



Konsorcjum Naukowe "Zdrowe Zwierzę - Bezpieczna Żywność"
Leading National Research Centre
Scientific Consortium "Healthy Animal - Safe Food"

Krajowy Naukowy
Ośrodek Wiodący



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Human Resources Excellence in Research

REVISED STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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1. IGAB PAS description

The Institute of Genetics and Animal Breeding of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IGAB PAS) was established in 1955. IGAB PAS is one of the leading scientific institutions in the field of animal genetics, breeding and biotechnology. Mission of the Institute is contribution to the development of animal sciences, as well as innovation and biological progress aimed at improvement of quality of life of the society, by conducting novel research in the field of genetics, animal breeding, experimental embryology and animal behavior. The principal fields of the basic research include: molecular genetics, experimental embryology, animal biotechnology, biodiversity, as well as animal behaviour and welfare. Moreover, applied research is conducted in the fields of population genetics, animal breeding, as well as improvement of food of animal origin. The principal purpose of applied research is the elaboration of such methods of animal improvement and sustainable production systems which aim at obtaining safe and functional food, ensuring a high level of animal welfare and limiting the unfavorable effect of agriculture on the natural environment.

The Institute has the right to confer the degree of doctor (PhD) and habilitated doctor (DSc) of agricultural sciences and since 1994 it has run postgraduate studies. Moreover, since 2018 it has run PhD studies in English. The Institute employs 105 people, including 52 scientific staff and 18 PhD students and it consists of five departments: Department of Molecular Biology, Department of Genomics and Biodiversity, Department of Experimental Embryology, Department of Animal Improvement and Nutrigenomics and Department of Animal Behaviour. In addition, the Institute owns an Experimental Farm keeping various farm and laboratory animals (cattle, horses, sheep, goats, rabbits, quails, rats and mice) necessary for experiments.

The Institute publishes *Animal Science Papers and Reports* – an English language quarterly indexed in the Journal Citation Reports/Science Edition of Thomson Reuters.

The Institute has coordinated 10 complementary projects financed and co-financed by the EU, including interdisciplinary research project “BIOFOOD – innovative, functional products of animal origin” realized under the Research and Development Strategic Programme of the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education within scientific-industrial consortium as well as “Epigenetic Risk Assessment of Assisted Reproductive Technologies - ERAofART”, within TWINNING call in HORIZON 2020. The patent applications prepared within the BIOFOOD project were awarded with prestigious prizes including gold and silver medals at the World Exhibition of Inventions, Research and New Technology "BRUSSELS INNOVA”

in 2013, 2014 and 2015. Moreover, during International Exhibition of Invention, INPEX 2016, USA, Institute has received prestigious prize - Best Invention of Europe.

Since April 2015 scientific consortium „Healthy Animal – Safe Food” with participation of the Institute of Genetics and Animal Breeding of the Polish Academy of Sciences has received from the Minister of Science and Higher Education prestigious status of the Leading National Research Center (LNRC) in the field of agricultural, forest and veterinary sciences, for a period from 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2019.

Since 1st of September 2019 IGAB PAS will start new HORIZON 2020 project “BovReg - Identification of functionally active genomic features relevant to phenotypic diversity and plasticity in cattle”, within ERC call in HORIZON 2020.

The Institute employs ambitious scientists from Poland and abroad. In the last 2 years, after international recruitment within restructurization project until 2017, as well as after opening in the Institute PhD studies in English in 2018, the number of international scientists has significantly increased. The ratio of research staff recruited from abroad reached 30% (including returning Poles), and the ratio of staff with foreign nationality reached 15%. Moreover, IGAB PAS makes an effort to create a friendly work environment and the transparent processes of recruitment of researchers. The Institute is aware that logo of “Human Resources Excellence in Research” is very important element of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers. Thus, the Institute would like to fully implement European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers to its internal regulations. By implementing them the Institute wants to become an internationally attractive employer and encourage the best scientists from all over the world to work in the Institute.

2. Internal Review

2.1. Methodology

2.1.1. Implementation Committee

Established by the Director, in the Initial Assessment phase (1st July 2017), Implementation Committee played crucial role in the last two years. Implementation Committee was coordinated by the Scientific Secretary and consisting of representatives of researchers, PhD students, HR Department, Research Support Office, Administration has regularly monitored progress in handling the challenges listed in Gap Analysis, as well as

realisation of activities and indicators listed in Action plan. After two years of receiving logo HR Excellence awareness of C&C principles has significantly increased in the working environment. The Implementation Committee worked under the direct supervision of the Director's Board.

The Implementation Committee has organised meetings continuously. During meetings level of realisation of activities and indicators in the 4 thematic areas of the Charter and Code was analysed. Any doubts, problems were solved directly. Moreover, during meetings there was presented progress in implementation and discussed further activities improving implementation process. The Directors' Board supervised the implementation process. The Implementation Committee has reported to the Director progress of the implementation in every 6 months.

2.1.2. Electronic Evaluation Survey

Two years after obtaining HR Excellence in Research logo IGAB PAS prepared one more time anonymous, electronic evaluation survey in Polish and English, using Google Forms tool (the same as two years ago). Based on the effective results from previous electronic evaluation survey, the participants were group into the six professional positions (Professor, Associate professor, Assistant professor, Assistant, PhD student, Specialist) and five employee group (Management Board and supervision staff, Member of research staff, Member of administrative staff, PhD students and Others).

The questionnaire consisted of 3 general questions to define profile of the participants and then 40 issues covering principles of Charter and Code. 40 issues in the survey were divided into four dimensions in line with the Charter and Code:

- I. Ethical and professional aspects
- II. Recruitment and selection
- III. Working conditions and social security
- IV. Training.

The respondents were asked to indicate level of importance and level of implementation for each of 40 issues.

The possible scores for each item were 1-4 points as follows:

Level of importance:

4. very high level of importance
3. high level of importance
2. medium level of importance
1. low level of importance

Level of implementation:

4. fully implemented
3. almost, but not fully implemented
2. partially implemented
1. insufficiently implemented

The respondents, the same as two years ago, were also asked to express their opinions and propositions of any actions to improve the implementation of Charter and Code principles at IGAB PAS.

HR Implementation Committee consisted of IGAB PAS staff members representing management, researchers, PhD students and administration. The online survey was carried out between 11 and 24 of July 2019. Altogether 105 employees were invited to participate in the survey, 66 employees and PhD students (i.e. 63% participation rate) filled electronic evaluation survey.

The results of the survey were analysed by the Implementation Committee and were basis for preparation of the revised Action Plan.

2.2. Survey results

Characteristics of the respondents are presented below:

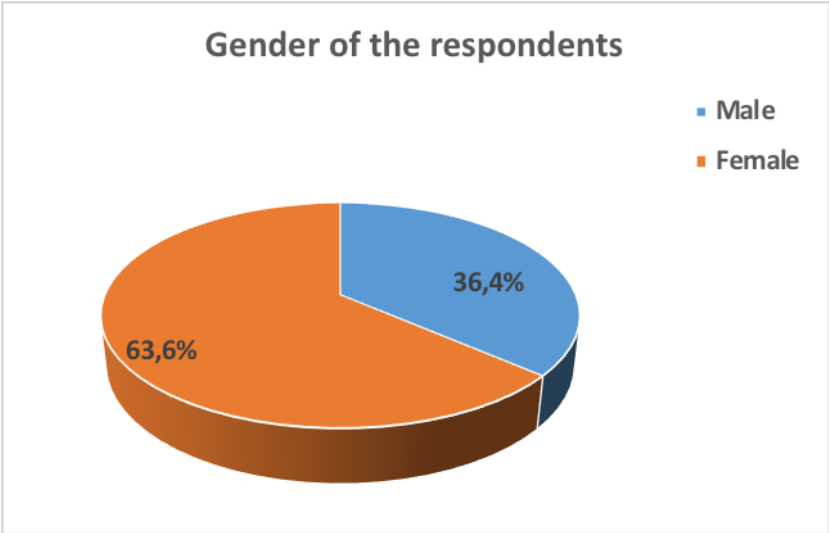


Fig. 1 Gender of respondents

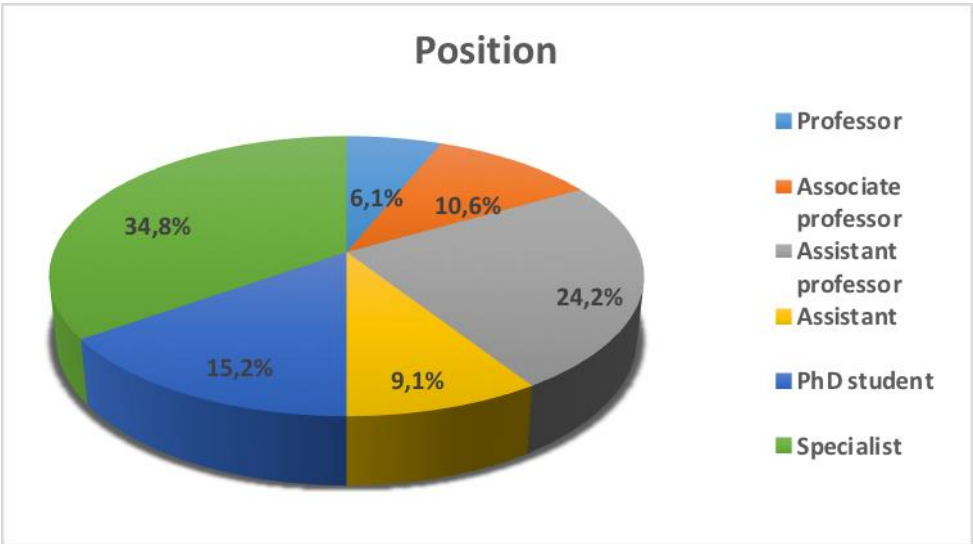


Fig. 2 Respondents division among their professional profile

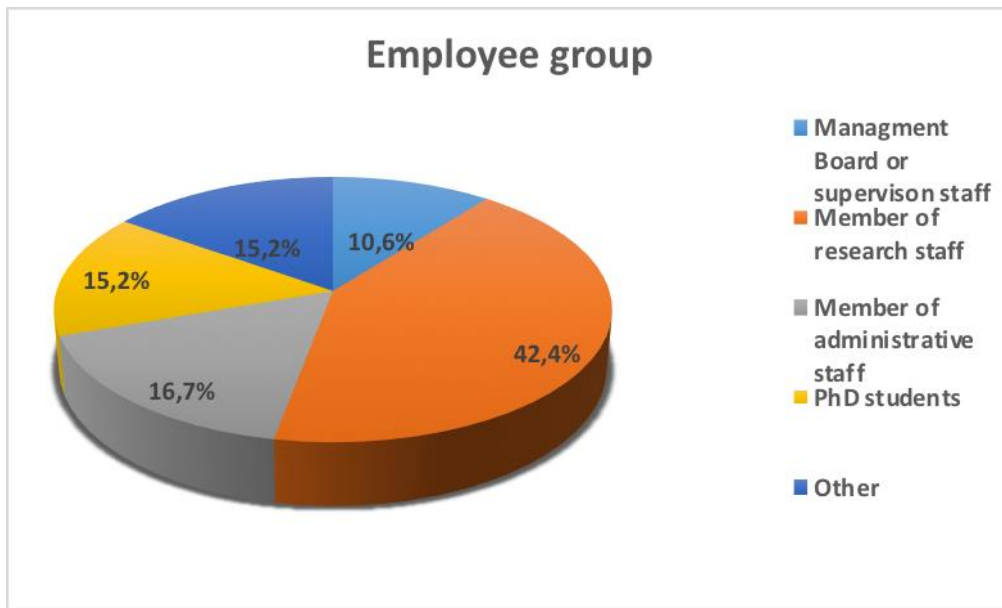


Fig. 3 Respondents division among formal status at IGAB PAS

The results of the survey were analysed by the Implementation Committee. The Committee identified two categories of results:

1. strengths of IGAB PAS rules and practices with regard to Charter and Code principles;
2. challenges that require corrective actions.

The answer scale both for level of implementation and level of importance was from 1 to 4. In the initial assessment phase the most highlighted items for which the average level of implementation was higher than 3.4 were identified as strengths. The most challenging items were below 3.00. In order to maintain continuity in the analysed results the same definition for strengths and challenges was kept for interim assessment phase. The overall analysis of the survey outcomes, for both: initial (2017) and interim assessment phase (2019), is presented below.

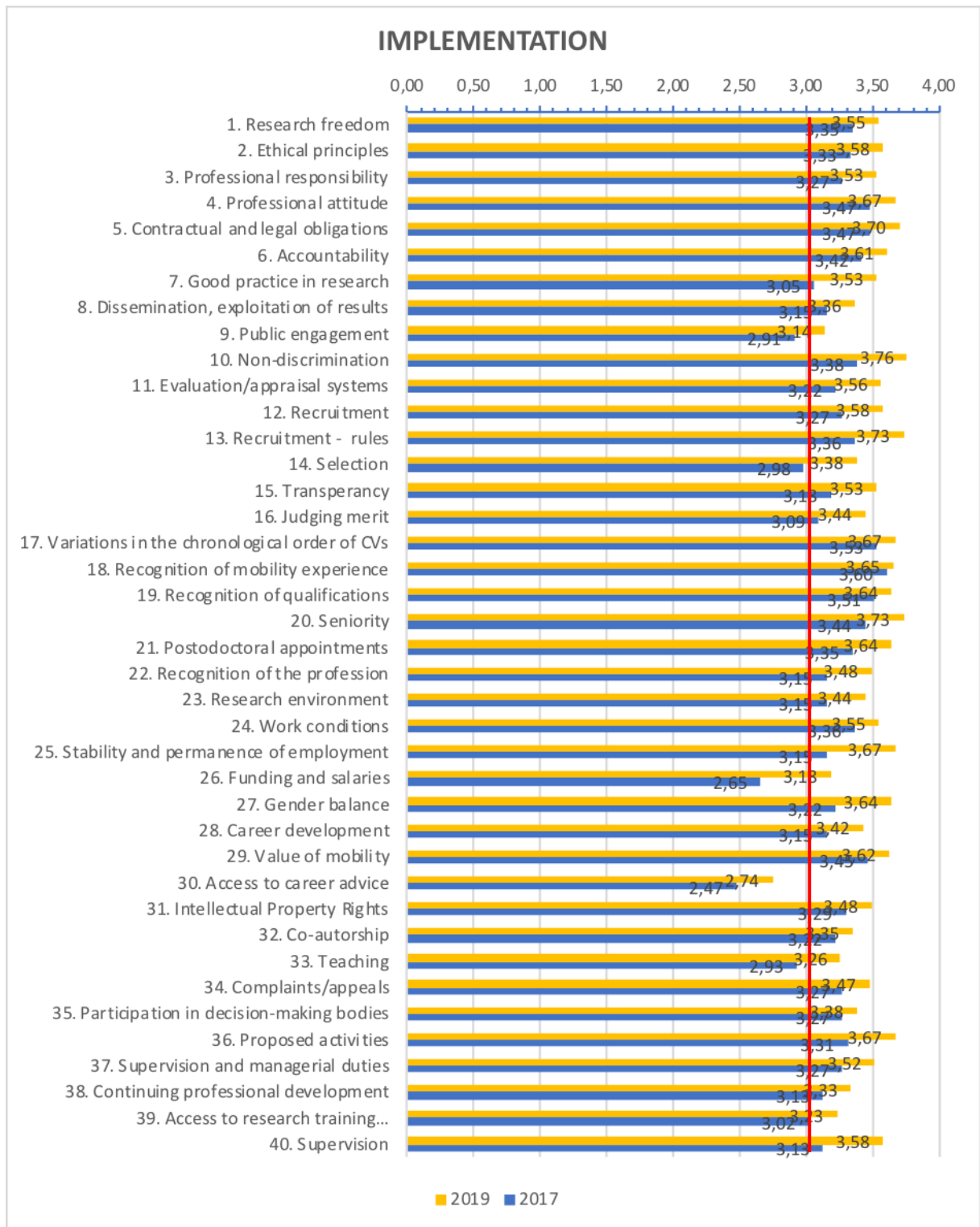


Fig. 4 Summary of survey outcome, average values of level of importance and implementation

Results of new electronic evaluation survey, prepared after two years of obtaining by IGAB PAS logo HR Excellence, showed that several actions implemented by Institute, in the last two years, brought fruitful effects. All items have been successfully improved.

Defined in the initial assessment phase as challenging items (below 3.0) almost do not appear in the present Internal Review. Almost all implementation items are above 3.0. Only for one case *30. Access to career advice*, in the “Working conditions and social security” area, level of implementation is below 3.0, it is 2.74.

Similar as in the initial assessment phase, strengths were defined as the most highlighted items for which the average level of implementation at IGAB PAS was higher than 3.4. Present results show that in most cases, average level of implementation was higher than 3.4.

Below more detailed analysis for strengths and challenges is given.

2.2.1. Strengths

Ethical and professional aspects

Results of new electronic evaluation survey, prepared after two years of obtaining by IGAB PAS logo HR Excellence, show that almost for all cases level of implementation was above 3.50, the same situation was for level of importance. Only for two cases 8.

Dissemination, exploitation of results, 9. Public engagement level of implementation was lower than 3.50, namely, 3.36 and 3.14, whereas level of importance was 3.73 and 3.41. *9. Public engagement* (defined in initial assessment as challenging item) has increased up to 3.14, level of importance for this item was 3.41. It shows that adding and updating all public engagement events on the Institute website, makes employees conscious of all events. Moreover, preparation of annual reports of all public engagement events, by created new Public Engagement Coordination Team, has influenced significantly on awareness of employees.

Recruitment and selection

Results of new electronic evaluation survey, prepared after two years of obtaining by IGAB PAS logo HR Excellence, show that almost for all cases level of implementation was above 3.50, the same situation was for level of importance. Only for *14. Selection* and *16. Judging merit* level of implementation was slightly lower, namely 3.38 and 3.44, whereas level of importance was 3.53 and 3.61. However, it should be pointed out that the highest improvement (in comparison to initial assessment phase) has been done for *14. Selection* item,

level of implementation has increased up to 3.38, whereas the level of importance was 3.53. It shows that actions implemented in the Institute, like: modification of Regulation of the Scientific Council by enabling participation in the selection team of members from different countries and by promoting gender balance, improvement of recruitment process by giving feedback to candidates by Selection Committee of the Scientific Council) gave significant effects.

Working conditions

Results of new electronic evaluation survey, prepared two years after obtaining by IGAB PAS logo HR Excellence, showed that several actions implemented by Institute in the third thematic heading “Working conditions” brought effective results. All items have been successfully improved. Almost all items have level of implementation above 3.4, only for two cases level of implementation is lower, for 26. *Funding and salary* (level of implementation is 3.18, level of importance is 3.79) and for 30. *Access to career advice* (level of implementation is 2.74, level of importance is 3.15). It shows that: creation on-line (intranet) library of the most important internal regulations, including funding and salaries, as well as scientific promotion regulations, translation into English the most important regulations, organisation of IPR seminar, access to several external trainings including professional aspects, simultaneously emails information to workers about existing Euraxess job possibilities, modification the Work conditions and Regulations of Postgraduate Studies of IGAB PAS by adding new rules enabling tele work significantly influenced on the present results.

Training and development

Although none dedicated actions have been planned after initial assessment phase all items have been successfully improved. Due to the additional funding obtained, the Institute ensured access to several external trainings including professional aspects (e.g. project application, project management, technical competences). In the present interim assessment phase level of implementation is almost for all cases above 3.50. Only for two cases, 38. *Continuing professional development* and 39. *Access to research training and continuous development*, level of implementation is lower, namely 3.33 and 3.23, whereas level of importance is 3.68 and 3.59.

2.2.2. Challenges

Defined in the initial assessment phase as challenging items (below 3.0) almost do not appear in the present Internal Review. Almost all implementation items are above 3.0. Only for one case *30. Access to career advice*, in the “Working conditions and social security” area, level of implementation is below 3.0, it is 2.74. Although level of implementation for *30. Access to career advice* is below 3.0, obtained results show that item 30 has increased after initial assessment phase (it has increased from 2.47 to 2.74). However, respondents do not treat this item as very important, level of importance has decreased from 3.38 (initial assessment phase) to 3.15.

3. Revised Action Plan

Implementation Committee, analysing results obtained after two years of received HR Excellence logo prepared Revised Action Plan. Detailed information is given in Internal Review, section 2 Actions.

The summary of actions for 2019 – 2021 is presented below.

As presented above, in *Section 2. Internal Review*, Implementation Committee has analysed actions in terms of strengths and weaknesses of the current policy and practice under four thematic headings of Charter and Code. As shown in *Section 2. Internal Review*, defined in the initial assessment phase as challenging items (below 3.0) almost do not appear in the present Internal Review. Almost all implementation items are above 3.0. Only for one case *30. Access to career advice*, in the “Working conditions and social security” area, level of implementation is below 3.0, it is 2.74. However as shown in document available on IGAB PAS website *Internal Review, in section 3. Actions* some of tasks still need to be continued. Below, brief presentations of new, as well as continued actions is given.

Ethical and professional aspects

Principle 5. Contractual and legal obligations

Regulations of IGAB PAS will be successively uploaded on on-line (intranet) library of all internal regulations.

When: Since 2018 continuously updated

Who: General Office

Indicator: Percentage of uploaded regulations (List of regulations uploaded to the intranet system)

Principle 6. Accountability

IGAB PAS has started translation of basic internal regulations (including all employment regulations). Up to now the following regulations were translated and uploaded to the intranet system: Regulamin wynagrodzenia pracowników IGHZ PAN (Pay regulations of IGAB PAS); Regulamin pracy IGHZ PAN (Work regulations of IGAB PAS); Regulamin organizacyjny IGHZ PAN (Organizational Regulations of the Institute); Ramowe kryteria związane z postępowaniami o nadanie stopni naukowych doktora i doktora habilitowanego oraz wszczęcia postępowania o nadanie tytułu profesora w Instytucie Genetyki i Hodowli Zwierząt PAN w Jastrzębcu (Frame Criteria for award of an advanced research qualification of PhD and Postdoctoral degree as well as motion for granting the title of profesor in the IGAB PAS); Regulamin postępowania konkursowego przy zatrudnianiu na stanowiska naukowe (Regulations of recruitment competitions for scientific positions). Further documents and translations will be continuously uploaded.

When: since 2017 continuously updated

Who: Research Support Office

Indicator: Percentage of translated regulations (List of translated regulations)

Principle 9. Public engagement

- All public engagement events will be continuously updated on IGAB PAS website. In the end of every year numbers of public engagements events will be given, moreover all public engagement events will be shown in the Annual report of the Institute.

When: since 2017 continuously updated

Who: Scientific Secretary

Indicator: Number of public engagement events

- Public Engagements Coordination Team works continuously, in the end of every year Report of the Coordination team will be presented.

When: since 2017 continuously updated

Who: Public Engagements Coordination Team

Indicator: Number of public engagement events (Report of the coordination team)

Recruitment and selection

Principle 13. Recruitment - Rules

Recruitment procedure will be continued in the same way as in the last two years.

Selection Committee of the Scientific Council is obliged to give feedback to the candidates including weakness and strengths. Moreover, every candidate will receive information about her/his weakness and strengths. After every selection process, report on recruitment procedure will be prepared.

When: Since 2017 ongoing activity, in every recruitment procedure

Who: Committee for Scientific Staff Development

Indicator: Percentage of candidates with feedback on weaknesses and strengths (Report on recruitment procedures)

Working conditions

Principle 26. Funding and salaries

- Created by IGAB PAS on-line (intranet) library of all internal regulations, including funding and salaries, as well as scientific promotion regulations will be continuously updated.

When: since 2017 continuously updated

Who: General Office

Indicator: Percentage of uploaded regulations (List of regulations uploaded to the intranet system:

- The Institute will successively translate into English IGAB PAS regulations

When: since 2017 continuously updated

Who: Research Support Office

Indicator: Percentage of translated regulations (List of translated regulations)

Principle 30. Access to career advice

- Institute will continue organisation of workshops with potential employers - representatives of companies. Moreover, Institute will continue emails information about possible job offers.

When: since 2018 employees receive continuously reports by emails

Who: Scientific Secretary

Indicator: Report of the workshop

- Due to extensive international recruitment of PhD students in 2018 (new PhD Studies were opened in English) it was decided to postpone the organization of workshop with potential employers and opportunities offered by Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions to enable full participation. In the middle of 2020 workshop with potential employers and on opportunities offered by Marie Skłodowska-Curie is planned.

When: postponed to the middle of 2020

Who: Research Support Office

Indicator: Report of the workshop

Principle 31. Intellectual Property Rights

Since IPR seminar has been organised for junior scientists, in the near future IPR workshop for all scientists will be organised

When: Second quarter of 2020

Who: Research Support Office

Indicator: Report of the workshop

Principle 33. Teaching

New Polish Law on Science and Higher Education (called also Law 2.0 or “Constitution for Science”) that has been entering into force in stages since 2018 and the process will continue in 2019 and the following years, as well as new evaluation system of scientific activities in Poland (final legal requirements are not established yet) delayed

modification of Scientific Council rules in the last period. Therefore, in the coming year Scientific Council rules will be modified.

When: Fourth quarter of 2020

Who: Scientific Council Secretary

Indicator: Increased points in evaluation system (Decision of the Scientific Council)

4. Conclusions

Results of new electronic evaluation survey, prepared two years after obtaining by IGAB PAS HR Excellence in Research logo, show that almost for all cases level of implementation was above 3.50, the same situation was for level of importance. Defined in the initial assessment phase as challenging items (below 3.0) almost do not appear in the present Internal Review. Almost all implementation items are above 3.0. Only for one case 30. *Access to career advice*, in the “Working conditions and social security” area, level of implementation is below 3.0. It shows that prepared after Initial assessment phase action plan brought fruitful results. Therefore, interim assessment phase has been done in the same way as Initial phase. Moreover, in most cases continuation of ongoing actions was proposed. Only for one action, due to entry into force new Law 2.0, as well as new evaluation system of scientific activities in Poland new solutions has been proposed.

As written in the introduction, one of IGAB PAS most important aims is to become internationally attractive employer and attract ambitious and motivated scientists from Poland and abroad. The Institute observed increasing number of international scientists. It has significantly increased after international recruitment within restructurization project until 2017, as well as opening in the Institute PhD studies in English in 2018. The ratio of research staff recruited from abroad reached 30% (including returning Poles), and the ratio of staff with foreign nationality reached 15%.

As the Institute hosts increasingly more researchers from abroad, the decision was made to institutionalize support for foreign newcomers. Since March 2016, one of the Institute’s administrative employees, Bogumiła Zima-Kulisiewicz, PhD, assumed additional responsibilities to provide foreigners with complex assistance related to formal, administrative, and social matters regarding their stay in Poland (e.g. visas, social insurance arrangements, accommodation, and practical advice). Dr Zima-Kulisiewicz acts also as a

point of contact for all foreign scientists who work at the Institute. She disseminates practical information that might be of interest and help. Her work will be continued. Moreover, keeping new web page of IGAB PAS, launched in Polish and English with current information on the Institute activity concerning implementation of the HR Strategy, will be continued.

More informed and well-oriented staff members allow a better understanding and acceptance of any actions taken, processes implemented, and changes made at the institution. Therefore, beside the corrective actions, there will be also performed actions ensuring further support of HR Strategy in the future, including: promotion of HRS4R, improving staff awareness of Charter and Code, periodical evaluation of Charter and Code implementation and realisation of HR Strategy, improvement of internal rules and procedures and development of staff skills.