



## **Process of the Internal Assessment**

(October 2022)

**Case number:** 2019ES377419

**Name Organisation under review:** UNIVERSITY OF ZARAGOZA

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This document describes the methodology used for the internal analysis of our institution based on the collection of data and then assess our strengths and weaknesses as an outcome of the implemented actions. Therefore, the methodology used to implement the study is based on the design and analysis of the next actions:

- 1.1. Meetings to collect qualitative data.**
- 1.2. Questionnaire to collect quantitative data**
- 1.3. Internal analysis of the results and the current status of the action plan developed 36 months ago.**

In order to conduct this internal assessment, UNIZAR has invited and encouraged all researchers to participate in these actions designed to obtain reliable data and that have been carried out in the last months by the HRS4R working group of our University. This group is composed by UNIZAR HRS4R Governing Board & Working Committee which involves all areas of the research community such as all researcher stages (R1, R2, R3, R4) and the management projects staff of the University (it is described in section 4).

#### **1.1. Meetings to collect qualitative data.**

Different meetings have been realized during this period, to summarize them:

##### **1) RESEARCHERS MEETINGS**

The meetings were held on 2022, May 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. They were published and announced in the University daily bulletin ([meetings on the UNIZAR HRS4R Strategy](#)) and sent also by mail through the different University Research Institutes, in order to extend the invitation to more researchers and encourage their participation. It was decided, due to the similar circumstances of these groups, to invite R1 and R2 researchers for the first meeting, and R3 and R4 researchers for the other. This decision was considered to be correct, as there were no significant differences between the problems raised by each of the groups.

- 1. May 18th – Meeting with R1 and R2: 16 researchers attended.**
- 2. May 19th – Meeting with R3 and R4: 18 researchers attended.**

In the meetings, the Responsible for International Research Projects of the University, Juan Ignacio Garcés, first reviewed the HRS4R implemented strategy in UNIZAR, the actions implemented since 2017 were exposed and justified, and he also informed

about the reports sent to the European Commission (EC) and future actions expected to be carried out shortly. Researchers were also informed about the obligation of UNIZAR to renew the HRS4R certification by October 2022.

Subsequently, the researchers were informed of the results obtained and of the suggestions and recommendations made by the self-assessment of the HRS4R strategy of the University of Zaragoza and which are included in the revision of the Consensus Report issued by the EC in 2019. Juan Ignacio Garcés also informed about the recommendations made by the EC (monitoring systems, improvement of UNIZAR's internal communication regarding the HRS4R strategy, etc...) reported in 2019 (updated action plan).

Finally, researchers were asked to give their opinion and feedback about the action plan exposed and about the 40 C&C Principles. Some of the main questions and concerns raised in the meetings, revised by the working group, were discussed in the Monitoring Commission meeting as exposed below.

## **2) MONITORING COMMISSION MEETING**

By the end of June (23/06/2022), another meeting of the monitoring commission was held in order to analyse and discuss the conclusions of the meetings with the researchers.

Issues discussed:

- Several researchers (especially from R1 and R2 groups) expressed their interest of having the chance to teach more hours, and specifically to teach in class or laboratory, with a view to future ANECA accreditations. Specifically, some of them claimed that being a master thesis (TFM) tutor does not count as teaching hours for their accreditation to Associate Professors according to the contracts based on the Spanish Science Law.

The Vice-Rector for Teaching Staff informed them that the Instruction for the Second Phase of the POD (POD: Plan de Ordenación Docente, Teaching Organisation Planning) includes measures related to this issue. On the other hand, the Vice Rector for Scientific Policy, Rosa Bolea, reported that she will be holding regular meetings with these groups in order to collect their opinions so the University will be able to take improvement measures ahead.

- (R1-R2) Related to Action 18. Development of the regulations for the figure of permanent researcher within the University of Zaragoza". The Vice Chancellor for Teaching Staff and the Vice Manager for Research informed that the regulations developed by UNIZAR will be reviewed by the Mesa Sindical (Union Negotiation Table) within a few days. Subsequently, hopefully it should be approved by the UNIZAR's Governing Council shortly.
- (R1-R2) During the meetings, the groups highlighted the need to take measures to facilitate family conciliation for researchers, such as nursery services and the possibility to choose their teaching hours.
- (R1-R2) Related to the participation of Administration and Services Personnel (PAS) in research projects, currently, the collective agreement of the PAS only allows the permanent PAS staff to participate in research projects (prior authorization by the UNIZAR Manager). A new agreement is currently being negotiated with the representative unions of the PAS; it may allow the entire PAS staff (including technical and contracted personnel) to participate in research projects, although this is something that is being negotiated by now.

- (R3-R4) researchers were concerned and consulted on how the new (January 2022) Spanish labour reform, which changes all temporal contracts to permanent ones, would affect their research groups. Carmen Baras, Vicemanager for Research, informs that, after the approval of the Royal Decree -law 8/2022, related to urgent measures in the field of labour contracting of the Spanish System of Science, Technology and Innovation, indefinite labour contracts linked to established lines of research (from the research groups recognized by the Aragonese Government) or established transfer lines (registered by UNIZAR's Technology Transfer Office (OTRI)), can be made using different projects/contracts/grants belonging to these research or transfer lines. So, as long as there is budget from projects related to established research or transfer lines, it will be possible to continue with the indefinite contract, without the need for a new call.

On the other hand, the recent approval of the new Science Law (2022 June 23<sup>rd</sup>) in the Spanish Parliament will also require researchers contracted by funds from European projects (such as the Horizon Europe program) to be hired indefinitely. Public entities may only make temporary contracts for the execution of the Spanish Recovery Plan and some non-competitive European funds.

- (R3-R4) Salary inquiries were raised, specifically the possibility to have salary ranges (instead of fixed salaries) for N1 to N4 contracts. In the meetings some researchers said that other institutions have more modalities with salary ranges for a same position. UNIZAR is not in favour of changing salary ranges for the same labour position. However, creating new research contract modalities apart from N1 to N4 figures will be evaluated, but it would be necessary to distinguish different research levels within a range of work and studies experience to open the number of contracts from the four levels that we currently offer. These requirements would be demanded in order to define each salary range, and Carmen Baras requested researchers to provide some samples in order to study this possibility.
- (R3-R4) Some researchers raised the possibility of, within the framework of national projects, being able to publish the position calls in English, in order to reach international researchers and be more competitive in bringing better talented researchers to the University. To this end, they requested the translation of the calls for proposals into English, since the research units currently do not have the resources to translate them by themselves. Our University is studying the possibility of collaborating with the Cervantes Institute to offer them the option of using UNIZAR's Modern Language Centre to provide support in the translation of official documents.

In addition, there is also a need to translate the clauses attached to the contracts so that international researchers can understand them when they sign the contract. This translation service offered by the Instituto Cervantes could offer this service as well.

- (R3-R4) Some Assistant Professors requested the possibility of promoting as soon as possible to the figure of Tenured Doctor. In this case the Vice-Rector for Teaching Staff recalls that, after the second full-time year, contracted Assistant Professors can already request the transformation of their figure. (Before that, it was requested 5 years seniority at the university to promote to Tenured Doctor Professor).

As can be seen from the comments and requests raised by the researchers, there is room for improvement, so we are going to introduce some of the requests in our new action plan. But it also comes clear that there is a need to inform better about the conditions and the often changing situation of labor contracts for researchers in the framework of the University of Zaragoza, which is for sure a good reason to maintain this kind of meetings regularly with them.

## **1.2. Questionnaire to collect quantitative data.**

The main objective of the survey was to collect researchers' opinion about UNIZAR's Human Resources Strategy (HRS4R), as well as whether they knew which measures have been taken during implementation period since 2017. In order to measure their opinion, the University's Vice-Rectorate for Scientific Policy prepared and sent a survey (in Spanish and English) addressed to the entire research personnel.

Researchers involved in answering the survey:

- Pre-doctoral researchers, contracts N4 and N3 (R1)
- Post-doctoral researchers (contracts N1 and N2, Marie Curie, Juan de la Cierva, María Zambrano and Margarita Salas) (R2)
- Recognized researchers (Tenured Research Doctors, Ramón y Cajal and Distinguished Researcher) (R3)
- Full Professors, Tenured Doctor Professors, Assistant Professors and Associate Professors (R4)

The announcement informing the researchers about the possibility of completing the survey was published in the [iUNIZAR bulletin](#). This announcement was published twice. A mailing was also sent from the Vice-Rectorate for Scientific Policy to the management of the UNIZAR's Research Institutes so they could forward it to their researchers. Individual mailings were also sent from Euraxess Office to the international researchers who had been in direct contact with the office during the last year, as well as to all the researchers who attended the UNIZAR HRS4R Strategy meetings in March. The survey was open from July 11<sup>th</sup> to a hard deadline in July 21<sup>st</sup>.

In order to assess the impact of the HRS4R strategy and the measures implemented since 2017, the survey was composed of 12 questions. These questions aimed to measure the researchers' knowledge and opinion about UNIZAR's strategy on:

1. Recruitment, 2. Working conditions, 3. Ethical and professional aspects and 4. Training. In addition, the actions carried out in this process were evaluated to measure the impact and satisfaction of the researchers.

The evaluation of the questions was measured with a scale of 4 levels, being 1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable. DK/NA (don't know/no answer).

Of the 2.933 researchers currently employed at UNIZAR, a total of 119 responded to the survey.

Number of responses by type of researcher:

- Category R1: 618 researchers (20 responses, 3.24% of the total UZ R1)
- Category R2: 124 researchers (7 responses, 5.65% of the total UZ R2)
- Category R3: 26 researchers (4 responses, 15.38% of the total UZ R3)
- Category R4: 2165 researchers (88 responses, 4.06% of the total UZ R4)

Therefore, the overall response rate was 4.06%.

Questions asked in the survey and their corresponding results, segregated by category and gender:

1. How do you assess, in general, from your point of view, the implementation of the [HRS4R Logo](#) in UNIZAR.

Average rating:

2.99

(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

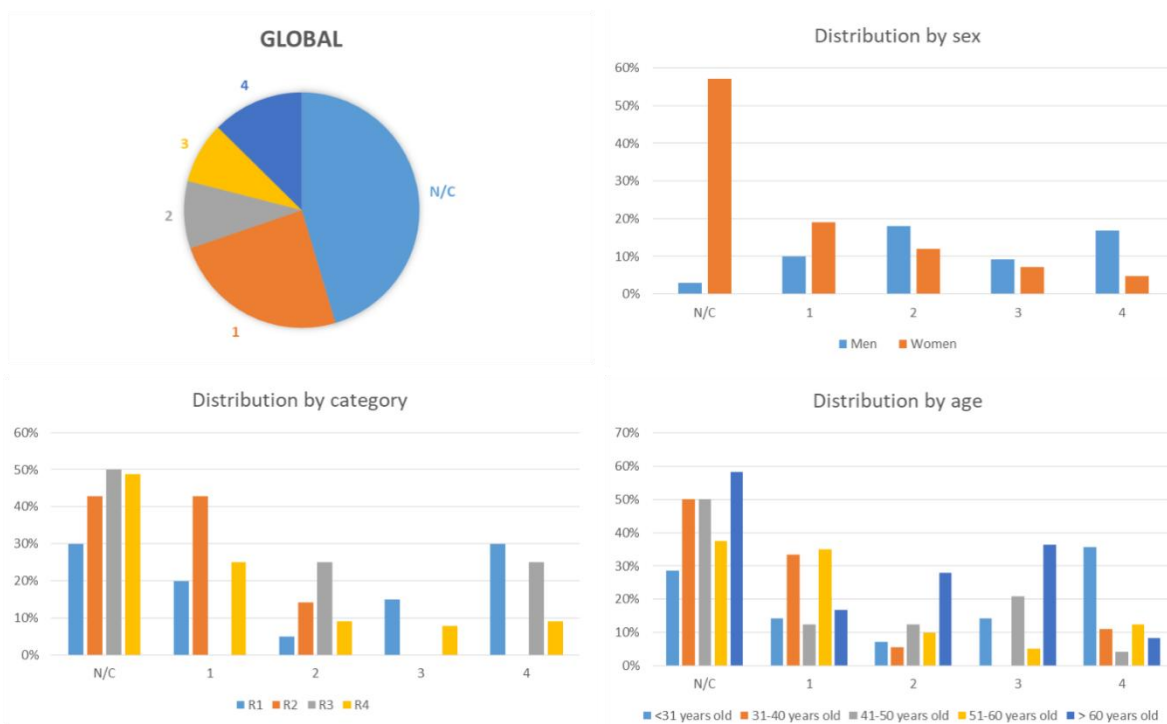


2. In your field of work, what has been the impact of the implementation of the HRS4R Seal in UNIZAR.

Average rating:

2.17

(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

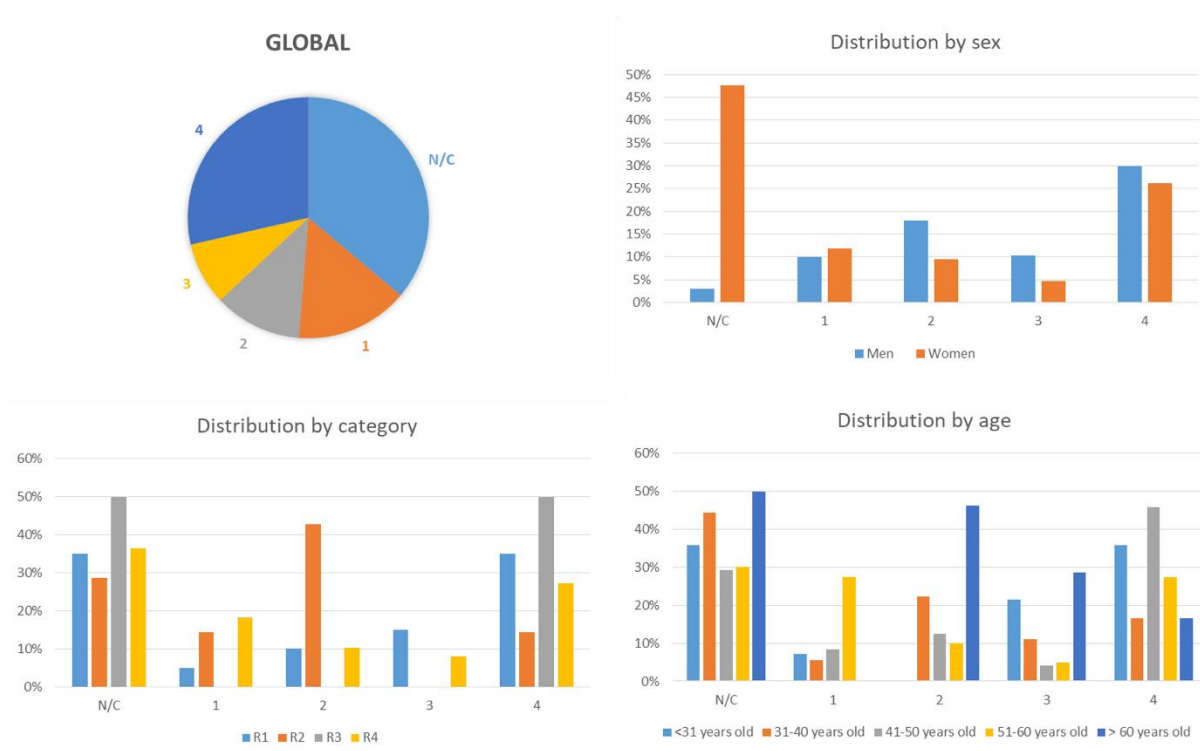
3. During the month of May 2022, UNIZAR HRS4R Strategy Monitoring Technical Commission organized meetings with the different groups of researchers (R1, R2, R3 and R4) to report on the status of the strategy, learn about their concerns and suggestions related to your research career (hiring, training, working conditions and ethical and professional aspects).

Value the initiative of UNIZAR with the convening of these meetings.

Average rating:

2.79

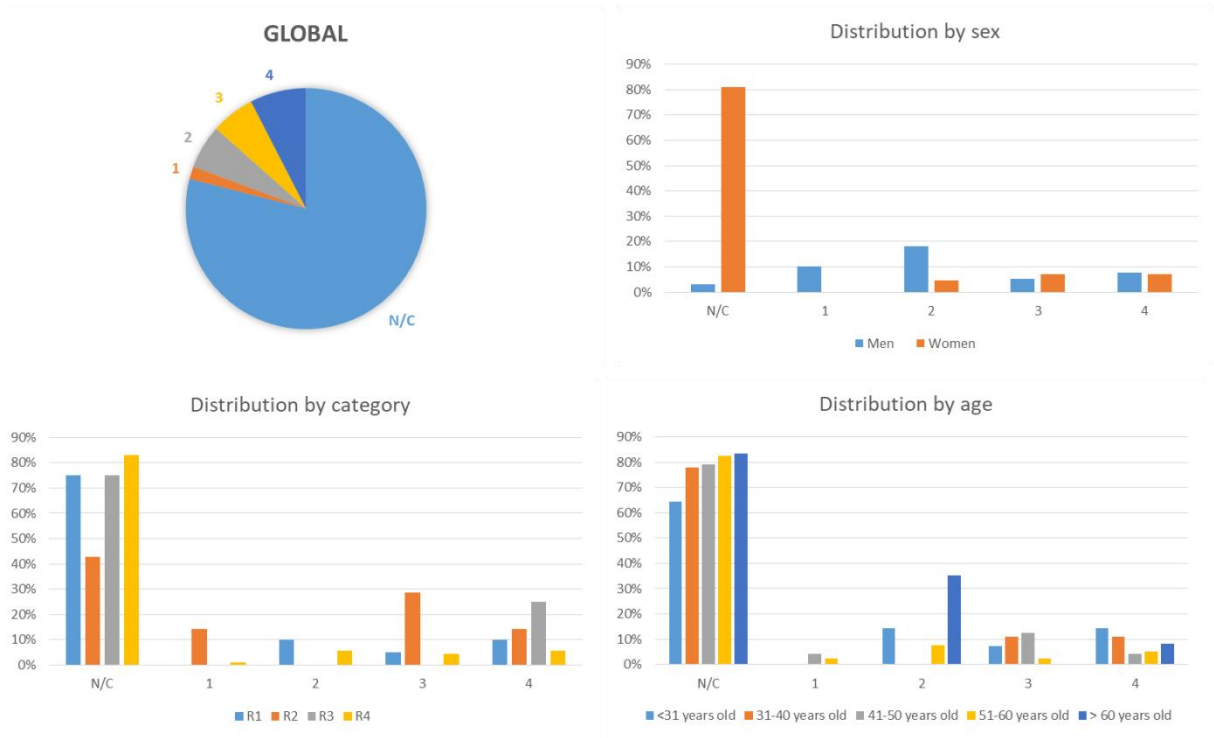
(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

4. If you have attended, rate your degree of satisfaction.

Average rating: 2.92 (1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



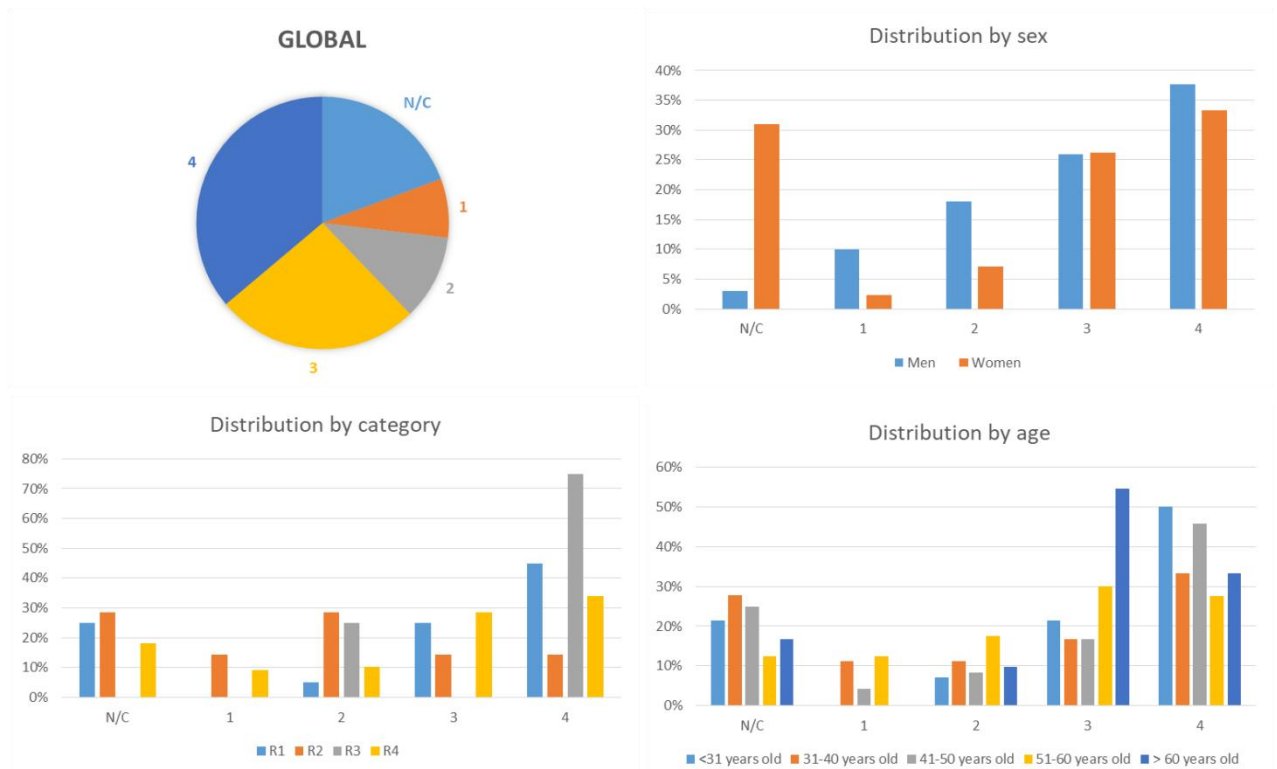
1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

5. UNIZAR has developed a regulation that allows the collaboration in the teaching activities of the research staff hired by the University of Zaragoza. This regulation regulates the possibility that contracted researchers (predoctoral, contracted for the development of specific research projects, etc...) can collaborate in teaching Final Master's Projects / Final Degree Projects. Rate the degree of satisfaction with this regulation.

Average rating:

3.12

(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

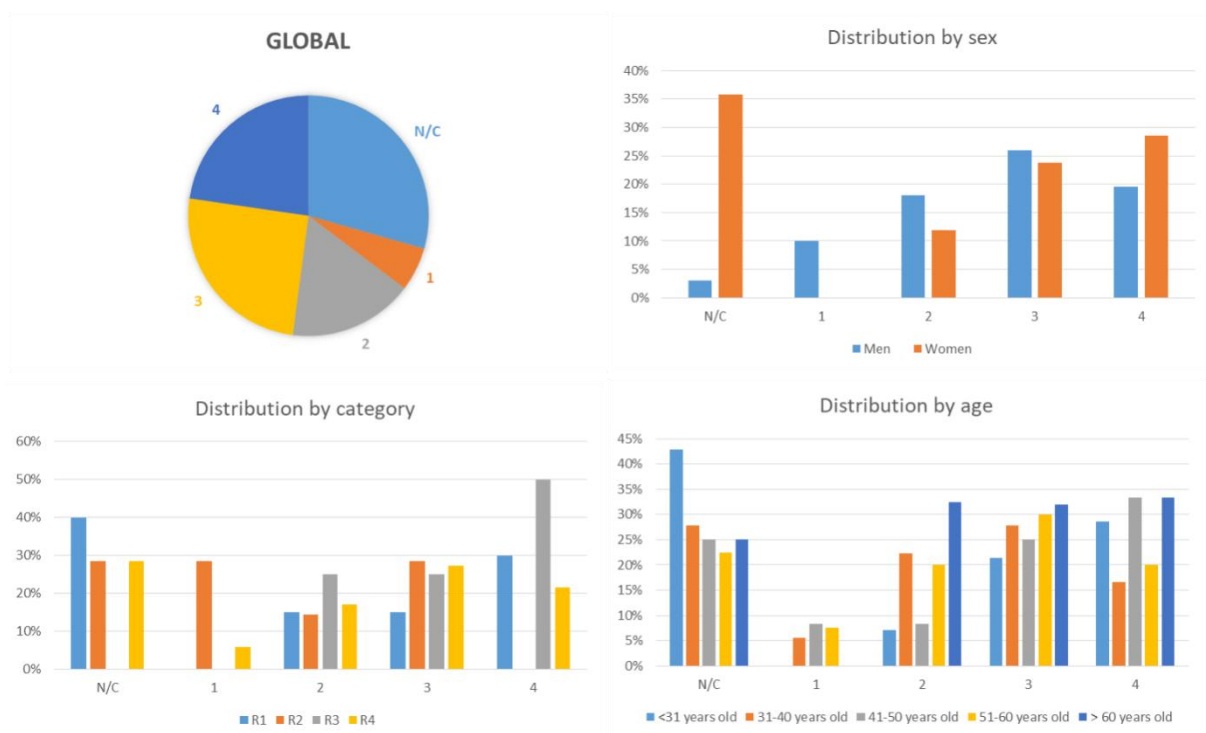
6. Since 2017, UNIZAR has regulations governing specific employment contracts for research personnel (Predoctoral, Access, Distinguished Modalities), provided for in Law 14/2011, of June 1, on Science, Technology and Innovation .

Rate the degree of satisfaction with the implementation of this regulation.

Average rating:

2.92

(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



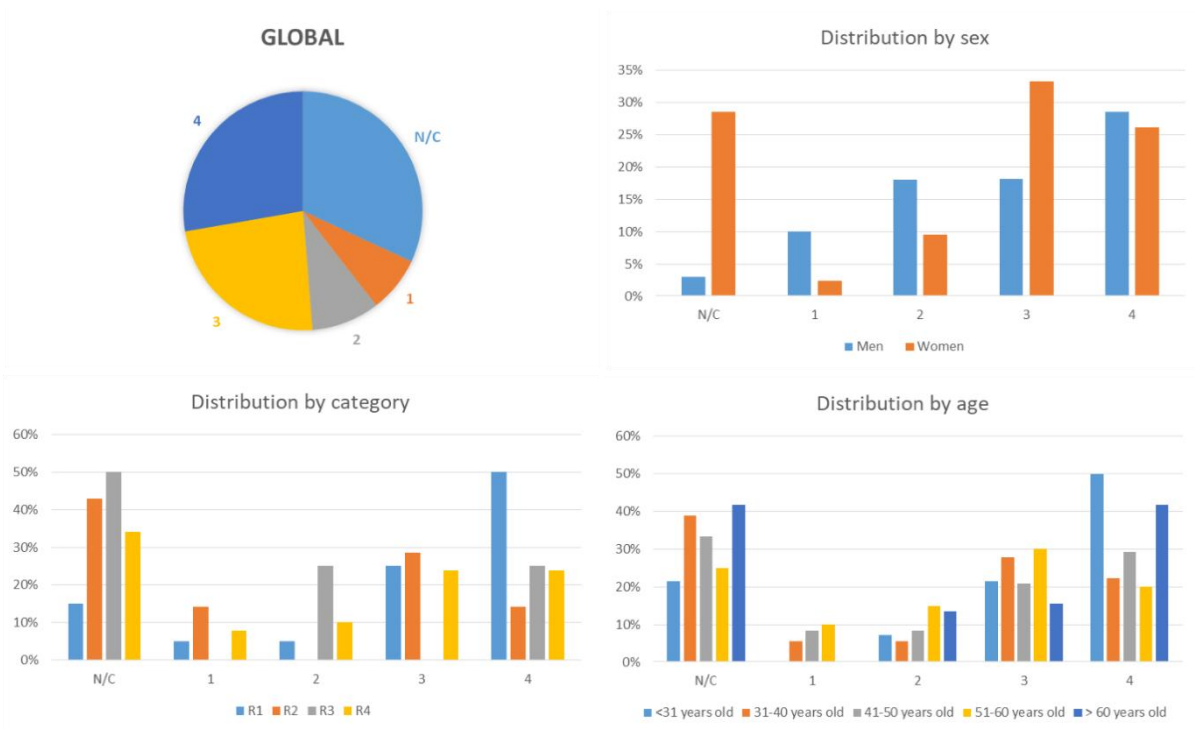
1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

7. UNIZAR has a [Code of Good Research Practices](#) (in Spanish and English). Please indicate your assessment of the measure.

Average rating:

3.05

(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



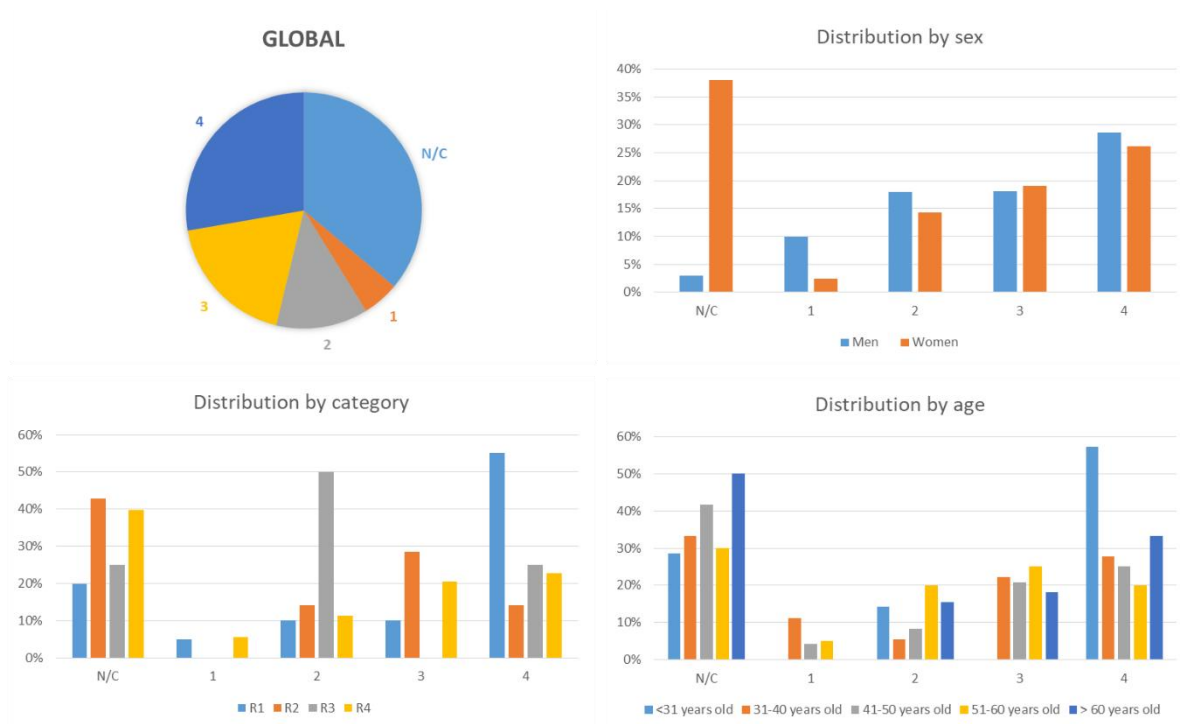
1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

8. UNIZAR has a [Welcome Manual](#) (in Spanish and English). Indicate your assessment of the measure

Average rating:

3.08

(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

9. UNIZAR has published a total of 1,905 calls for hiring researchers (from 2017 to date). Indicate how you value the contracting procedure, its transparency and efficiency.

Average rating:

2.81

(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).



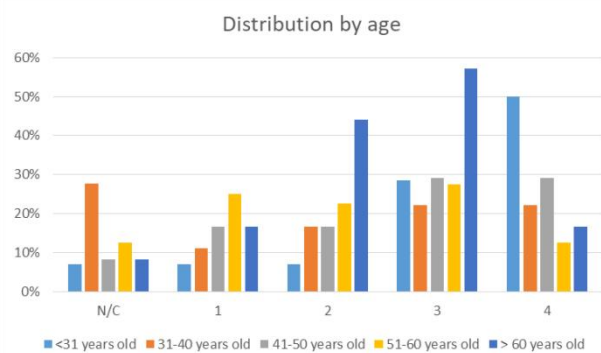
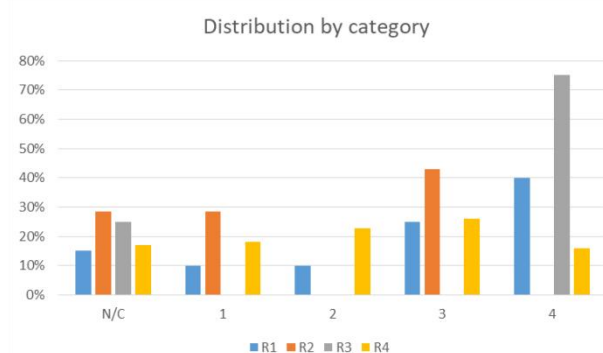
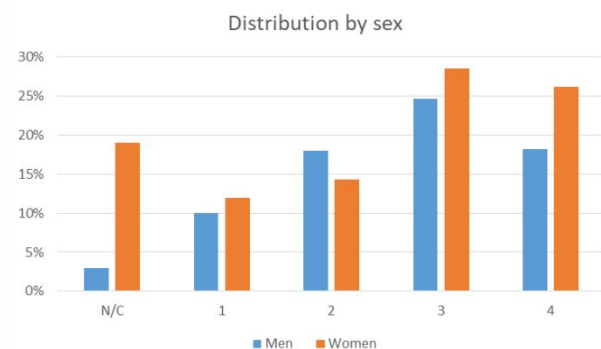
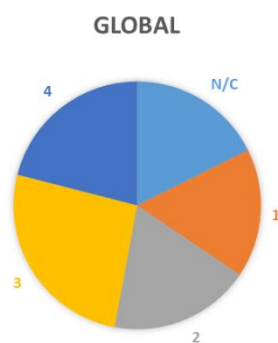
10. UNIZAR has a Centre for Innovation, Training and Research in Education Sciences (CIFICE), which offers training courses for UNIZAR researchers.

Rate the degree of satisfaction with the training offered.

Average rating:

2.62

(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

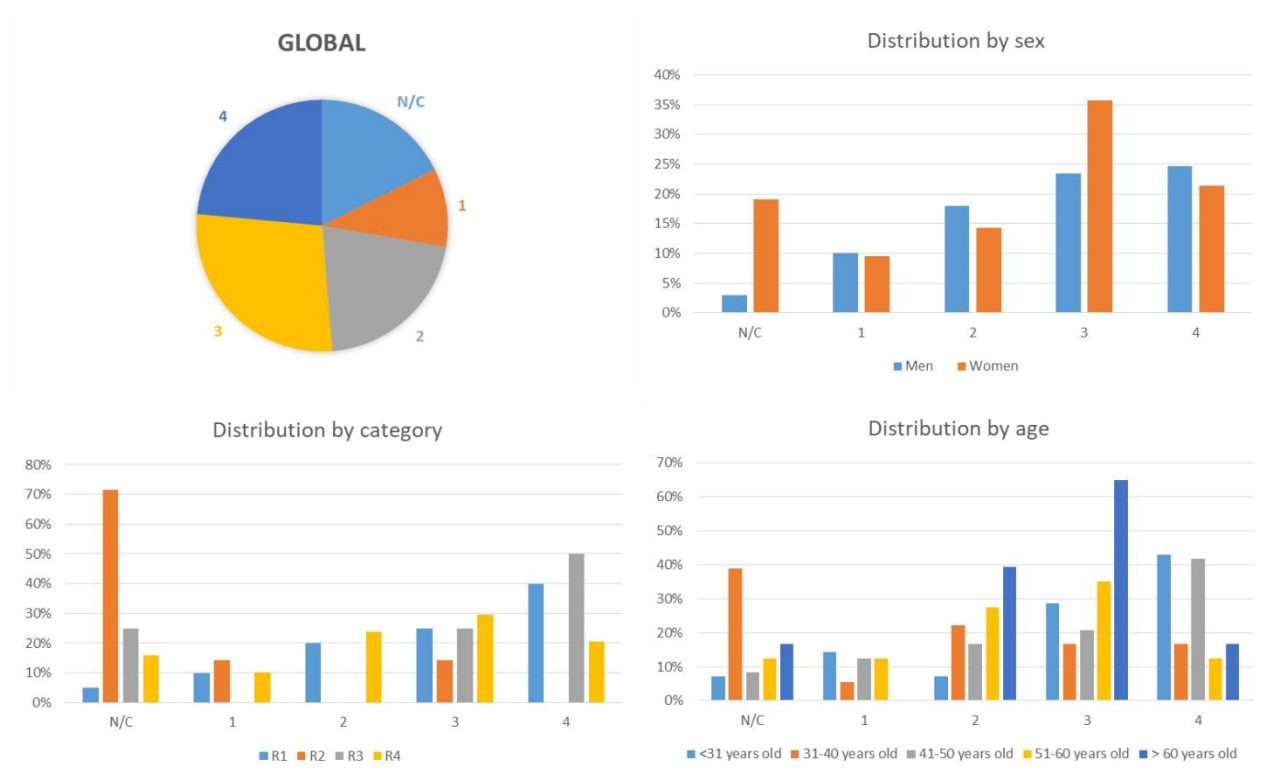
11. The UNIZAR Doctoral School offers training courses (cross-cutting activities/program training activities) in Spanish and English for pre-doctoral researchers.

Rate the degree of satisfaction with the training offered.

Average rating:

2.79

(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

- 12.** UNIZAR has the EURAXESS service that provides personalized assistance both to foreign researchers who travel to UNIZAR to carry out their research work, and to UNIZAR researchers who are interested in moving abroad temporarily (obtaining visas, work permits, stay and residence cards, renewals, homologation of university degrees, job offers, Social Security and health care, schooling).  
Rate the service provided by the UNIZAR Euraxess office.

Average rating:

2.96

(1-2) (>2<3) (3-4)



1=Very unfavourable and 4=Totally favourable and DK/NA (does not know/does not answer).

Here, we summarise the main conclusions of the results of the survey:

- Before analysing each question, we would like to point out that in many questions there is a high number of answers "Don't know/don't answer". Therefore, we observe that a part of the participants is not aware of the actions that are integrated into the HRS4R strategy.
- The average of the scores is good. There is no question whose mean is less than 2. The average of all the questions is 2.68 out of 4. With this we conclude that the satisfaction with the actions proposed and implemented and with the human resources strategy followed by UNIZAR is satisfactory for the researchers. Nevertheless, it is important to analyse in detail each of the answers. Satisfaction with completed actions is high, indicating that they are happy with the work done and that they are aware of the existence of the final documents.
- QUESTION 1: This question is referred to the degree of general satisfaction that researchers have with the human resources strategy. The result is not satisfactory for us even though the score almost reaches 3 (2.99), since the number of "Don't know/No answer" reaches 40%. We believe that this high number of "Does not know/does not answer" is due to the fact that many researchers do not associate some human resource actions to those included in the implementation strategy of the HRS4R in UNIZAR. In other words, we believe that the actions carried out within this project are visible (as demonstrated in subsequent questionnaire responses), but many researchers do not identify them with the HRS4R strategy. Therefore, we conclude that the communication work has not been effective and that greater communication efforts should be made in the future.
- QUESTION 2: With this question we reached similar conclusions to those of the previous question, since the question was about the repercussion of the implementation of the HR label in the workplace. Moreover, we observe an average score, 2.17, observing a certain degree of dissatisfaction. However, the number of "Don't know/No answer" reaches 45% in this case. Therefore, we conclude, again, that the researchers do not identify clearly the actions launched by the HRS4R strategy with the implementation of these actions. In this sense, it is once again observed that communication has not been sufficient and that greater efforts should be made in terms of communication in the future.

- QUESTION 3: This question refers to the meetings organized to inform researchers about the status of the strategy, learn about concerns and suggestions related to their research career. Once again, we observe a high number of "Don't know/no answer", higher than 35%. Although these meetings were publicized by different means and disseminated trying to reach all researchers, at the end they obtained a low participation. Therefore, there is a lack of knowledge about this question. It could be considered that greater communication efforts are necessary to reach to more researchers and increase their participation in the project. The score was 2,79, so it may be concluded that the researchers who were familiar with it, were satisfied with the initiative.
- QUESTION 4: This question is related to the previous question looking just for researchers' answers who attended to the meetings. It can be observed a positive degree of satisfaction 2.92. The participants evaluated the initiative and the meetings positively. Reinforcing the previous conclusion, the number of "Does not know/No answer" rises to 75%, which reflects the low attendance to the meetings.
- QUESTION 5: This item evaluates the internal regulation that allows the collaboration of contracted researchers in teaching activities. It can be observed a moderate satisfaction by the researchers, with a score of 3.12. However, a significant aspect compared to the previous questions related to the number of "Don't know/No answer" which decreases to 35%. It can be concluded that this action has had a direct impact on the researchers' work environment and therefore, they appreciate it. However, this action is not perceived within the implementation strategy of the HRS4R certification.
- QUESTION 6: This item evaluates the degree of satisfaction with the implementation of regulations governing specific employment contracts for research staff. Similar to the previous question, a positive satisfaction can be observed (2.92), the number of "Don't know/No answer" remains in a low percentage (around 20%). For this reason, similar conclusions can be reached: This action has had an impact on the working environment, and it has also been positively evaluated, although it is not considered as an action included in the implementation of the HRS4R strategy.

- QUESTION 7: This is a question related to the Code of Good Research Practices which was implemented as a result of the first Gap analysis. It can be observed a moderate satisfaction with this action (3.05) and the number of "Don't know/No answer" drops below 30%. These data indicates that it is a positively valued action and known by researchers, although they surely do not relate it with the HRS4R strategy.
- QUESTION 8: this question is about the Welcome Manual. It can be observed good satisfaction (3.08) and the "Don't know/No answer" number is around 28%. Analysing the answers, it can be observed that the groups over 60 years of age are the ones that know the least about this Welcome Manual and the ones that respond the most to the "Don't know/no answer" option. Meanwhile the R1 researchers give this initiative a score of 4, since they have joined the University lately or they have had to consult the manual in the last few months or years. For this reason, we are satisfied with the degree of knowledge and satisfaction regarding to the welcome manual of professionals who have less seniority at the University. It could be considered to make it known and spread the manual, so the most senior Staff get to know it. Consequently, those who have been working in the organization for some time are aware of the existence of this manual.
- QUESTION 9: This question is related with the recruitment calls for researchers and the recruitment procedure, its transparency and effectiveness. The question has obtained a good score (2.81) and a low number of "Don't know/No answer" (around 25%). With this we deduce that these recruitment calls are known by the researchers and their assessment is well evaluated.
- QUESTION 10: A Training question, since it asks about the Innovation Center, Training and Research in Education Sciences (CIFICE), which offers training courses for UNIZAR researchers. We observe that the score is 2.62 and that the number of "Don't know/No answer" falls below 25%. It could therefore be concluded that researchers are aware of the center and are aware of the courses offered, although efforts should be made to make the assessment more positive.
- QUESTION 11: This question is also linked to Training. Specifically on the existence of Spanish and English courses for pre-doctoral researchers. This item has had a score of 2.79 and a "Don't know/No answer" number of less

than 25%. We are impacted by the fact that a very high percentage of R2 answered "Don't know/No answer", an aspect that should be analysed, since although these courses are not aimed at this group, they should be aware of its existence.

- QUESTION 12: This last question is related to EURAXESS office which provides services to international researchers who come to work at UNIZAR, as well as to UNIZAR researchers who require its services because they are going to stay abroad or need to carry out some procedure outside Spain also to researchers seeking international mobility. A positive satisfaction with this service is 2.96 although the number of "Don't know/No answer" is around 30%. It can be observed that seniority researchers, both R3 and R4, and, consequently, the oldest researchers, over 60 years of age, answered "Don't know/No answer". This is probably because this group has never used this service, therefore they are not aware of the service. In any case, it would be advisable to carry out a communication task for this group of researchers to inform them of the existence of this office and the services offered.

In summary, the University of Zaragoza must make more and better efforts to publicize its HRS4R strategy, link the actions developed within the strategy itself and communicate these actions much better so that a greater number of researchers are aware of them and thus achieve a better engagement of our researchers to our own strategy.

### **1.3. Internal analysis of the results and the current status of the action plan developed 36 months ago.**

The internal gap analysis is analyzed by the HRAS4R working group considering the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the questionnaire and from the researchers' meetings. Additionally, the actions already carried out by UNIZAR since the beginning of HRS4R strategy are also taken into account. Therefore, all the internal review based on strengths and weaknesses, has been completed and uploaded together with the action plan of the University of Zaragoza.