

Sustainable Careers for Researcher Empowerment (SECURE)

WP3

Development of Tenure Track-Like Models

Deliverable 3.1

First Draft of Tenure Track-Like Models



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1 Introduction

SECURE Work Package (WP) 3 – Development of Tenure Track-Like (TTL) Models aims to provide examples of tenure track-like models including recommendations on funding schemes, recruitment, employment, training, development, and career progression to implement TTL models for researcher organisations. Consultation will be held with stakeholders to gather feedback and co-design the TTL models which will be integrated into a consolidated Research Career Framework in WP2.

WP3 will build on the work of WP1 – State of the Art on Researcher Careers and work in close collaboration with WP2 – Research Career Frameworks. It will also inform WP4 – Implementation of the Research Career Framework and WP5 – Policy Briefs.

This Deliverable 3.1 is a *First Draft of Tenure Track-Like Models* based on literature reviews, WP and consortium expertise and desk research on existing policies and recommendations on TTL models. In this project phase we have developed principles for researchers and institutions looking to implement a TTL system. In support of this we have identified several case studies covering different TTL models supported by interviews with selected candidates focussing on the legal, financial, and administrative implementation of TTL models alongside challenges faced and lessons learned.

The subsequent chapters of the deliverable are structured as follows:

Chapter 2: Overall Methodology for Development of Tenure Track-Like Models

Chapter 3: Principles for Tenure Track-Like Models

Chapter 4: Tenure Track-Like Models Case Studies

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Next Steps

Chapter 8: Annexes - Full Bibliography

2 Overall Methodology

[Deliverable 1.2 State of the Art on Tenure Track-Like Models](#) highlighted the huge international variance around what is feasible, desirable, and culturally acceptable at institutional and national levels in the development of tenure track-like models, given variations in funding and national legislation. The SECURE project aims to reflect this variance, and not to define a singular tenure track-like model or to identify one model as being ‘best.’ Therefore, in this first draft we have opted to define a set of shared principles that could apply to TTL schemes and create a useful starting point for any institution looking to implement a tenure track-like scheme allowing flexibility to be applied regardless of different national policies. This set of principles can be found in Chapter 3.

In addition to these principles, we provide several case studies that represent very different tenure track-like schemes and provide an understanding on how the principles might work in practice. These case studies can be found in Chapter 4.

By aligning our work with the “[Council Recommendation on a European Framework to attract and retain, research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe](#)” and the revised [Charter for Researchers](#) we have shifted the focus of the SECURE project to consider practical implementation of the recommendation, which we hope gives additional value to the project.

Whilst WP2 is concerned with considering the entire council recommendation and practical actions in implementation., the focus of WP3 is clear with Recommendation 30 (of 44) referring directly to tenure track.

“In order to reinforce careers in academia leading to the most senior positions, a transparent, structured, inclusive and gender-equal career accession and progression system is needed. The development of tenure-track-like systems, to be understood as defined frameworks where a fixed-term contract has the prospect of progression to a permanent position subject to positive evaluation, could be considered for this purpose at the level of Member States and research performing organisations”.

This therefore provides our project definition of what might be considered a tenure track-like system.

3 Principles for Tenure Track-Like Models

3.1 Methodology for development

This set of draft principles has been developed to support institutions in the implementation of tenure track-like models. They were initially developed at a workshop in Lisbon attended by all SECURE consortium partners with the intention of understanding what is essential or desirable in a tenure track-like model, and how the project could best support the new Council Recommendation. This drew on the considerable consortium expertise.

The principles have then been through several iterations. For example, the initial division of desirable and essential elements was not found to be helpful. They were then further discussed and refined by the SECURE consortium including pilot organisations and experts to create a first draft. Subsequently, designated experts and representatives from the case study institutions gave their input and comments on the principles. Finally, Luisa Henriques, Senior advisor to the Board and policy analyst of Portuguese Science and Technology Foundation (FCT), and co-sponsor of Action 4 – ERA Policy Agenda gave specific input on how this work and the principles can support implementation of the recommendation. This remains a draft set of principles that will be further developed as we move into the consultation phase before the conclusion of the SECURE project. Chapter 3.2 below introduces the principles including paragraphs that provide an overview and brief context, allowing this chapter to be extracted from this Deliverable as an independent document.

3.2 Tenure Track-Like Models – Guiding Principles

These guiding principles support institutions to create sustainable and fulfilling careers for researchers, particularly those transitioning from early stage to independent researcher (R1, R2 and in some countries R3 according to the career stages outlined and defined in the European Commission’s communication “[Towards a European Framework for Research Careers](#)”). They comprise the considerations that are essential to implement tenure track-like (TTL) models in any context, and to attract, nurture, and retain research talent through this approach. Tenure track-like models usually provide a fixed-term contract that leads to the expectation of an academic position.

This aligns with and complements the European Commission proposal on a Council Recommendation for a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation, and entrepreneurial talents in Europe, suggesting that member states should act in limiting the total duration and number of fixed-term contracts, and that wherever possible, permanent, or open-ended contracts should be used. They are designed to support the practical implementation of the recommendation with regard specifically to tenure track-like models. Of particular relevance is recommendation 30, which specifically refers to Tenure Track-Like Models and the earlier recitals 8, 12, 15 and 32.

In addition, they have been aligned, where possible, with the European Charter for Researchers, particularly Pillar 2 - researcher assessment, recruitment and progress, Pillar 3 - working conditions and practice and Pillar 4 - research careers and talent development.

They incorporate practices across Europe and beyond, including open, transparent, and merit-based progression, appropriate professional and career development opportunities, and job security. Although

these principles have been developed for tenure track-like programmes, these are fundamental good employment practices, and most are applicable to the employment of any researcher.

| Principle | |
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| <p>1. Stability</p> | <p>Researchers expect to have a clear and defined progression pathway that leads to permanent employment or an open-ended contract.</p> <p>Institutions are recommended to have adequate and sustained support from internal funds, a funding body, or government. When developing a strategy for TTL positions, they should consider funding and workforce planning, wider institutional strategies (e.g., human resources, research, teaching) and relevant external normative and legal frameworks (e.g., Council Recommendations and national legislation). Involving researchers in this process is recommended (e.g., through consultation or relevant committees).</p> |
| <p>2. Transparency</p> | <p>Researchers expect to have been thoroughly informed about the recruitment process, expected skills and competencies, selection criteria, working conditions and benefits, contractual status, and progression pathway(s).</p> <p>Institutions should advertise TTL positions externally, and make openly available information about the recruitment process, expected skills and competencies, selection criteria, working conditions and benefits, contractual status, and progression pathway(s).</p> |
| <p>3. Competitive and inclusive recruitment</p> | <p>Researchers expect a competitive recruitment process with selection criteria that consider a diverse range of skills, competencies, and experiences (including inter-sectoral) in an inclusive and accessible manner.</p> <p>Institutions should ensure that selection and recruitment processes are competitive, with merit-based selection criteria that consider a diverse range of skills, competencies, and experiences (including inter-sectoral), and are inclusive and accessible to all. Institutions should consider equal opportunities and ways of supporting applications from under-represented groups.</p> |
| <p>4. Fair pay and benefits</p> | <p>Researchers expect to receive attractive commensurate remuneration and benefits with pay increases linked to progression, and to be made aware of the review of remuneration conditions, for example once they are successful in obtaining a permanent or open-ended contract. This should include access to adequate social protection.</p> <p>Institutions should provide commensurate attractive remuneration and benefits and be open and transparent about these. The benefits should be independent of the researchers' status and contract type (permanent or open-ended), as far as is possible under existing employment legislation and collective bargaining agreements.</p> |
| <p>5. Recognition through career pathways</p> | <p>Researchers expect to be supported to pursue their career ambitions, with recognition for diverse contributions and outputs (e.g., across research,</p> |

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| | <p>teaching, leadership, innovation, and engagement) through a range of possible career pathways. Where possible this should include the opportunity for non-linear, multi career and hybrid paths that are recognised on par with linear career paths.</p> <p>Institutions should consider utilising a tenure track-like model which is sufficiently flexible to acknowledge the variation within academic careers and offers different pathways reflecting differing contributions (e.g., research, teaching) and which recognises and values collaboration (e.g., with industry). Where possible, they should support non-linear, multi career and hybrid paths that are recognised on par with linear career paths.</p> |
| <p>6. Professional development</p> | <p>Researchers expect to have the time and ability to engage in meaningful professional and career development, including access to relevant training and opportunities (including in other sectors) that develop the leadership qualities necessary for academic progression and independence. Mentoring schemes should also be offered.</p> <p>Institutions are recommended to ensure ongoing professional and career development, enabling researchers on TTL models to access training and development opportunities and to encourage upskilling and reskilling opportunities. The career development offers should be relevant to needs and career stages, and align with relevant tools and frameworks (e.g. ResearchComp). They should also support other professional outcomes, offer counselling for career alternatives, and support non-linear, multi-career and hybrid paths.</p> |
| <p>7. Inclusive and healthy working environments</p> | <p>Researchers expect to work in environments that welcome and value diversity, which are healthy and accessible, and have no tolerance for bullying, harassment, or pressure to compromise research integrity.</p> <p>Institutions are recommended to foster collegiality and belonging among researchers on TTL models, support good mental health and wellbeing, and offer balanced, flexible, and achievable workloads. There should be clear mechanisms for dealing with bullying and harassment and poor research integrity. Researchers on TTL models should also have opportunities to take breaks and request reasonable adjustments (e.g., for health reasons), without any negative effects.</p> |
| <p>8. Supportive management</p> | <p>Researchers expect to have a named line manager (or named senior member of staff) with allocated time, availability, and expertise to offer them regular points to check-in, appraise their performance, and provide the support needed to achieve their full potential.</p> <p>Institutions could provide structured line management for researchers on TTL models, including regular appraisals and performance reviews, and support line managers or counselling bodies through training to provide honest and constructive feedback, aid professional and career development, and to acknowledge and mitigate the effects of career breaks, disruptions, and inequalities.</p> |

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| <p>9. Responsible evaluation</p> | <p>Researchers expect there to be a formal evaluation process at set checkpoints and against clear criteria. These criteria and timeline should be made available to them before or at the time of appointment. Where it becomes clear that they may not meet the criteria, researchers expect this to be communicated as early as possible and a support plan and process of remediation should be put in place.</p> <p>Institutions are recommended to set out a formal evaluation process with clear criteria, timelines, and checkpoints. Assessment should be balanced between the qualitative and quantitative evaluation of research and recognise a diversity of outputs and contributions. The criteria and timelines should consider the effects of career breaks and other disruptions, thus respecting non-linear career progression. They should include an appeals process and mechanisms to support researchers who are unlikely to be offered a permanent or open-ended position. Criteria should include other elements beyond research quality for example behavioural competence and contribution to the department and institution.</p> |
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4 Tenure Track-Like Models Case studies

To support the draft principles and show practical examples of them in operation, the project decided to collect a number of tenure track-like models that were operating in European institutions in order to show a breadth of options and approaches that were broadly in alignment with the SECURE principles. These seven examples are described in more detail in this chapter.

Selection of the case studies drew on the work of D1.2 State of the Art on Tenure Track-Like Models and the resulting conclusions and recommendations, alongside additional desk research and consortium expertise. They represent a wide variety of models and consider geographical spread, national legislation, different size and scope of institution and understanding of specific national context and challenges.

To test taking theoretical principles into practical implementation, while analysing the case studies, they were mapped against the principles, highlighting that not for all principles examples can be found in the case studies.

Case studies were selected from the following countries and institutions:

Belgium – University of Antwerp
Croatia – University of Rijeka
Finland – University of Helsinki
Germany - Goethe University Frankfurt
The Netherlands – University of Maastricht
Portugal – NOVA University Lisbon
United Kingdom – University of Edinburgh

The case studies were developed by initial desk research of available website information, supporting institutional documentation and national legislation where it was possible to obtain in English or to translate easily into English. Subsequently, the respective institutions were approached for a follow up conversation with a senior person responsible for the scheme to discuss the case study and get more detailed information currently not present in the literature. Where possible, interviews were additionally held with individuals who had benefitted from the scheme to see how their experience related in comparison with the intention of the scheme and how they felt about achieving tenure.

The objective of this was to gain a more realistic understanding of the model, test our knowledge and understand challenges and lessons learned. These interviews inform our case studies but also our conclusions in this deliverable and our work in the next project phase.

The generic questions can be found in Appendix A, although it is important to note that each conversation was different depending on the scheme. Moreover, it was not possible to hold interviews with participants from all the case studies. This is made transparent in the descriptions of the case studies below.

4.1 Belgium – University of Antwerp

Overview

The University of Antwerp has a long-established tenure track like system with most full-time positions recruited at junior professor level (R2-3) being offered a pathway to a permanent contract. Whilst this was introduced with the intention of reducing precarity for researchers, the system also allows universities an opportunity to recruit individuals who have not yet proven themselves as established academics. Clear criteria are set at the start of the 5-year tenure track, and if successful, the candidate receives a lifetime contract, allowing the opportunity for researchers to acquire the broader skills required as an academic (including teaching, service to society and leadership). Candidates on a tenure track-like model at Antwerp receive the benefits of civil servants, just like tenured academics do. Criteria established at department level allow assessment to be relevant and appropriate to the academic discipline.

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| Stability (Principle 1) | A tenure track appointment at the University of Antwerp offers a minimum of five years' security with clear assessment criteria to meet in order to achieve a permanent contract. The only reason why this TTL appointment may <i>not</i> result in a permanent position is that it does not meet the assessment criteria which were agreed at the start. Professional development support and the research culture at Antwerp means that most researchers will achieve this. |
| Fair Pay and Benefits (Principle 4) | Each researcher on the tenure track is categorised as a civil servant and therefore achieves comparable salaries and benefits as outlined in the Dutch Higher Education Code. Pay scales for each position are available on the university website. |
| Responsible Evaluation (Principle 9) | A formal evaluation process with clear and tailored criteria exists for each position. This is defined at the time of appointment and is tailored to both the individual and the academic discipline. A midterm review highlights individuals' progress and allows the opportunity to reflect on criteria and where additional support is required. |

What was the rationale?

This system provides an 'in-between step' and way of committing to the researcher, but in a trial setting with a clear exit point, should it not be mutually beneficial. Researchers have room to transition into fully-fledged independent academics, including teaching, service, and leadership responsibilities. The institution is legally obliged to provide a permanent position if the academic meets the specified criteria. Nevertheless, the legal requirement to master Dutch at B2 level – one of the tenure track criteria imposed by the government – can be a challenge for some international academics.

The institution set university-wide policies on evaluation criteria and an agreement is developed for each individual researcher with both education and research performing outputs that are transparent and merit based. This is reached within the faculty allowing tailored criteria that are applicable to the academic discipline. The University of Antwerp has recognised the need to consider behavioral competencies as part of assessment criteria and is currently in the process of defining these further. When considering criteria for a tenure track, flexibility is required around disciplines particularly when competing with business and industry.

Mid-term assessment conversations are held with Deans, Heads of Department, and relevant committees to discuss progress and whether it is feasible to meet criteria, alongside professional development support needs, before final evaluation by committee is completed. As a guide, the typical candidate would have two to five years post doc experience before embarking on a five-year tenure track which would indicate 7-10 years from completion of PhD to tenured professorship, although candidates with more than 5 years post PhD experience are still eligible to apply. Salaries for all positions are fixed in relation to central salary scales established in the Higher Education Code.

The tenure track is limited to a five-year period, with a maximum extension of one year due to sickness or maternity leave. There is no opportunity to fast track the five-year period; five years must always be completed. However, the University of Antwerp retains some flexibility for other employment options and contracts, for example fixed term contracts leading to permanent employment. This allows the university to accommodate researchers with substantial/specific expertise who wish to progress more quickly. There is some potential for part-time employment but to be considered for tenure track a position would need to be at least 50%.

What have been the challenges in implementation?

- All ERC grant recipients that are hosted at Antwerp will as per institution policy be awarded a tenure track-like position. This needs to be considered in terms of long-term budget planning before the grant application is endorsed by the university.
- There is a requirement to achieve a B2 level in the Dutch Language within the 5-year period, potentially this may make the positions unattractive to international applicants.
- Tenure track positions may only be extended by one year above the initial five-year period, this may be a challenge for those whose personal circumstances require any extension for a longer period.

What are the key learnings?

- Assessment criteria established at department level and relevant to the academic discipline, within a university-wide approach, is important in ensuring researchers are being measured appropriately and meeting both their own and departmental needs. The level of seniority of the applicant will influence whether a tenure track scheme is required.
- There is a need to also measure individuals' behavioural competencies, and this is being considered and developed.
- Measurable performance-based criteria may involve a risk on focusing too much on the criteria themselves, at the cost of developing behavioural competencies, which are much harder to assess (in other words: risk of focusing on the “what” instead of the “how”: collaboration, leadership, supervision skills...)
- This model does not suit everyone, and it is essential to keep the flexibility to offer options around employment and contracts for example for those who wish to work part-time at the institution or those that bring a more senior level of expertise.

Sources

- Interviews with University management and Assistant Professors who have recently completed the tenure track (December 2023 – January 2024).
- **Higher Education Code:**
 - <https://data-onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/edulex/document.aspx?docid=14650#1>

- **Resourcing Higher Education in the Flemish Community of Belgium**
 - <https://doi.org/10.1787/3f0248ad-en> or
 - [6. Human resources in Flemish higher education | Resourcing Higher Education in the Flemish Community of Belgium | OECD iLibrary \(oecd-ilibrary.org\)](#)
- **Eurydice Website**
 - <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/belgium-flemish-community/conditions-service-academic-staff-working>

4.2 Croatia – University of Rijeka

Overview

The University of Rijeka has developed a ‘brain gain model’ to stimulate Croatian academics to return to their home country. This programme has been in existence in various forms at the national level since 2004; however, following a new Act on Higher Education and Scientific Activity, it has recently been revised to be in accordance with national law. This model is primarily devoted to researchers being appointed to the level of Assistant Professorships. UNIRI is making wide use of it so that ca. 6-7% of all current UNIRI faculty staff are in fact returning scientists.

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| Stability (Principle 1) | <p>This programme is entirely funded by both the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education and the University of Rijeka and is thus financially sustained. The tenure track has a clear five-year career progression cycle to advance from the level of Assistant Professor towards higher scientific-teaching grades and offers a rather secure career path linked to the compliance with national criteria.</p> <p>Working conditions are defined through national regulations for public employees, and researchers are employed as civil servants.</p> |
| Transparency (Principle 2) | <p>This model is clear, once on the tenure track with ongoing five-year review periods and accompanying targets in order to progress to the next level, an Assistant Professor with accompanying salary and benefits. This provides a level of clarity and certainty regarding career progression. If criteria are not met, the individual will remain at their current level with another five years to achieve promotion should they wish to.</p> |
| Responsible evaluation (Principle 9) | <p>Criteria for assessment are defined nationally in Croatia and ratified at the National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development, allowing a level of scrutiny and comparability. Institutions and faculties can then choose to set additional criteria as required. This allows for institutions to set criteria that meet with their individual priorities or reflect needs of an academic discipline.</p> <p>In fact, The new Act on Higher Education and Scientific Activity foresees in this regard a revision of the currently valid criteria (see figure) as well as their possible complementing with institutional criteria. In this regard the UNIRI Senate has adopted its Guidelines for the additional (institutional) criteria for the selection of scientific-teaching, artistic-teaching, teaching, associate and professional staff at the University of Rijeka and its constituents.</p> |

What was the rationale?

Prior to the introduction of this model, the opportunity for new permanent positions were mostly available after retirement of a professor. This system allows more flexibility for departments to employ individuals that would be of benefit to the institution. The model described here targets Croatian researchers who have been abroad for five years or in some cases, three years at a ‘research-intensive university’. The government opens up a position on the request of an institution where generally a candidate has been identified,

(although all positions remain fully open to applications from any interested candidates.) All positions are advertised in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia, University website and EURAXESS. All professors carry a significant teaching load and pay scales are set nationally.

Policy on tenure track is standardized in Croatia by national law. The introduction of the new Act on Higher Education in Science requires adjustment of institution policies. As the University of Rijeka has gained expertise on and has established tenure track schemes for several years, it is anticipated that this will be a smaller reform compared to other institutions nationally. Whilst new Act dictates criteria for assessment, which are ratified at the level of the National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development, in order to have a transparent process, universities and faculties are able to further define these criteria s. Each faculty can establish their own criteria that can go beyond the national threshold. This allows for flexibility and an approach suitable for the respective academic discipline (see above).

The current updating of policies has provided an excellent opportunity to align with other European initiatives, for example the development of the UNIRI COARA action [plan](#).

The national criteria being revised are based on purely scientific merit (PhD degree and appropriate number and quality of scientific publications (discipline specific)) as well as criteria based on teaching contribution, scientific and professional contribution/impact and leadership contributions.

The UNIRI institutional Guidelines for the additional (institutional) criteria for the selection of scientific-teaching, artistic-teaching, teaching, associate and professional staff at the University of Rijeka and its constituents take into account also:

- academic skills: quality of publications, knowledge of research methodologies, multi-, inter- and trans-disciplinarity in research activities, internationalisation, usage of open science principles and practices, teaching skills, management of research, peer review, financing, community engagement;
- skills related to academic and institutional behaviour: professionalism, leadership, institutional policies, contributions to United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) / European Research Area / European Higher Education Area principles and actions, teamwork, communication skills;
- personal qualities and skills: basic disciplinary knowledge, enthusiasm, persistence, integrity, self-confidence, responsibility, adaptability, conflict resolution, cognitive abilities, career development (incl. mobility), management of own resources, creativity, understanding of societal and cultural contexts.

On completion of the initial five-year scheme, the Assistant Professor will have five yearly review points until fifteen to twenty years post receiving tenure when there is no longer a requirement for evaluation (Full Professor with Tenure). The revised criteria as defined by the new Act on Higher Education in Science will allow for wider non-traditional criteria for assessing academic excellence.

What have been the challenges in implementation?

- Whilst policy is dictated nationally, there is an additional challenge in the fact that most faculties are separate legal entities and therefore, the university can only make suggestions which may or may not be implemented at the faculty level.

- Croatian salaries are not attractive when compared to other countries and research resource is limited, for example there are few technicians. This makes attracting researchers difficult. However, the salary system is in the process of reform with the elements of this still unclear at this point.
- The five-year review period may be too long for some individuals whose level of excellence would enable them to progress more quickly. There is no way to bypass this within the system, equally there is an emphasis put on having five years to prove yourself which may disincentivise longer term projects.
- There is a requirement for all to teach and this may impact on scientific excellence as perception is that the teaching burden may impact on time to pursue research.

What are the key learnings?

- It would be useful to have more nuance in salary bands and the opportunity to reward within the five-year period in order to offer flexibility and incentivise excellence.
- It is important to recognise a range of skills alongside teaching and research and there is a need to develop wider criteria for assessment based on qualifications, academic achievement, and personal qualities. Contributions to the community, international collaborations, and other non-traditional indicators, should also be considered.
- Public salaries still do not compare favourably with business and industry, and this creates a challenge for Croatian research, alongside comparisons with other European countries. Individuals attracted to positions tend to be from countries outside of Europe as salaries are more competitive.

Sources

- Interviews with Assistant Professors who have achieved tenure and University management (December 2023 – January 2024)
- [Act on Higher Education in Science \(October 2022\)](#)
- Collective Contract for Science and Higher Education (currently being updated)
- [Bibliometric conditions appointment to scientific grade defined by the National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development \(Established 2017\)](#)
- [Conditions for the appointment to scientific teaching grade \(defined by the Croatian rectors conference\).](#)

4.3 Finland - University of Helsinki

Overview

- The tenure-track scheme at the University of Helsinki is part of a strategy to attract, support, and retain leading international researchers in a global academic market.
- The tenure-track takes 3-10 years depending on entry point, spanning assistant professor (R3, 3-5 years), associate professor (3-5 years), and then professor (R4, permanent).
- The criteria for each stage of the tenure track are clear and wide-ranging, including publications, teaching, public engagement, leadership, and future potential.
- The university emphasises that researchers should take responsibility for their own careers, with flexibility in workload models (including research and teaching allocations).

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| Transparency (Principle 2) | Helsinki has published information on the gender balance of assistant and associate professors (51% women) and professors (36%). Clear information about criteria and processes for recruitment, review, and progression are also available. There is openness about the preference to fill tenure track positions through an open and competitive process, but they reserve the right to fill professorships (and, in exceptional circumstances, associate professorships) by invitation. |
| Fair pay and benefits (Principle 4) | The different stages of the tenure-track (assistant professor and associate professor) are remunerated in accordance with pay scales set by the university. Since the tenure track applies to all assistant and associate professorships, all appointees are on the same salary scale. In addition, researchers receive an additional salary component based on personal performance. |
| Responsible evaluation (Principle 9) | There is clear guidance for assessors serving in review processes, including principles of disqualification, information about the need to follow responsible evaluation principles (e.g., the Declaration on Research Assessment), and a reminder that assessor statements are shared with shortlisted candidates. The university also aims to ensure that equality and diversity is considered in evaluation, with both male and female assessors as far as is possible. |

What is the context for the tenure track-like model?

- The Universities Act (2009) established Finnish universities as independent entities and employers, with staff no longer having civil servant status. This provided an opportunity in 2010 to change the way the university attracted researchers.
- Universities are largely dependent on public funding, with amounts allocated in blocks (c. 5 years) to institutions by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Funding for positions is delegated to faculties and there is additional short-term support available from the Research Council of Finland.

What was the rationale?

- The scheme was part of a strategy to attract top talent to the university and to further internationalise the academic staff. Initiated in 2010 at assistant professor and associate professor levels, the scheme was extended in 2015 to include recruitment at professor level.
- Limited government funding for academic positions means that there are few academic options in Finland. The introduction of tenure track-like schemes in Helsinki, as in other Finnish universities, is part of a desire to introduce formal and structured career pathways.

What have been the challenges in implementation?

- Individuals on the tenure track have reviews based on individual criteria at each progression point, with appointment to professor also involving an external assessment and confirmation by the rector. Communicating expectations around criteria remains a challenge, however, with some candidates feeling that they need to meet all criteria and not fully understanding the flexibility available in assessment.
- There has not yet been much attention paid to preparing candidates for alternative careers or other options, should they be unsuccessful in progressing through the track. In part this is due to the high success rate of individuals, with few leaving the track. The university may consider additional support as part of their review of the scheme in 2024.

What are the key learnings?

- The importance of communicating, early on, with all stakeholders. To be successful, senior leaders in particular need to be committed to the scheme.
- Similarly, the importance of open communication in relation to criteria and providing structured opportunities, at regular intervals, to discuss with individuals and ensure they understand where they are in relation to the criteria; and what they need to do to meet expectations.
- Further attention should be given to contractual status while on the tenure track. At Helsinki, both assistant professor (3-5 years) and associate professor (3-5 years) are offered as fixed-term contracts. This might affect the choices of candidates looking for tenure track positions, as in other countries permanent contracts are offered sooner. The longer process might also have an impact on productivity (or expectations of productivity) and in turn mental health and wellbeing.

Sources

- Interviews conducted November - December 2023
- [University of Helsinki website](#)
- League of European Research Universities, *Tenure and Tenure Track at LERU Universities: Models for Attractive Research Careers in Europe*, Advice Paper No. 17 (September 2014)
- Maria Pietilä, 'Incentivising academics: experiences and expectations of the tenure track in Finland,' *Studies in Higher Education* 44(6) (2019), pp. 932-45

4.4 Germany – Goethe University Frankfurt

Overview

The Goethe University Frankfurt/Main has defined three career paths for researchers with R1/R2 profiles: (a) the Advanced Academic Track (research-focused career path with less teaching obligations), (b) the Advanced Teaching Track (scientific teaching-focused career path) and (c) the Academic Support Track (science management career path). Both the Advanced Teaching and Advanced Academic Track are tenure tracks starting with a fixed-term contract for qualification that turns into a permanent position after positive external evaluation. The Advanced Academic Track includes the Tenure-Track Professorship (implemented in 2010 and further developed under the German Tenure-Track Programme). The career paths came into force as principles issued by the Executive Board in April 2023. They are to be implemented by each faculty individually.

Stability (Principle 1)

The Goethe University principles describe clear and defined progression pathways that include permanent employment and open-ended contracts.

Tenure-track professors are initially employed on a temporary basis for up to six years (with a possible extension upon birth or adoption of a child by one year per child, up to a maximum of two years). They transition to a permanent professorship if their performance is evaluated positively. The criteria for the tenure evaluation are made clear at the time of appointment, and the evaluation is the only aspect considered when deciding whether to grant tenure.

Both the positions of *Associated Researcher* and *Associated Lecturer* include a tenure-track, i.e., the positions are initially announced on a fixed-term basis with the option for permanent employment as a *Researcher/Lecturer* upon successful qualification and positive external evaluation. *Scientific Manager / Lab Manager* positions will be offered for an indefinite period upon proof of qualification, which can also be acquired in additional courses on science management or in the context of employment as a *Research Assistant, Associated Researcher or Associated Lecturer*.

Transparency (Principle 2)

The principles include clear statements on international job postings and on selection procedures and hiring requirements.

The positions are to be advertised both internally and externally and as a rule also internationally. In accordance with legal regulations, the positions in the Academic Support Track will be advertised and filled directly as open-ended positions. As a rule, the positions of *Researcher, Senior Researcher, Lecturer or Senior Lecturer* are not advertised since they are granted after positive evaluation.

The selection decision is made by a selection committee (consisting of two professors (including the supervisor), a scientific staff member of the corresponding faculty, a representative of the relevant departmental student council, the Staff Council, the Equal Opportunity Officer and, if applicable, the Representative for Severely Disabled Persons). For fixed term *Associated Researcher/Lecturer* positions a target agreement outlining the qualification goal, teaching and necessary qualification measures is concluded.

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| Responsible evaluation (Principle 9) | <p>The evaluation process and criteria for tenure-track positions are clearly defined and it is stated that they are to be recorded in the job posting in writing as a basis for the evaluation.</p> <p>The evaluation must be completed by the faculty dean or the head of an academic institution and an external reviewer (appointed by faculty dean/head of), at the latest six months before the end of the fixed-term employment contract.</p> <p>Relevant documents include an overview of completed qualification measures, i.e., achievement of goals defined in the initial target agreement.</p> |
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What was the rationale?

In 2022, the Goethe University Principles were developed in a participative process together with members of staff, including early-career researchers (ECRs), administrative staff and across all faculties. According to our interview partners, in a situation with increasing skills shortage also at universities, career paths need to become more attractive and transparent to ensure quality. The aim of the principles' further development is, among other things, to represent permanent tasks through permanent positions and to bundle competencies. Against this backdrop, Goethe University is pursuing three main goals with the transparent structuring of career paths for researchers in mid-level academia.

What have been the challenges in implementation?

- The scheme has resulted in a mandatory process for all faculties, because in the future all permanent positions must be advertised according to the new career track model. Therefore, the faculties and scientific institutions must define permanent tasks and specify these in their Strategy and Development Agreements/target agreements with the Executive Board until March 2024. A permanent task with defined qualification criteria and a defined number of working hours is necessary to advertise a position as permanent-after-tenure. For some faculties this may be more challenging than for others.
- Employment is generally full-time, part-time employment of at least 50% is only possible in justified cases, in particular at the request of the employee. This wording is inconsistent with the notion that sustainable research careers should allow to reconcile career and family/kids.
- The number of permanent positions at the university will likely be increased in the next years, because there is a target agreement between Goethe University and the Land Hesse¹ to increase permanent positions continuously each year until 2025. However, the first step is likely to be the transformation of existing permanent positions that are restaffed according to the new (tenure-track) system defined in the scheme.

What are the key learnings?

- Goethe University Frankfurt has adopted a tenure-track system for filling both professorship and permanent researcher / lecturer positions.
- Selection and evaluation criteria are clearly defined and transparently communicated to candidates before appointment
- The third track (*Academic Support*) includes permanent positions without tenure evaluations.
- Implementation depends on the motivation of the university organizational structure, e.g., faculties.

Sources

- This case study was drawn from HR resources at Goethe University of Frankfurt, information on the German Tenure-Track program by the Federal Ministry of Research and Education and a joint interview with the University President and the head of HR (December 2024)
- Link to the principles: https://www.uni-frankfurt.de/132320338/Principles_Career_Paths.pdf
- Bylaws with regulations on appointment of professorships with and without tenure track: https://www.unifrankfurt.de/137215258/Satzung_zur_Durchf%C3%BChrung_von_Berufungsverfahren_und_Tenure_Track_Verfahren_von_Professuren_an_der_Goethe_Universit%C3%A4t.pdf
- The implementation of the Goethe University principles is subject to and situated within the framework of legal requirements.
- The German Act on Fixed-Term Employment Contracts in Academia (Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz) allows a maximum duration of fixed-term contracts of six years after the doctorate (exceptions apply for medicine and project-based funded positions).

4.5 Netherlands – University of Maastricht

Overview

Academic staff pursue career opportunities on a career path within the University of Maastricht with transparent criteria for career advancement. Tenure track is used throughout the institution across all faculties as part of an overall goal of having fewer temporary contracts.

The University are keen to widen criteria for reward and recognition and in order to be eligible for selection to a tenure track-like position criteria are set across the following categories, education, work experience, teaching, research, management, internationalisation, and competencies.

They are keen to ensure that academics are assessed broadly and transparently and have a system of annual appraisals and professional development support.

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| Transparency (Principle 2) | University of Maastricht has developed a tenure track policy for assistant professors, which is then adapted by individual faculties. This is a practical policy covering both criteria and Appointment Process and the tenure process whilst also offering guidance on support and development plans including recommendations for mentoring. |
| Professional Development Support (Principle 6) | The University HR strategy states that self-development is both a right and responsibility. The staff career centre offers a range of suitable programmes, both internal and external, focusing on various target groups including a distinct department to support early career researchers. University of Maastricht employees have a responsibility to turn their development needs into actions. |
| Supportive Management (Principle 8) | Annual appraisals have a clear focus on development and sustainable employability. There are no forms used and the focus is on a quality conversation based around four themes, looking back, looking forward, short term development and long-term development. They are supported by a digital toolkit and 'self-development is a right and responsibility'. |

What was the rationale?

To qualify for a permanent position, assistant professors on the tenure track must meet the defined criteria within a period of five years. Evaluation has clear milestones and review points and draws and builds on the criteria defined at the point of selection to the tenure track. To support this process two key mechanisms are in place:

- A tailor-made development plan, which is agreed during the first three months of the process and updated on annual basis. This should involve the head of department who serves as the line manager.

- A mentor who will support the individual in their career development with guidance that they meet approximately three times per year. This should be a career-based discussion ideally with no bureaucracy.

Sustainable employment is at the heart of HR Policy with a strong focus on diversity, inclusivity, leadership, and career development. The intention is for all employees to work in a safe environment in which they can continue learning, developing, and investing in their future mobility which the University of Maastricht sees as a basic human right. Managers are trained to support this process.

What have been the challenges in implementation?

- Finding and training mentors who feel confident to provide guidance on careers and have the time available to commit to the researcher.
- Being able to offer each individual the support they require to meet the criteria of the tenure track.

What are the key learnings?

- As far we are aware there has not been any analysis of the success of the tenure track at Maastricht in terms of retention, but the career development support available and the focus on mobility exceed what is offered by many other institutions – particularly the mentoring provision and tailor-made development plan, with emphasis on researcher development, not just meeting the requirements to achieve tenure.

Sources

This case study is drawn from desk research.

[Tenure Track Policy – University of Maastricht](#)

4.6 Portugal - NOVA University Lisbon (NOVA)

Overview

In Portugal there are two parallel Academic careers: one more focused on teaching and the other more focused on research. Both consider 3 levels: Assistant Professor or Assistant Researcher, Associate Professor or Principal Investigator and, finally, Full Professor or Research Coordinator. Both tracks have a tenure track system established by the Portuguese national law (1). NOVA, based on this national regulation, also has internal regulations for tenure track recruitment and contracts (2). In both national and NOVA's regulations, the length of the tenure track period is different for both tracks: while for the teaching track this period is 5 years, it is 3 years for the research track.

More recently, the national Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) opened a call for one thousand permanent positions in both teaching and research tracks – [FCT Tenure](#). These positions are co-funded by the FCT and each host institution. Each host institution can apply for the number of positions they need and are able to co-fund. Once FCT grants the positions, an open, international call will be launched by each host institution. However, this is limited by the need for candidates to already have had a contract from FCT as a postdoctoral researcher.

Standardisation of positions by the FCT provides a scalarly structure and comparable benefits and protections across all Portuguese universities.

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| Stability (Principle 1) | The role of Assistant Professor or Assistant Researcher provides a tenure track-like route that allows a trial period of five or three years (depending on the track) to achieve allocated criteria and an open-ended contract. This is seen as extremely desirable, and many Early Career Researchers believe they will achieve this despite the limited number of positions. |
| Fair Pay and Benefits (Principle 4) | At NOVA, salary scales are determined at national level by national legislation and therefore are comparable across Portugal. All the contracts have the same general social benefits and protection. |
| Responsible Evaluation (Principle 9) | Clear evaluation criteria are set by NOVA in its internal regulations for both tracks (3). These criteria are both qualitative and quantitative with a focus on scientific excellence, research, teaching, innovation, knowledge transfer, and management. Evaluation is carried out by a scientific committee. |

What was the rationale?

The institution establishes selection criteria and selects the candidate. Evaluations are therefore adapted to each recruitment call. Salaries are defined at national level, however, institutions can supplement salaries, for example through external funding for a specific research project.

The tenure track system at NOVA starts at the level of Assistant Professor/Assistant Researcher for those holding a PhD. This position has a trial period of five or three years (depending on the track), after which, with positive evaluation, a permanent contract is issued. Upon an open call for Associate Professor/Principal Investigator the Assistant Professor / Assistant Researcher can apply.

Associate Professors/Principal Investigators have at least five years post PhD. The trial period is one year for the teaching track or three years for the research track unless they already have an open-ended contract with any Portuguese institution. An Associate Professor/Principal Investigator can become aggregated and therefore apply for the position of Full Professor/Research Coordinator if an open call is launched. A Full Professor at a foreign University or an Associate Professor that has the equivalent *curriculum* of a Full Professor can apply for the position of Full Professor/Research Coordinator at NOVA without the need to become aggregated. Full Professors/Research Coordinators have a trial period of one year unless they already have an open-ended contract with any Portuguese institution.

Career development support is not yet formalised for Assistant and Associate Professors or Assistant Researchers and Principal Investigators, and it will therefore differ depending on individual supervisors and academic department. There may be a perception that those on the track have been successful and therefore there is less need for career development support.

Whilst tenure track is an established system at the university, and options for this model may be available, there are equally large numbers of researchers still working on short-term contracts – generally 3 to 6 years - and there is a general acceptance of this. There is no limit to the number of short-term contracts an individual can have. In Portugal it is possible to remain a postdoc for the entire career. Progression is therefore only possible if a suitable position is opened, however, many postdocs believe that they will get tenure despite the lack of positions, there is a mismatch in expectation when compared to reality. There is a tendency for people on the teaching track to teach more than the ones in the research track and therefore for some this is less appealing. Postdocs receive social protection and benefits as contracted employers and if contracts end, they will receive some compensation.

Recently the Portuguese national law that established the research career was being revised. However, due to the current lack of government in Portugal it is impossible to say when this will be completed and what it might comprise. This could pose a challenge for institutions as it may involve changes to the current system.

What have been the challenges in implementation?

- The R1 – R4 research profile descriptors as defined in the European Commissions communication “Towards a European Framework for Research Careers” are not equivalent to the Portuguese system. In Portugal a PhD candidate would not be seen as an R1 researcher as they are not contracted employees, nor would they receive full social protection.
- Mobility may be limited by a bias to Portuguese researchers that prefer to stay in Portugal and/or in the same sector.
- Portuguese legislation is only written in Portuguese, and this might be a limitation to foreigners. The same applies to many internal regulations in universities.
- In Portugal there is no limitation on the number of short-term contracts an individual can receive and there is a general acceptance of this in research culture.
- Some contracts are associated with projects, which leaves researchers in a very precarious position when the project ends.

What are the key learnings?

- For the time being, NOVA has not performed any structured analysis on the tenure track system first implemented in 1979 but this is a possibility under the scope of SECURE. Concerning the new FCT

Tenure, the calls close on 1 March 2024, so it might not be possible during the timeframe of SECURE to have lessons learned from this new system or a comparison to the system implemented in 1979.

Sources

This case study is drawn desk research, provided documentation and an interview with staff from the University of NOVA.

Statutes and legal requirements

- (1) Decreto-Lei n.º 448/79, Diário da República n.º 262/1979, Série I de 1979-11-13 - Aprova o Estatuto da Carreira Docente Universitária
- (2) Decreto-Lei n.º 205/2009 - Diário da República n.º 168/2009, Série I de 2009-08-31 - Aprova o novo Estatuto da Carreira Docente Universitária
- (3) Regulamento n.º 409/2018, Diário da República n.º 129/2018, Série II de 2018-07-06 - Regulamento relativo às carreiras, ao recrutamento e aos contratos de trabalho dos docentes em regime de contrato de trabalho da Universidade Nova de Lisboa. Alterado pelo Despacho n.º 8533/2021, Diário da República n.º 167/2021, Série II de 2021-08-27 - Alteração ao Regulamento relativo às carreiras, ao recrutamento e aos contratos de trabalho dos docentes em regime de contrato de trabalho da Universidade Nova de Lisboa
- (4) Despacho n.º 8088/2021, Diário da República n.º 158/2021, Série II de 2021-08-16 - Regulamento da avaliação do desempenho e alteração do posicionamento remuneratório dos docentes em regime de contrato de trabalho que integram a carreira docente da Universidade Nova de Lisboa
- (5) Despacho n.º 6757/2023 , Diário da República 121/2023, Série II de 2023-06-23 - Regulamento da Avaliação do Desempenho dos Investigadores da Universidade NOVA de Lisboa

References

FCT Tenure: <https://www.fct.pt/en/concursos/fct-tenure-1-edicao>

4.7 United Kingdom - University of Edinburgh

Overview

- The Chancellor's Fellowships scheme is part of the university's strategy to attract talented researchers internationally and support major investment in early career researchers.
- Edinburgh has appointed over 450 fellows to the scheme since 2014. This is a five-year research fellowship, advertised as a tenure track scheme, with the expectation that following a successful review at the end of year three or four, fellows will transition to an open-ended post.
- Chancellor's Fellowships are aligned with College and University research strategies, with fellowship rounds highlighting priority themes (e.g., AI and Datascience, Climate and Environment Sustainability).
- Successful candidates have access to a leadership programme and mentoring and a phased workload, with teaching responsibilities increasing over the 5-year period.

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| Stability (Principle 1) | The scheme is part of a strategy to contribute to the internationalisation of the staff profile at Edinburgh and rooted in workforce planning. Universities in the UK receive quality-related block grants for research (Research Excellence Grant, REG, in Scotland), allocated based on prior performance, and which provide stability over 5-7 years. The scheme has benefited from additional funding from the Scottish Funding Council. |
| Competitive and inclusive recruitment (Principle 3) | Edinburgh has set aims around equality, diversity, and inclusion in recruitment to fellowships. In 2023, the aim is that at least 50% of appointments are women and 20% are individuals from Black and minority ethnic groups. This builds on gender and ethnicity targets used in a previous internal recruitment competition in 2020 and resulted in 80% women and 19% Black and minority ethnic individuals being appointed. |
| Supportive management (Principle 8) | There are clear guidelines for line management of fellows, developed with researchers, which outline the role and importance of the line manager, expectations around fellows' workloads, and information to aid objectives setting, development needs analyses, performance, and review. Line managers are expected to assist fellows in prioritising and planning their workload and to reach their full potential. |

What is the context for the tenure track-like model?

- In the UK, workers on fixed-term contracts should not be treated less favourably than permanent employees, and anyone who has worked continually for the same employer for 2 years or more has the same redundancy rights as permanent employees.
- Any employee on a fixed-term contract for 4 years or more will automatically become a permanent employee, unless there is a good business reason not to do so.

What was the rationale?

- One of the key rationales for the scheme was to contribute to the internationalisation of the staff profile. In 2012 and 2013, 62% of appointments to the scheme were non-UK nationals.
- The scheme has continued to evolve in line with school and university strategies. An internal recruitment round during Covid-19, for example, was explicitly linked to the recognition of the unequal impact of Covid-19 on particular groups, as well as a way of reducing precarity among staff already employed by the university. All those in the 2020 round were internal candidates on fixed-term contracts.

What have been the challenges in implementation?

- In the initial years of the scheme, more men applied than women, and the proportion of white applicants was much higher than other racial and ethnic backgrounds. The gender and ethnicity distribution of the applications was then reflected in the appointment distributions. This has prompted the need for more proactive approaches to diversify the candidates applying for and being appointed as fellows.
- The fellowships are advertised externally as tenure-track positions to attract international candidates. However, tenure does not exist in the UK in the same way that it does in the United States and some in the sector have questioned how (beyond protected time for research) such schemes differ from the more common use of probationary periods in standard academic contracts.
- Many of the fellows undertake interdisciplinary research, and line management of staff undertaking interdisciplinary research has been challenging for academics and Schools.

What are the key learnings?

- Existing professional and career development needed to evolve to better support the specific needs of the fellows. The university therefore needed to develop targeted, cohort-based support to facilitate networking and develop leadership skills. The current programme includes opportunities for fellows to consider ways of leading teams, collaboration, and using their fellowships strategically.
- Attracting talented applicants has been straightforward, but retaining staff requires attention to the effective performance and line management of individuals. This includes close attention to progression criteria to minimise ongoing feelings of job insecurity, as well as the need for effective performance and line management.

Sources

- University of Edinburgh website and Council reports
- University and College Union, *The future of Scottish higher education: An alternative vision for universities* (February 2021)

5 Conclusions and Next Steps

The adoption of the Council Recommendation has had strong implications for the SECURE project and has made it essential to tie the work of the project to the Recommendation, Charter and ResearchComp.

Recommendation 30 provides a definition of tenure track-like models *“to be understood as defined frameworks where a fixed-term contract has the prospect of progression to a permanent position subject to positive evaluation, could be considered for this purpose at the level of Member States and research performing organisations”*

Consultation has already begun with all the institutions we have liaised with in case study collection, our own pilots, and key stakeholders from the commission. Feedback has been positive although there remains difference in appropriate language for example what is advisable and what is mandatory across member states.

Case Studies Mapped to Principles

| Principle | University of Antwerp | University of Rijeka | University of Helsinki | Goethe University | University of Maastricht | University of Nova | University of Edinburgh |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Stability | | | | | | | |
| 2 Transparency | | | | | | | |
| 3 Competitive and Inclusive Recruitment | | | | | | | |
| 4 Fair pay and benefits | | | | | | | |
| 5 Recognition through career pathways | | | | | | | |
| 6 Professional Development | | | | | | | |
| 7 Inclusive and healthy working environments | | | | | | | |
| 8 Supportive management | | | | | | | |
| 9 Responsible evaluations | | | | | | | |

Mapping the case studies to the principles has demonstrated that some of the SECURE principles are easy to evidence and support (highlighted in dark grey in the table above) whilst others have only been addressed implicitly (light grey) or have not been addressed (blank) in the models used as case studies here. All case studies have in common that the schemes presented address stability and predictability of careers. Almost all specifically address, or imply, the transparency of the career path and researchers’ progression along the path. However, especially principles 5 to 9 are barely evidenced in the models. This may be due to the fact that information of professional development, work environment and management are not detailed in institutional guidelines focussing on career paths but may be found in faculty, department or HR guidelines.

The next phase will explore if models that demonstrate more of these principles can be found or if more information can be obtained with further interrogation of the existing case studies. We would also like to highlight some of the interesting schemes identified in T1.2 in order to ensure that our work is comprehensive. This will include tenure track schemes focussed on women for example the Leibniz

Programme for Women Professors and also consider the relevance of schemes outside of Europe. There are obviously many examples that can be drawn from the USA but also others for example schemes in Pakistan were highlighted in the literature review. We will also ensure that we have examples from all our test institutions were appropriate for example University of Cyprus. Moreover, we will consult on the principles and the ways in which tenure track like models can be aligned with the Recommendation, revised Charter, ResearchComp, HRS4R and our own work in WP2 in SECURE looking how to practically implement the Council's Recommendation. Vitae will draw on our own expertise in research leadership and identification of good practice in this field.

The collection of these case studies has reinforced the need to continue to collect and develop several models for tenure track. In terms of support, understanding the national context is vital whilst also following principles that allow for equality and diversity and the best possible experience for researchers on the tenure track. It is also to consider disciplinary context and differing requirements around support.

Interviews with individuals on the track have yielded some interesting points for consideration, particularly regarding formal and informal support on each principle, with formal policy type support often being difficult to identify despite their being lots of examples of informal support. It is important to also consider that individual researchers may also be receiving career and professional development support from professional associations and societies. This may be hard to evidence within the scope of SECURE but may form part of the support individuals draw upon. Interviews have also highlighted where there is complementarity in the principles, as we progress. These will require further discussion and thought.

1. **Stability** – All cases studies have in common that their schemes address increased stability and predictability of research careers. They thereby contribute to reduced precarity, as continuous employment on fixed-term contracts is one of the characteristics of the precarious situation of researchers. However, it should be noted that stability may not be the only factor for researchers when selecting a position, as individuals may value other factors equally or higher for example expertise of department or remuneration.
2. **Transparency** - The differing nature of recruitment across institutions and countries makes transparency difficult particularly when comparing positions or trying to find clear information. The differing nature of schemes also contributes to this.
3. **Competitive and inclusive recruitment** - Many calls are open to all, however, often there is a person who has been potentially identified as favoured and suitable. Therefore, they may be not quite as open as they appear to be.
4. **Fair pay and benefits** - It is hard to define the time period to achieve tenure from start to end but five years seems to be most common. However, this may be frustrating for those that wish to move forward sooner and options for this should be considered.
5. **Recognition through career pathways** - Pathways still need to be mapped, particular non-linear, multi-career and hybrid paths, demonstrating parity with linear pathways.
6. **Professional development** - There is a risk that being recruited to a tenure track system is seen as success and therefore there is limited need for professional development support. Success, however, should not be assumed and this support should be embedded in order to ensure permanence is achieved but also to start the process of developing skills required for future academic leadership and creating a culture of professional development.
7. **Inclusive healthy working environments** - For researchers who have achieved permanent contracts and a certain status this carries a weight of expectation and working life may still be difficult in terms of workload and expectations (e.g., committees to attend, publications to achieve, etc). Institutions should

still consider support for those on permanent contracts. Institutions should also consider expectations and pressure on the researcher on the tenure track and consider ways to support them.

8. **Supportive management** - Supervisor support is critical to researchers on a tenure track, but this is ad hoc and there is little guidance on how they should do this or support available to them. The link to the HRS4R is clear and should be explored further. Training should be offered particularly around research culture and EDI.
9. **Responsible evaluation** - Evaluation criteria appear to work well when a set of governing criteria at international or institutional level can be adapted and tailored to the department, academic discipline, and individual researcher.

Next Steps

The next phase for WP3 is to move into a process of consultation on the draft TTL models principles and supporting case studies. This will involve key stakeholders including research-performing and research-funding organisations, recruitment agencies, companies, and researchers. The draft TTL principles and targeted questions will be shared with the stakeholder community via an open consultation involving surveys and interactive feedback sessions with invited stakeholders. The consultation will ensure co-design and validation of the TTL models by the community as well as drive interest and future uptake of TTL models. This may well involve finding further case study examples. It would also be interesting to see if it is possible to collect data on retention and scale of tenure track models in institutions.

Alongside this process, we will explore with our pilots what they can successfully trial in the scope of the SECURE project and try and establish some benchmarks and impact measures which will inform our work and support the work of the Commission. This will be done in conjunction with WP2 in order to ensure this is fully aligned and embedded in the researcher career framework (RCF). The first draft of the RCF is a step towards implementing the strategic recommendations of the European Framework for Researcher Careers (EFfRC) and proposes how to translate the recommendations into concrete actions for research-performing organisations (RPOs) and research-funding organisations (RFOs). To align the two Work Packages, we will therefore map the Principles of Tenure Track-Like Models against the list of actions proposed in the RCF. This will, on the one hand, inform the RCF on additional aspects to consider for the proposed actions, and, on the other hand, will help us understand the ability for RPOs and RFOs to implement tenure track-like models. Note that within the Council Recommendations (and therefore the RCF), tenure track-like models are recommended for implementation to “promote a fair, equal, inclusive, transparent, structured and gender-equal career accession and progression system for researchers in academia” (Recommendation 30; see Chapters 2 and 3 above).

End Notes

[1] We would like to particularly thank Karen Vandeveldde, Human Resources Director, University of Antwerp and Luisa Henriques, Senior Policy Analyst, Foundation for Science and Technology, Portugal for their input and feedback on the framework and deliverables.

[2] There are 4 pilot organisations in SECURE. The 3 pilot RPOs are NOVA University of Lisbon, University of Cyprus, and University of Rijeka. The pilot RFO is UEFSCDI. Thank you to representatives from these institutions for your contributions to development of the principles.

[3] Thanks to all of the individuals who were interviewed as part of the collection of case studies.

Appendix A – Data and Privacy Notice

Data Privacy Notice

Uses of your information

This is a mixed methods project focussing on tenure track-like models identified by the SECURE project as being of interest and representing a range of approaches. The identified case studies have been selected to demonstrate a range of different approaches and schemes that map to a set of principles for tenure track-like models. They have been developed through desk research and a series of interviews with a number of representatives from each identified institution including those that have participated in the tenure track and supporting staff at the institution. The case studies will be summarised in the project deliverable 3.1 Tenure Track-Like Models that we (lead: CRAC-Vitae) will write.

Legal basis for using your personal information.

Under data protection legislation, a legal basis is required to be able to process your personal information for the purposes set out above. The collection and use of your personal information will be based on you providing your explicit consent.

Withdrawal of consent: Consent must be a clear positive action that you have given your agreement to the use of your personal information, and consent can also be withdrawn at any point if you are no longer happy with the use of your personal information without providing a specific reason. If you wish to withdraw consent, please do so in writing to Emma Day emma.day@vitae.ac.uk.

Once consent is withdrawn, we will destroy all relevant personal information. However, withdrawing your consent does not affect the lawfulness of processing based on consent before you withdrew it.

What personal information we will collect

The personal information we will collect and use as part of the interviews is set out below:

- Name
- Employer
- Job title at work
- Email address

Storage and sharing of personal information.

The information you submit will be compiled by CRAC and anonymised data from the interviews will be included in our deliverable as part of the relevant case study. You will not be identifiable from any such outputs. Members of the SECURE consortium may have restricted access to this where it is relevant to this deliverable. We will not pass your information to any other organisation except where required to do so by law.

Your rights over your personal information

Once your personal information has been collected, you have certain rights in relation to that personal

information that may be exercised. You have the right to:

- Request access to your personal information (and receive a copy of it)
- Request correction of any inaccurate personal information held about you
- Request for your personal information to be deleted
- Withdraw your consent for us to use your personal information

To exercise any of these rights, in the first instance please contact Emma Day emma.day@vitae.ac.uk

How we protect your personal information

CRAC-VITAE has a range of security measures to protect your personal information:

- All staff are required to undertake training in data protection and information security on joining the organisation and then on an annual basis.
- Formal information security policies that must be read and understood by all staff.
- Personal information is only available to those members of staff who require access as part of their role.
- Our information and data systems are accredited through the Cyber Essentials scheme and **the ISO 27001 standard on information security.**

How long we will hold your personal information.

We are only able to retain your personal information for as long as it is needed for the purpose(s) for which it was collected. Personal information you have shared will be retained by CRAC no longer than three months after the conclusion of this project which is currently expected to be March 2025.

Complaints about the use of your personal information

If you are unhappy with the way in which your personal information has been handled, please contact us via David.nightingale@crac.org.uk and we will try to resolve your issue. If we are not able to resolve the issue to your satisfaction, you can make a complaint to the data protection supervisory authority. In the UK, this is the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) which can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113; Email: casework@ico.org.uk

Changes to this privacy notice

We keep our privacy notices under regular review, and we will inform you of any changes to this notice in writing.

This privacy notice was last updated on 28.11.2023.

Appendix B – Interview Questions for Case Studies

For each case study, we are looking for at least one representative - one person responsible for the TTL model, a researcher who has experienced the TTL model and another to be defined in partnership with the institution (this could be someone from HR, professional development support or a senior manager). This may affect the question set selected.

In advance of the meeting, we will share the principles and ask for feedback.

- Ask if they have seen the privacy notice and have any queries.
- Explain the SECURE project.
- Explain that we are collecting case studies of TTL models.
- Ask if they have read the principles and record any comments.

For Managers of the TTL model

Introductions and tell me about your role.

Any comments on the principles for TTL models

Do you know what led XXXX university to introduce the XXXX scheme? What is the national context?

What were the challenges and barriers that needed to be addressed with the scheme?

What have you learned from implementation?

Were there any legal, financial, or administrative changes or systems that you needed to implement?

What are you proud of in terms of the scheme?

How do you support individual researchers participating in your scheme?

Do you know if the intention exists to further develop the scheme? If so, how?

Do you have any advice for institutions wishing to implement tenure track-like schemes on how to support researchers?

Any other comments?

For researchers

Introduction and tell me about your role.

Any comments on the principles for TTL models

What led you to apply for the XXXX scheme?

How did you find the application and recruitment process?

What are the strengths of the way the scheme is implemented at XXXX?

What aspects of your career would you like more support with?

Would you recommend tenure track to other researchers?

Would you have any other comments for senior management or university administration?

Any other comments?

For HR and other administrative staff

Introduction and tell me about your role.

Any comments on the principles for TTL models

What led XXXX university to introduce the XXXX scheme? What is the national context?

What were the challenges and barriers that needed to be addressed with this scheme?

What have you learned from implementation?

Were there any legal, financial, or administrative changes or systems that you needed to implement?

What are you proud of in your scheme?

How do you support individual researchers in your scheme?

Do you know if the intention exists to further develop the scheme? If so, how?

Do you have any advice for institutions wishing to implement tenure track-like schemes on how to support researchers?

Any further comments?

Sustainable Careers for Researcher Empowerment

WP3

Development of Tenure Track-Like Models

Deliverable 3.1

First Draft of Tenure Track-Like Models

SECURE PROJECT

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT OUR
PROJECT ACTIVITIES

E-MAIL US info@secureproject.eu

secureproject.eu