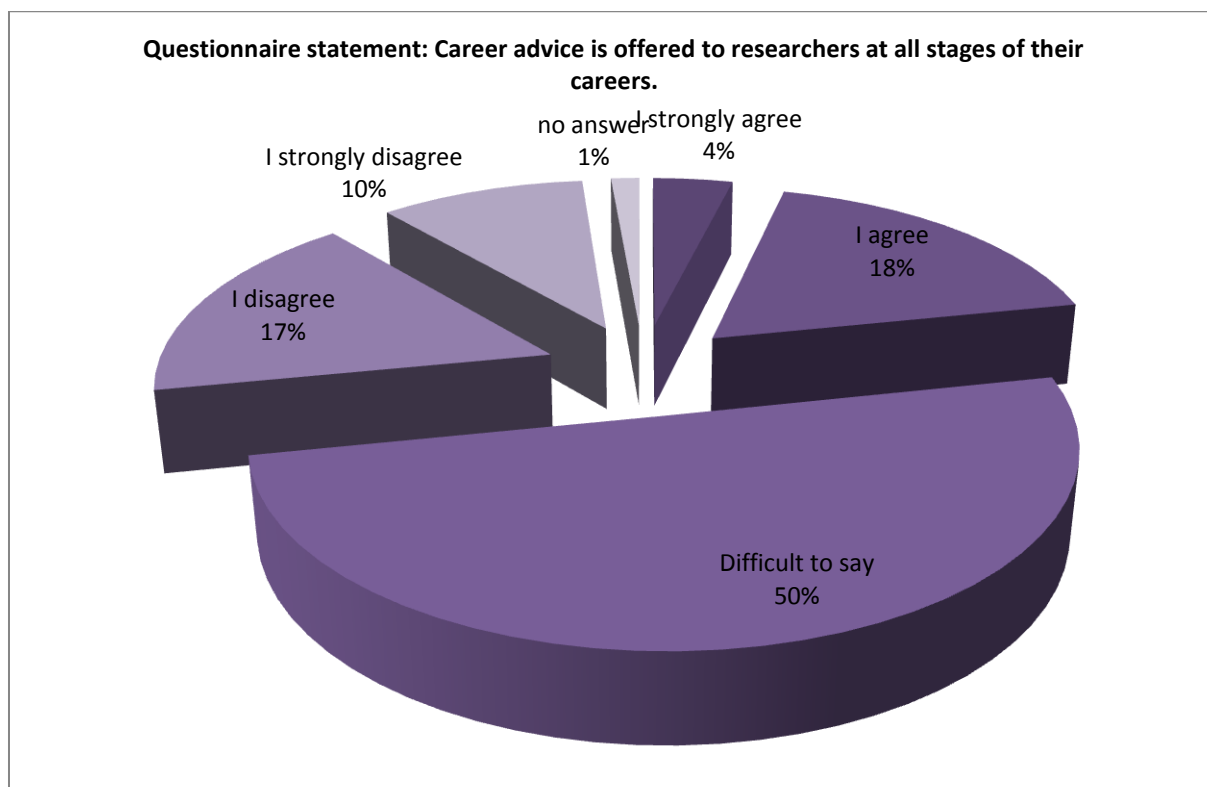
1.4. Career development and access to career advice

Both internal gap analysis and the questionnaire survey indicated that the employees lack support in **career development** and have limited **access to career advice**. Internal gap analysis proved that our institution offers limited advice on career management and development. What we lack is “a specific development strategy for researchers at all stages of their career” that is recommended in the Charter. It could enable an individual researcher to set a clear career path. Human Resources Department deals with employment matters, while Career Services Department runs a variety of programmes aimed at gaining new skills and work experience for students and alumni only. The survey results validated this conclusion – the researchers feel they lack career advice. 97 out of 363 respondents (26.72%) stated that there is no career advice and 182 persons marked “difficult to say” (over 50%), which tops all the other answers (Table no. 6; Chart no. 8).

Table no. 6 – Access to career advice (overall results – 363 respondents)

Statement	I strongly agree	I agree	Difficult to say	I disagree	I strongly disagree	no answer
Career advice is offered to researchers at all stages of their careers.	14	65	182	61	36	5

Chart no. 8 – Access to career advice (overall results – 363 respondents)



Conclusion

It is crucial to improve the attractiveness of various academic positions by establishing a clear career path. An institution should be active in supporting researchers in this area, especially supporting early stage researchers. Career advice should be offered to all researchers. More attention needs to be given to these matters in our institution.

Actions to be taken concerning career development and access to career advice:

- a career development strategy for researchers at all stages of their career needs to be developed, which will be based on profiles aligned to academic positions, from research assistant to professor. A special attention will be devoted to preparing a career plan development for young employees. The profiles should detail the range of demands, responsibilities and competencies required at each grade;
- identification of the skills that should be developed at each stage of a scientific career and to provide courses on those skills, including career management and planning
- in addition to career development strategy career advice will be offered to researchers at all stages of their career

2. Selected aspects of recruitment

The Implementation Working Group decided to focus on the following matters within the area of **recruitment**:

- clearly specified entry and admission standards for researchers,
- open, efficient, transparent, supportive and internationally comparable recruitment procedures (transparency of the recruitment procedures)
- feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates' applications,
- merits to be judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively,
- clear rules and explicit guidelines for the recruitment and appointment of postdoctoral researchers.

The Implementation Working Group analysed the existing legislation as well as AMU policies and practices with regard to the recruitment procedure. It is obligatory to follow a specified recruitment procedure when employing for a ½ FTE position (art. 118a of the Act on Higher Education, § 112 of AMU statute). AMU statute provides a number of provisions concerning the recruitment procedure (§ 122 - § 125 of AMU statute). The procedure includes the following stages: appointing a selection committee (at least 5 persons); posting a job advertisement on AMU website and EURAXESS website; preparing a committee's report (a model report was introduced). Several job advertisements and other recruitment procedure documents were scrutinized.

It was concluded that we lacked some elements in our recruitment procedure to be in compliance with the principles and recommendations of the Charter and the Code. Some elements, on the other hand, need to be enhanced. The advertisements lack information on career development prospects. There is no requirement set with regard to the time between the advertisement of the vacancy or the call for applications and the deadline for replying. More attention should be given to informing the candidates about career development prospects as well as about the strengths and weaknesses of their applications. We must make sure that apart from focusing on their overall potential as researchers, their creativity and level of independence should also be considered. This means that merits should be judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

Again, the survey results confirmed some of the findings of the Implementation Working Group (see Table no. 7; Chart no. 9-12 for details). A considerable number of the respondents (28.65%) assessed that entry and admission standards for researchers were unclear and 101 respondents (27.82%) were not able to say whether the admission standards were clear or unclear. 87 respondents (23.96%) did not agree with the statement "Selection committees are objective and competent", while 133 respondents (36.63%) marked "difficult to say". Over 49% of the respondents found it problematic to determine whether the selection process factored in the whole range of experience of the candidates and 17.07% of the respondents was quite sure it was not the case. As far as the constructive feedback on the candidate's application and performance is concerned, the results were fairly evident: over 30% think there is no feedback and over 55% of the respondents find it difficult to assess.

Table no. 7 – Selected aspects of recruitment (overall results – 363 respondents)

Statement	I strongly agree	I agree	Difficult to say	I disagree	I strongly disagree	no answer
Entry and admission standards for researchers are clearly specified	36	115	101	60	44	7
Selection committees are objective and competent.	35	102	133	56	31	6
Candidates are informed after the selection process about the strengths and weaknesses of their applications.	8	32	204	73	41	5
The selection process takes into consideration the whole range of experience of the candidates. Merit is judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively; mobility experience is recognised.	24	89	181	43	19	7

Chart no. 9 - Selected aspects of recruitment

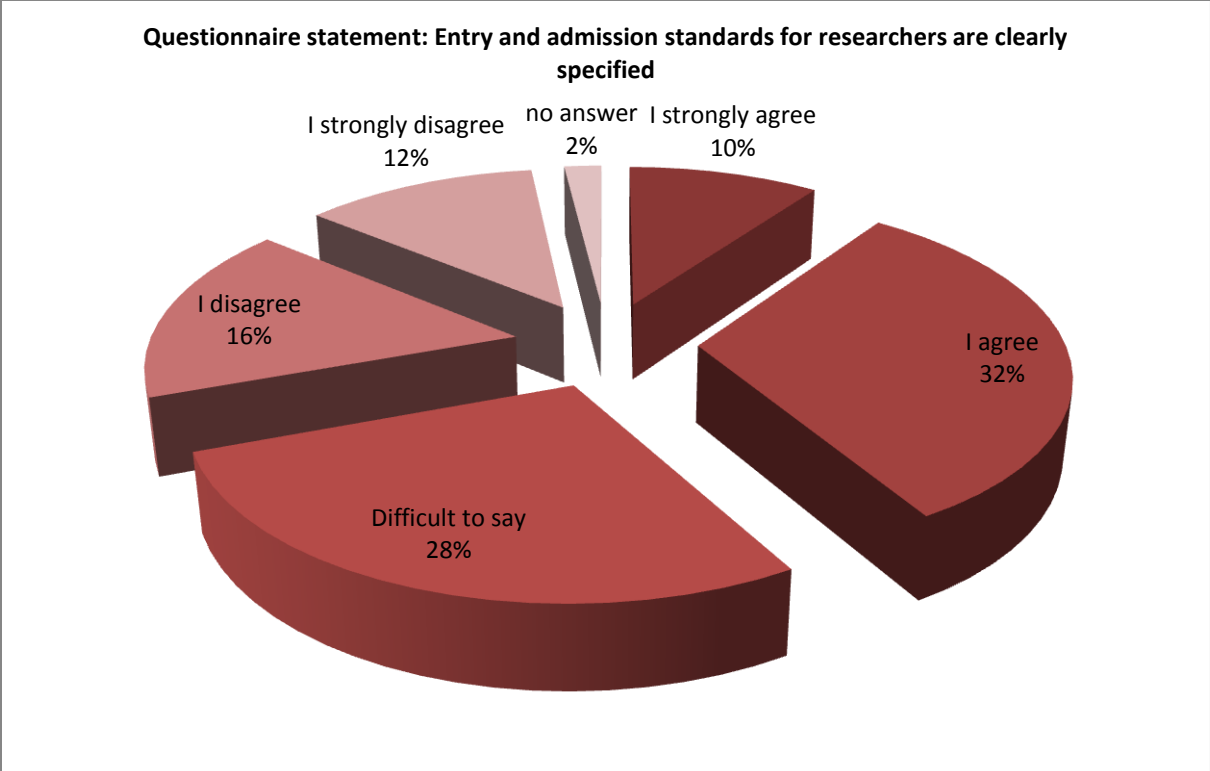


Chart no. 10- Selected aspects of recruitment

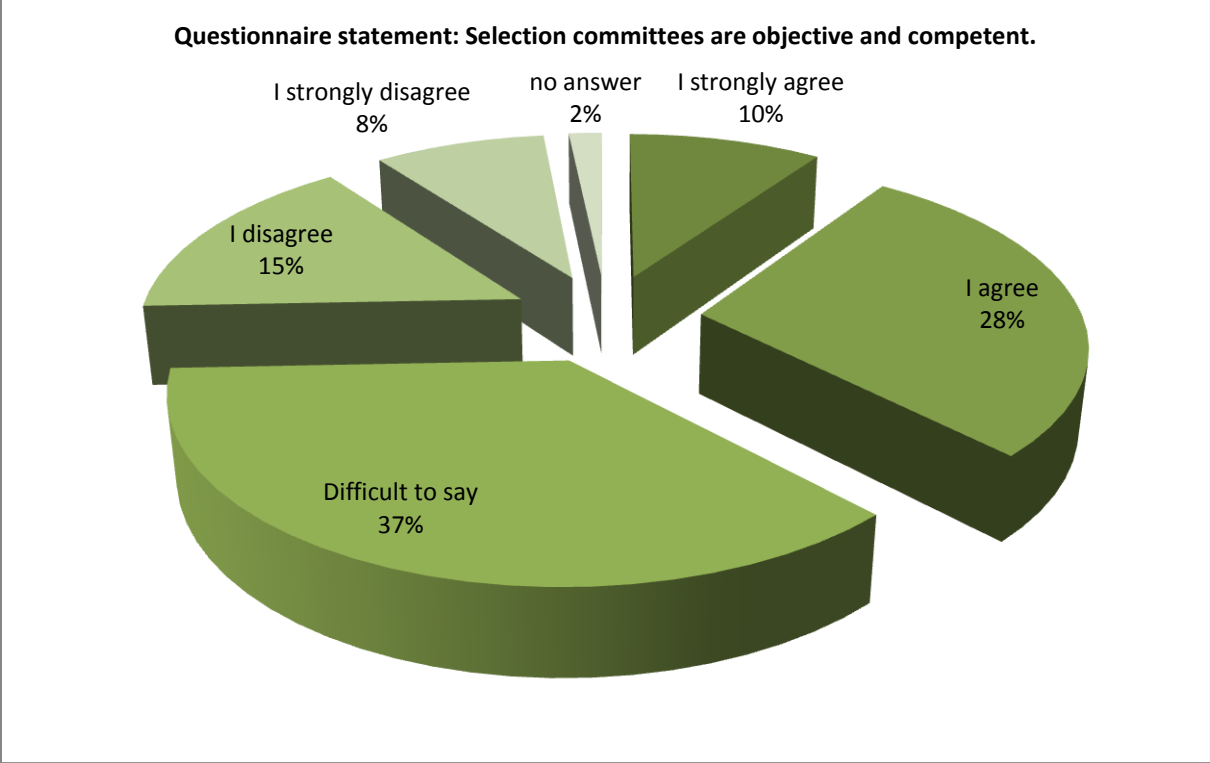


Chart no. 11- Selected aspects of recruitment

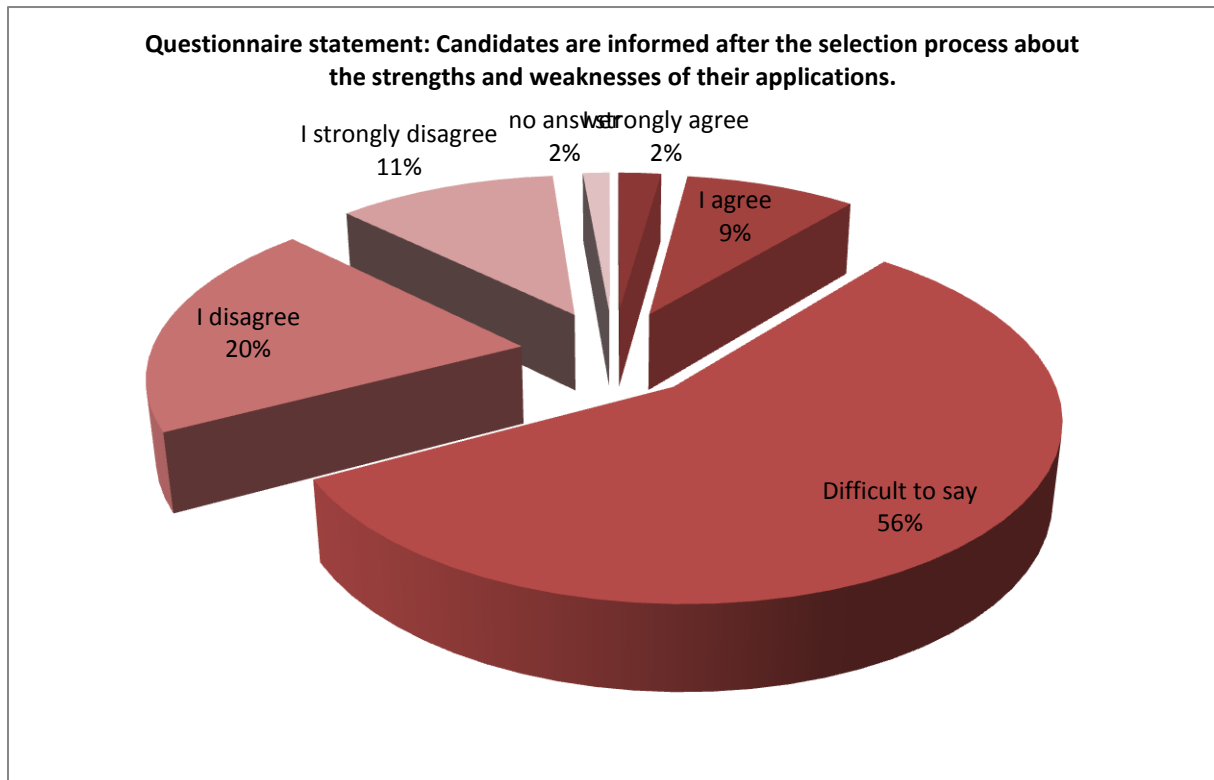
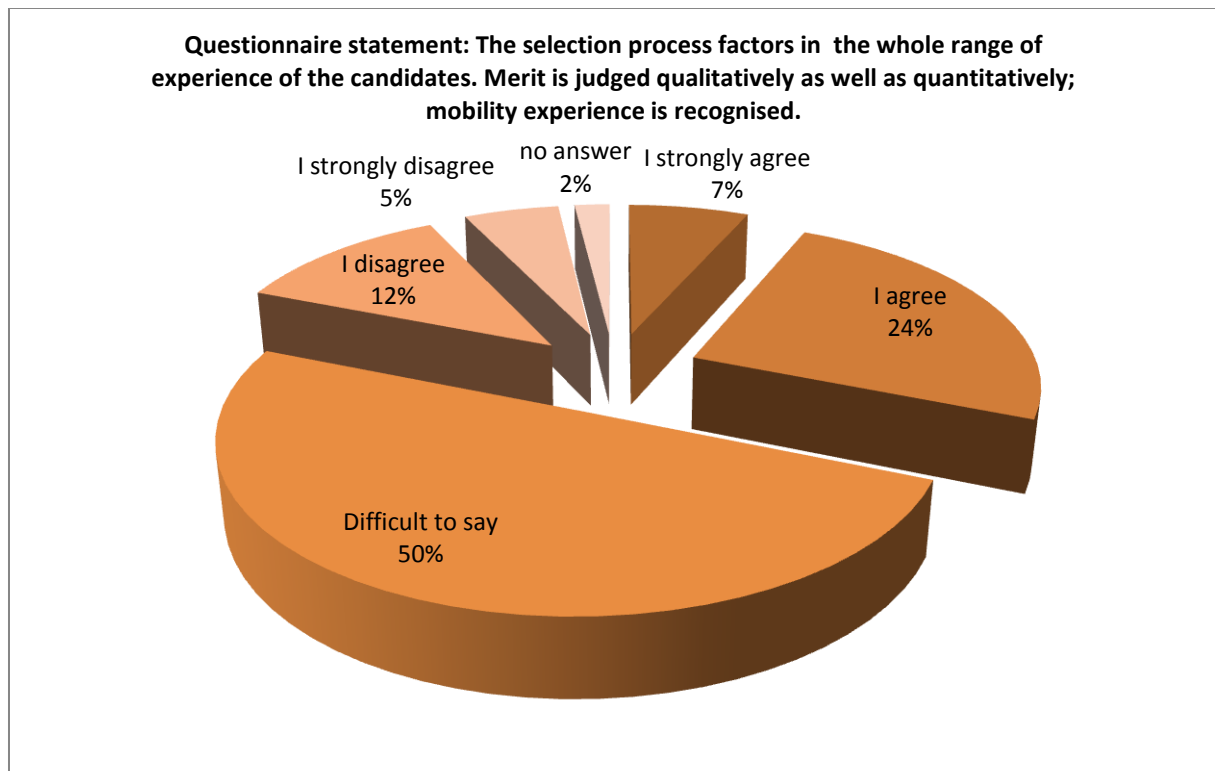


Chart no. 12- Selected aspects of recruitment



Conclusion

The Implementation Working Group found the results of the survey to be of great importance. The survey demonstrates exactly which areas need improvement. A set of recruitment requirements should be prepared and a close and systematic monitoring by the institution is needed.

Actions to be taken concerning selected aspects of recruitment:

The existing recruitment system will be corrected and will include the following new elements:

- job advertisements will include information on career development prospects;
- at least 14 days will be given to candidates to apply for a position;
- feedback for unsuccessful candidates on the strengths and weaknesses of their applications will be given;
- results of the recruitment will be published on AMU website;
- training for members of recruitment committees will be provided with emphasis on focusing during the assessment process on outstanding results within a diversified career path and not only on the number of publications (merit judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively)

3. Balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties

The next question refers to the problem of **balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties**. AMU shares the opinion expressed in the Charter that teaching “is an essential means for the structuring and dissemination of knowledge”. However, for many research and teaching staff it is difficult to combine teaching and research in a balanced way. Various factors can create tension between these two complementary activities.

Under the Polish law on higher education the annual teaching load can be as follows:

- 1) between 120 and 240 teaching hours for research and teaching staff,
- 2) between 240 and 360 teaching hours for teaching staff (except for lecturers and instructors)
- 3) between 300 and 540 teaching hours for teaching staff employed in the positions of lecturers and instructor or equivalent positions.

The teaching load is determined for every academic year by an act of the AMU Senate. Academics employed on a full time basis have the following teaching load:

- professor and “doctor habilitowany” – 180 teaching hours per academic year;
- adjunct - 210 teaching hours per academic year;
- senior lecturer – 330 teaching hours per academic year;
- lecturer – 360 teaching hours per academic year;
- other teaching positions – 540 teaching hours per academic year.

Additional teaching assignments beyond the basic teaching load are executed as overloads and entitle the employee to additional remuneration. The close examination of AMU policies and practices revealed that researchers often exceed their teaching load due to wide range of courses offered and large number of students. Preparation for class and teaching itself is very demanding and time-consuming.

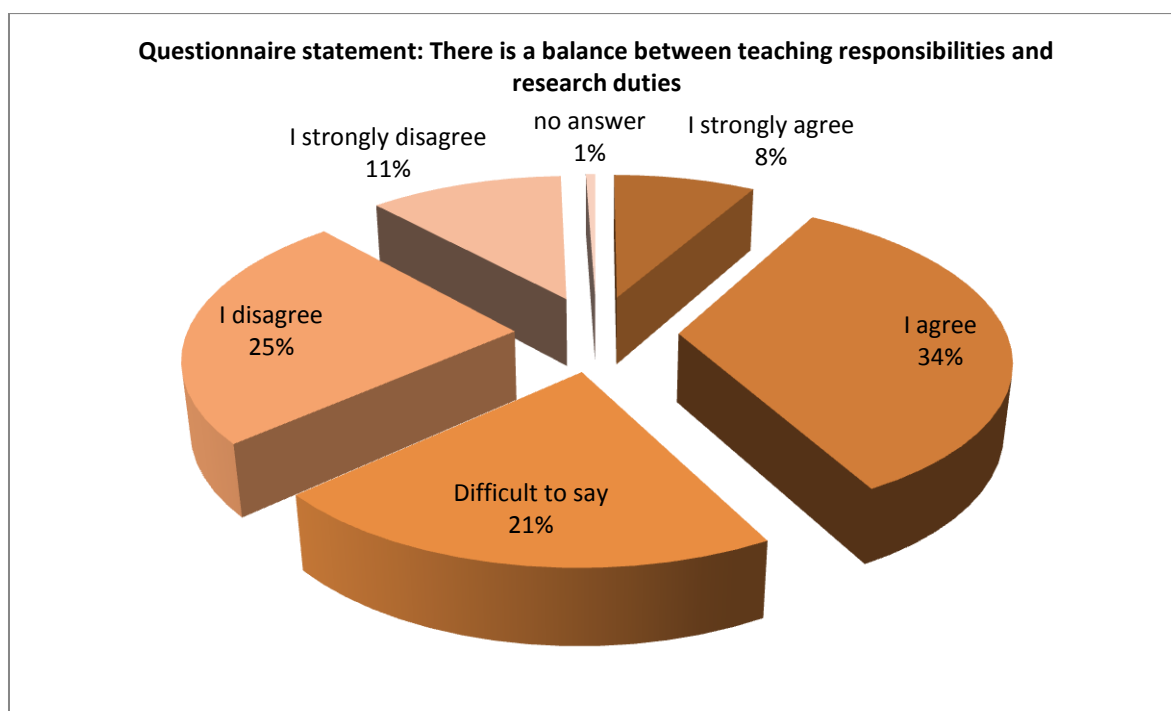
There is another aspect of this issue, which is connected with the researchers' evaluation. The current researcher evaluation system in Poland is largely based on the publication output and is directly connected with the evaluation of the institution thus influencing the university state-budgeting. As a result research became a more, so to say, valuable academic activity nowadays. It is obvious then that the academic staff often find it difficult to balance the demands of high scientific performance and excessive teaching load.

The survey has shown that teaching load is often too heavy. One out of three respondents felt that there was no balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties (Table no. 8; Chart no. 13) and over 1/5 of the respondents replied with "difficult to say".

Table no. 8 – Balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties (overall results – 363 respondents)

Statement	I strongly agree	I agree	Difficult to say	I disagree	I strongly disagree	no answer
There is a balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties	30	123	77	90	41	2

Chart no. 13 – Balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties (overall results – 363 respondents)



Conclusion:

It was concluded that it is difficult to create the ideal relationship between teaching responsibilities and research duties. If teaching and research are to be efficiently combined, new approach to teaching-research relationship should be adapted.

Actions to be taken concerning balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties

A flexible approach towards efficient combining of teaching and research will be adopted:

- to allow teaching load to be reduced when a researcher is engaged in a significant research project;
- to enable a researcher to complete his/her total teaching load during one semester so that a researcher can have the other semester free for research activity;
- distribution of workloads should be rethought as to be more open to a researcher preferences;
- to introduce e-learning as an alternative to traditional teaching (e-learning materials, such as videos, presentations can be re-used many times).

4. Evaluation/appraisal systems

AMU has developed its own institutional evaluation system through the years. Academic staff is required by AMU statute to undergo regular evaluation. AMU statute regulates an evaluation process in detail (§ 135 -§ 144). It is based on peer review, e.g. the evaluation is performed by the evaluation team/committee, whose members are appointed by the faculty's board/council. Every member of the academic staff is evaluated on a regular basis – every two years (full professor every four years). Evaluation sheet is used that take into account overall activity: research, teaching, administrative and organizational duties. Students' opinions are taken into account when teaching is evaluated. An employee can receive one of the following assessments/notes: positive, positive (evaluation to be repeated the following year), negative. The employees have the right to appeal against the decision of the evaluation committee.

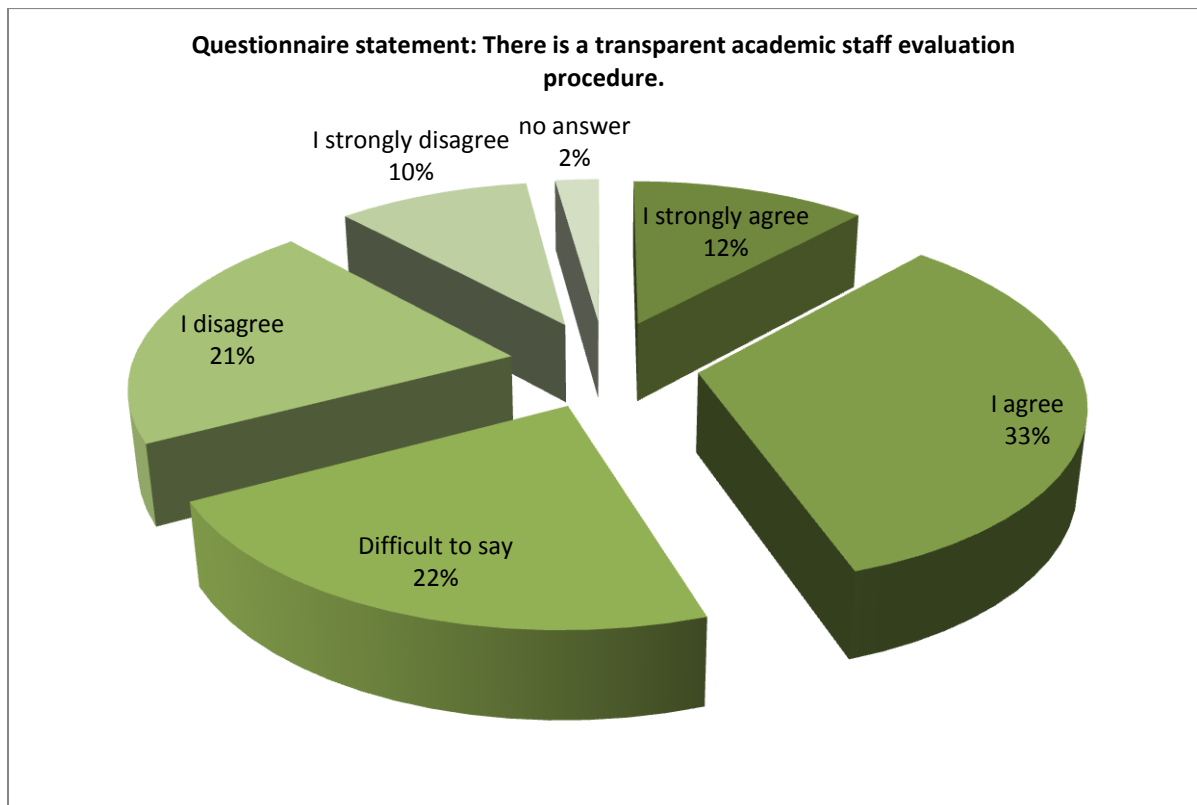
The Implementation Working Group agrees with the recommendation of the Charter concerning evaluation/appraisal system but the requirement for 'international committee' in the case of senior researchers (full professors) evaluation is considered to be undesirable and impossible to implement in the Polish higher education conditions.

The survey revealed that quite a number of respondents (111 out of 363) perceive AMU evaluation procedure as being unclear, and 81 respondents more find it difficult to assess (Table no. 9; Chart no. 14).

Table no. 9 – Evaluation system (overall results – 363 respondents)

Statement	I strongly agree	I agree	Difficult to say	I disagree	I strongly disagree	no answer
There is a transparent academic staff evaluation procedure.	43	120	81	76	35	8

Chart no. 14 – Evaluation system (overall results – 363 respondents)



Conclusion

The evaluation system has become a very important tool in the employment policy, as the existing regulations allow the higher institution to dismiss an employee if his/her working performance is evaluated as unsatisfactory. Some changes in the evaluation process are needed in order to take into consideration/ensure employees' interests as well. The Implementation Working Group decided that some remedy actions needed to be undertaken in order to accommodate the employees' suggestions and improve AMU evaluation system.

Actions to be taken concerning evaluation/appraisal systems:

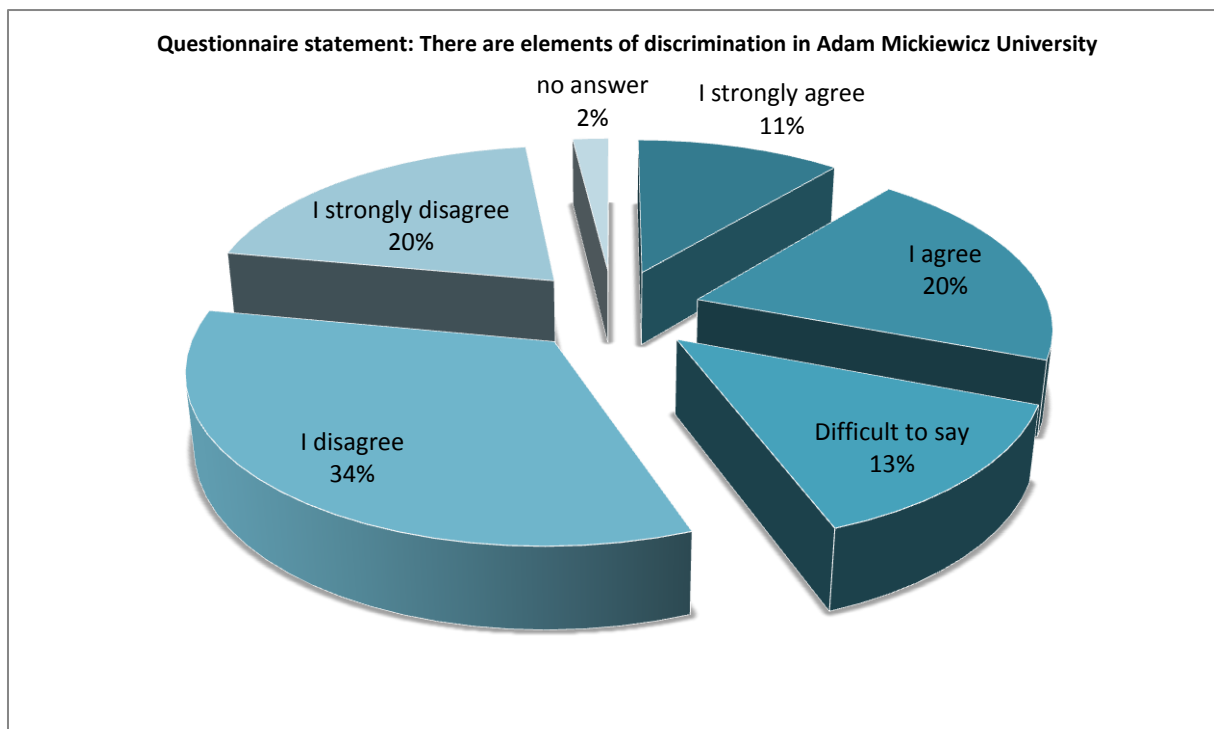
An existing system will be modified in order to be in compliance with principles of the Chart.

5. Non-discrimination

The Implementation Working Group analysed the existing anti-discrimination regulations. The Polish Constitution guarantees equality under the law and prohibits discrimination based on "any reason". Anti-discrimination regulations introduced in the Polish Labour Code (art. 11³) makes it illegal to discriminate someone on the ground of their gender, age, disability, race, religion or belief, nationality, political views, national origin and disability. Under the same regulation, part-time employees have the right to be treated by any employer in the same way as the employer treats a comparable person employed under indefinite contracts.

As far as the staff survey results are concerned, the researchers who felt that some kind of discrimination occurred at our university comprised 35.85% of the whole group (Chart no. 15). It is high time appropriate anti-discriminations measures were proposed and introduced.

Chart no. 15 - Non-discrimination (overall results – 363 respondents)



Conclusion

AMU has no internal regulations on anti-discriminatory practices and lacks relevant policy in this area.

Actions to be taken concerning evaluation/appraisal systems:

A non-discrimination policy will be outlined and implemented

5. Action plan and monitoring

Area	Charter/Code principle	Actions to be undertaken	Unit/Person responsible	Target dates
1. Institution's assistance: Institution's administrative assistance	Professional attitude Contractual and legal obligations Accountability	A.1. As organisational system must be capable of supporting the researchers, AMU will introduce a new strategy on information in order to enhance the researchers' abilities to meet all sorts of formal requirements:		
		A.1.1. courses covering researcher's responsibilities (national, sectoral and institutional regulations) – at the beginning of employment,	HR in cooperation with other relevant departments	(1) Works on merit-content – 12/2016 (2) Consultations with stakeholders (researchers) – 3/2017 (3) Implementation – 12/2017
		A.1.2. courses of relevant legal regulations and administrative procedures with regard to managing projects and finances – when receiving access to financial resources.	FO in cooperation with other relevant departments	(1) Works on merit-content – 12/2016 (2) Consultations with stakeholders (researchers) – 3/2017 (3) Implementation – 12/2017
		A.1.3. guidance materials provided on AMU website on internal administrative procedures,	all central administrative departments	(1) Works on merit-content – 12/2016 (2) Implementation: publication of materials – 12/2017
		A.1.4. management workshops for researchers who feel they need to improve their management skills,	CS	(1) Consultations with stakeholders (researchers) – 12/2016 (2) Works on merit-content – 3/2017 (3) Implementation – 12/2017
		A.1.5. assistance for non-Polish speaking researchers (relevant documents to be translated to English, e.g. employment documents)	HR in cooperation with EURAXESS Services Centre for Mobile Researchers	(1) Works on merit-content – 12/2016 (2) Implementation – 12/2017
2. Institution's assistance: data protection	Good practice in research	A.2.1. a back-up strategy to be outlined;	IT	(1) Works on back-up strategy – 3/2017 (2) Implementation – 12/2017
		A.2.2. training in IT skills for researchers who feel they need it;	IT	(1) Works on merit-content – 3/2017 (2) Implementation – 12/2017
3. Institution's assistance: stability and permanence of employment	Stability and permanence of employment	A.3. Flexible employment policy needs to be introduced in order to create favourable conditions for researchers who are obliged to obtain post-doctoral academic degrees within a specified maximum period (8 years to obtain "doctor habilitowany" degree; 12 years to obtain "professor" degree), including such elements as: A.3.1. granting paid sabbatical leaves A.3.2. allowing teaching load to be reduced to increase research efficiency	HR	(1) Works on information campaign (AMU website) – 12/2016 (2) Implementation – 12/2017

Area	Charter/Code principle	Actions to be undertaken	Unit/Person responsible	Target dates
4. Institution's assistance: career development and access to career advice	Career development Access to career advice	A.4.1. A career development strategy for researchers at all stages of their career needs to be developed, which will be based on profiles aligned to academic positions, from research assistant to professor. A special attention will be devoted to preparing a career plan development for young employees. The profiles should detail the range of demands, responsibilities and competencies required at each grade;	HR	(1) Works on a "Career Path Strategy" and consultations with researchers – 5/2017 (2) Strategy implementation – 12/2017
		A.4.2. to identify the skills that should be developed at each stage of a scientific career and to provide courses on those skills, including career management and planning	CS	
		A.4.3. in addition to career development strategy career advice will be offered to researchers at all stages of their career	Vice Rector for Staff and AMU Development HR	(1) Training for HR staff – 3/2017 (2) Implementation – 12/2017
5. Selected aspects of recruitment	Recruitment Transparency Judging merit	A.5. The existing recruitment system will be corrected and will include the following new elements: - job advertisements will include information on career development prospects; - at least 14 days will be given to candidates to apply for a position; - feedback for unsuccessful candidates on the strengths and weaknesses of their applications will be given; - results of the recruitment will be published on AMU website; - training for members of recruitment committees will be provided with emphasis on focusing during the assessment process on outstanding results within a diversified career path and not only on the number of publications (merit judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively)	HR	(1) Works on new elements of the recruitment system – 12/2016 (2) Consultations with the Deans – 5/2017 (3) Implementation – 11/2017
6. Balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties	Teaching	A.6.1. A flexible approach towards efficient combining of teaching and research will be adopted: - to allow teaching load to be reduced when a researcher is engaged in a significant research project; - to enable a researcher to complete his/her total teaching load during one semester so that a researcher	HR in cooperation with TD	(1) Consultations with the Deans and researchers – 5/2017 (2) Internal regulation and implementation – 10/2017

Area	Charter/Code principle	Actions to be undertaken	Unit/Person responsible	Target dates
		can have the other semester free for research activity; - distribution of workloads should be rethought as to be more open to a researcher preferences;		
		A.6.2. to introduce e-learning as an alternative to traditional teaching (e-learning materials, such as videos, presentations can be re-used many times).	D-Learning	(1) Promotion of e-learning (AMU website, promotional meetings for Faculties) – 3/2017 (2) Courses on e-learning – 3/2018
7. Evaluation/appraisal systems	Evaluation/appraisal systems	A.7. An existing system will be modified in order to be in compliance with principles of the Chart.	HR	(1) Works on the evaluation system modifications – 12/2016 (2) Consultations with stakeholders – 6/2017 (3) Implementation – 12/2017
8. Non-discrimination	Non-discrimination	A.8. A non-discrimination policy needs to be outlined and implemented	HR	(1) Works on a non-discrimination policy regulation – 12/2016 (2) Consultations with stakeholders – 6/2017 (3) Implementation – 12/2017

HR – Human Resources

IT – IT Department

FO – Financial Office

TD – Teaching Department

CS – Career Services Department

D-Learning – Centre of Support for Distance Learning

Gantt Chart: Implementation of the Action Plan

Action plan area (number of action)	2016							2017												2018					
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
Institution's assistance: Institution's administrative assistance (A.1.1., A.1.2., A.1.4.)																									
Institution's assistance: Institution's administrative assistance (A.1.3., A.1.5.)																									
Institution's assistance: data protection(A.2.1., A.2.2.)																									
Institution's assistance: stability and permanence of employment (A.3.1., A.3.2.)																									
Institution's assistance: career development and access to career advice (A.4.1., A.4.2., A.4.3.)																									
Selected aspects of recruitment (A.5.)																									
Balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties (A.6.1.)																									

Action plan area (number of action)	2016							2017												2018					
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
Balance between teaching responsibilities and research duties (A.6.2.)																									
Evaluation/appraisal systems (A.7.)																									
Non-discrimination (A.8.)																									

Works on merit content

Consultations with stakeholders

Implementation

Internal audit including on-line survey

Monitoring

The Implementation Working Group will become the Steering Group, which will monitor every action on a regular basis. The monitoring will consist of the following steps:

- (1) the Steering Group plans to meet once every six months. Persons or representatives of units responsible for implementation of the actions will also be invited to participate in the meeting and present the report on the current status of the action; a scrupulous attention will be paid to the consultation stage;
- (2) appropriate changes to the action plan will be introduced after every meeting of the Steering Group (if needed);
- (3) the Steering Group will prepare two reports on the outcome of the implementation after 12 (June 2017) and 24 months (June 2018); corrections to the action plan will be made (if necessary);
- (4) in April-June 2018 an internal survey among researchers will be carried out; the Steering Group will assess the whole process and will propose necessary corrections for the future.

Plan of monitoring actions

2016							2017												2018					
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
- the Steering Group Meeting							- the Steering Group Meeting - report on the implementation						- the Steering Group Meeting						- the Steering Group Meeting - internal on-line survey - self-assessment and corrections					