



**Uchwała nr 1866  
Senatu Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku  
z dnia 27 kwietnia 2016 r.**

***w sprawie zatwierdzenia dokumentacji związanej z wdrożeniem zasad  
Europejskiej Karty Naukowca w Uniwersytecie w Białymstoku***

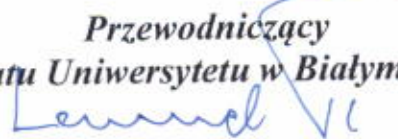
Na podstawie § 24 ust. 2 pkt 43 Statutu Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku Senat Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku uchwała, co następuje:

§1

Senat zatwierdza dokumentację związaną z wdrożeniem zasad Europejskiej Karty Naukowca w Uniwersytecie w Białymstoku, stanowiącą Załącznik do niniejszej Uchwały.

§2

Uchwała wchodzi w życie z dniem podjęcia.

*Przewodniczący*  
*Senatu Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku*  
  
*Prof. dr hab. Leonard Etel*



**Report on the implementation of the European  
Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct  
for Recruitment of Researchers at the  
University of Białystok**

**University of Białystok  
April 2016**

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## **1. Information about the University of Bialystok**

University of Bialystok was created in 1997 from the former Branch of the University of Warsaw (established in 1968). Over almost twenty years the University of Bialystok has become a dynamically growing institution of higher education, the largest one in the Podlasie region (the North-Eastern part of Poland) both with respect to the number of researchers, fields of study and forms of education offered as well as the number of students and graduates. In 2014 the construction of a modern and well-equipped campus for the students of natural and mathematical sciences was completed.

The University consists of nine faculties, including one located abroad in Vilnius (Lithuania): Faculty of Law, Faculty of Economics and Management, Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics, Faculty of Physics, Faculty of History and Sociology, Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology, Faculty of Biology and Chemistry, Faculty of Philology, and Faculty of Economics and Informatics in Vilnius.

Classes and lectures are delivered by approximately 850 academic teachers including around 200 university and tenured professors. At present the University offers courses in 35 fields of study and over 110 specializations for approximately 12,500 students. The major fields of study offer unique and inter-faculty courses created to meet the social demand.

In 2010 and 2011 the University of Bialystok was awarded the 3rd place whereas in 2012 it was one of five laureates and received a certificate "Good School – Good Job" in the contest for "The most innovative and creative university in Poland". In 2011 the University of Bialystok was awarded the certificate "University of Leaders" by the Foundation for the Development of Education and Higher Learning.

PhD degree studies are carried out within six University units: the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Economics and Management, the Faculty of Philology, the Faculty of Biology and Chemistry, the Faculty of History and Sociology, and the Faculty of Physics.

The University is entitled to confer the university degree of doctor in economics, law, physics, biology, chemistry, sociology, history, linguistics, literary studies, as well as education, and the postdoctoral degree (doctor habilitatus) in law, economics, biology, chemistry, physics and history.

The region's unique nature and cultural diversity, which attracts scientific studies, are applied to science research carried out at the University.

As of April 2016, within the frames of over 60 scientific and teaching agreements, the University cooperates with foreign partner universities from the Russian Federation, the USA, China, Great Britain, Romania, Japan, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Switzerland, Czech Republic and Italy. The University has signed almost 170 agreements within the framework of the Erasmus + Programme.

The fields of study are adapted to the region's needs and capabilities. They also include the needs of our compatriots residing east of Poland. The University of Bialystok offers studies in Catholic and Orthodox Churches' theologies. They are of great ecumenical significance and emphasize the university's specificity.

The University has awarded Honoris Causa Doctorate Degree to ten outstanding persons for their immense scientific, social and political achievements: Prof. Brunon Hołyst, Prof. Jerzy Wilkin, President of Poland in Exile - Ryszard Kaczorowski, a founder of Paris "Culture" – Jerzy Giedroyć, Prof. Andrzej Stelmachowski, Prof. Andrzej Wyczański, Autocephaly Orthodox Church Metropolitan of Poland - Prof. Sawa, Prof. Marcel Morabito, Archbishop Metropolitan of Bialystok - Prof. Edward Ozorowski, and Prof. Keiichi Yamanaka.

The University of Bialystok is continually developing and improving its facilities to provide the best possible conditions to study and research.



## The mission of the University of Bialystok

In reference to the fundamental ideals of the University, such as the pursuit of truth, service to the public good, educated society, preserving the autonomy of the research, the mission of the University of Bialystok is:

- ✓ conducting high-quality research in the natural sciences, science, humanities and social sciences, thereby bringing standing contribution to the scientific knowledge of the world and solving its major contemporary problems;
- ✓ educating highly qualified personnel for modern research and development facilities in the region and the country;
- ✓ learning and enriching the cultural heritage of the region;
- ✓ promoting graduates equipped with comprehensive knowledge, skills and competences suited to the needs of the labour market and the requirements of the knowledge economy.

The location of the University of Bialystok close to the eastern border of Poland, the enormous importance of democratic values, such as openness to others, tolerance, respect for social and cultural diversity, are the foundation for the development of cooperation with our closest neighbours, with special regard to the educational needs of the Poles in the East and broadening the educational offer at the Faculty of Economics and Informatics in Vilnius.

## 2. Process Description and Methodology

### 2.1 Process Description

The University of Bialystok decided to take action upon the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers on the **28<sup>th</sup> of April 2015** at the meeting of the Senate Committee for Research. The Committee members debated on the letter by the Minister of Science and Higher Education on the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. They also discussed founding criteria of research projects regarding the implementation of documents mentioned above that were planned by the National Science Centre and the National Centre for Research and Development in Poland.

Between **May and September of 2015** discussions on the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers took place at the meetings of the Faculty Councils. On the **30<sup>th</sup> October 2015** Vice-Rector for Research and International Relations Professor Beata Godlewska-Żyłkiewicz held a meeting with the Vice-Deans for Research. On the **3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2015** the University Authorities (Rector and Vice-Rectors) presented and discussed the preliminary information about the Charter and Code. On 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2015 the University Authorities discussed the implementation of the Charter and Code at the University of Bialystok. On the **12<sup>th</sup> of January 2015** the University Authorities decided to establish the Committee to develop a strategy for the implementation of the Charter and Code.

Following that decision, on the **26<sup>th</sup> of January 2016** Rector Professor Leonard Etel signed an Ordinance on the formation of the Committee to develop the implementation strategy of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers at the University of Bialystok (hereinafter referred to as the Committee).



The Committee consists of five members:

- Dr Anna Budnik, PhD, LL.M. - Chair
- Dr hab. Elżbieta Kuźelewska, PhD - Member
- Dr hab. Paweł Brzęk, PhD - Member
- Dr Piotr Guzowski, PhD - Member
- Dr Katarzyna Winiecka, PhD - Member

The members of the Committee represent four Faculties of the University of Białystok: Faculty of Law, Faculty of Biology and Chemistry, Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology, and Faculty of History and Sociology; among them are experts in administrative law, political science, sociology, experimental science and history. One member is engaged in the Citizens of Academia movement which was established to initiate a broad debate on the future of Academia in Poland.

The members of the Committee are young scholars who earned their PhD or PhD with habilitation degrees in different scientific areas. They have gained broad international experience by conducting research, lecturing, and carrying out various other projects at European and American Universities. Their diverse expertise and skills guarantee a comprehensive approach to different activities at the University of Białystok that were examined and evaluated in this study.

Composition of the Committee complies with the principle of gender balance as it consists of three women and two men.

On the **27<sup>th</sup> January 2016** at a meeting of the University Senate the current status of the implementation process of the Charter and the Code was presented and discussed. On the **24<sup>th</sup> February 2016** the University Senate made a Resolution in support for the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers and activities to obtain the HR Excellence in Research logo. On the same day the Rector of the University of Białystok Professor Leonard Etel signed the Declaration of endorsement for the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers.

At the meeting on the **14<sup>th</sup> of April 2016** the Committee discussed a preliminary version of the Recommendation with Vice-Rector for Research and International Relations Professor Beata Godlewska-Żyłkiewicz, Vice-Rector for University Organization and Development Professor Dariusz Kijowski, and representatives of the University's trade unions.

On the **27<sup>th</sup> April 2016** the University Senate made a Resolution ratifying the documentation related to the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers at the University of Białystok.

## **2.2 Methodology**

In March 2016 the Committee carried out a survey whose main objective was recognition of the work conditions at the University of Białystok. The purpose of the research was constructed on the basis of guidelines coming from the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. In order to achieve the aim of the examination the Committee decided to conduct a survey among academics and PhD students of the University.

In the research a quantitative method was applied. The survey was carried out using a computer-assisted web interview technique.

121 people participated in the survey, among which were: academics with the title of Professor (6), academics



with the Doctorate degree with habilitation (29), academics with the Doctorate degree (40), academics with the Master's degree (10), and PhD students (36). The persons who participated in the survey represented the whole academic environment and Faculties of the University of Bialystok. There were 56% women and 44% men in the research sample. In the survey a nonprobability sampling was used.

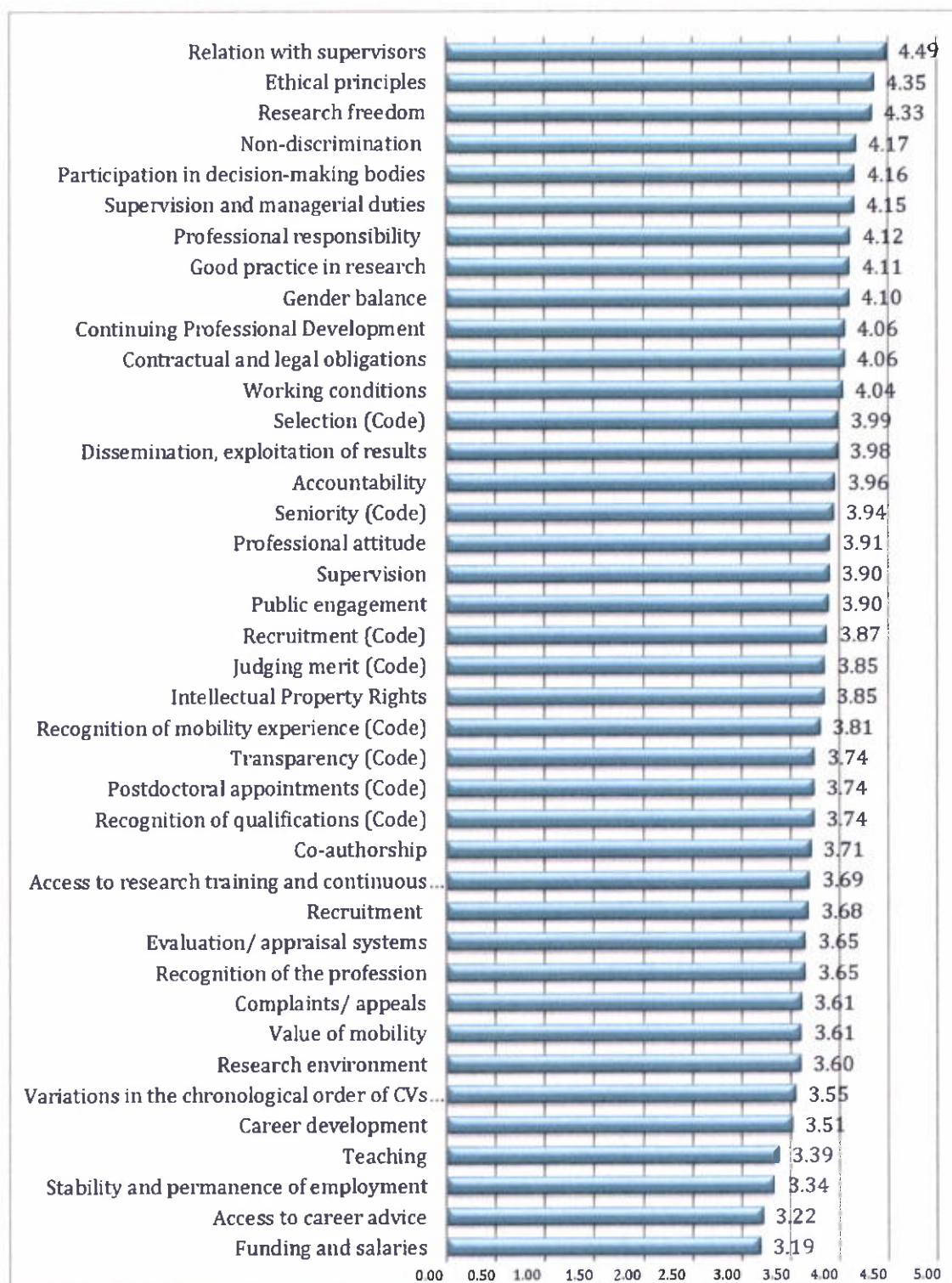
The participants were asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire. At the outset the survey explained that it concerns the European Charter and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and its aim is to learn what academics and PhD students think of the work conditions at the University of Bialystok. The addressees of the questionnaire were also informed that their opinion is important as the University is going to apply for the HR Excellence in Research logo granted by the European Commission.

The Committee divided the survey into 4 fields, according to the four areas suggested in the gap analysis template, and they were as follows: ethical and professional aspects of work, recruitment, work conditions, and finally social security and training at the University of Bialystok. Participants were asked to evaluate the level of implementation of the 40 principles of the Charter and Code at University of Bialystok by scoring forty Likert-scale questionnaire items from 1 ("very poor") to 5 ("very good").

### **3. Results**

The results of the questionnaire were analysed by the Committee. They identified three categories of responses. Items classified as the strengths are in the first one, in the second one there are items classified as good or quite good and the last category consists of objects classified as the challenges. The graph below shows the mean scores for each item.

TABLE 1. QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS



Elements classified as the strengths scored 4.0 and above. Items of score 3.55 to 3.70 were identified as good or quite good. The challenges are the items that got the score 3.55 and below.



### 3.1. Strengths

According to Table 1, the highest mean scores were gained by the following items: relation with supervisors (4.49), ethical principles (4.35), research freedom (4.33), non-discrimination (4.17), participation in decision-making bodies (4.16), supervision and managerial duties (4.15), professional responsibility (4.12), good practice in research (4.11), gender balance (4.10), continuing professional development (4.06), contractual and legal obligation (4.06) and work conditions (4.04).

### 3.2. Challenges

The lowest mean scores in the survey were gained by such items as: funding and salaries (3.19), access to career advice (3.22), stability and permanence of employment (3.34), teaching (3.39), career development (3.51) and variations in the chronological order of CVs (3.55). This group of items was recognized as the challenges.

There is also a group of items which was recognized as good or quite good. These are items between 3.60 and 3.70 score. The Committee decided that the University of Białystok will have to take action in order to improve their implementation at the University, especially in the case of items with the scores which are close to 3.5. The following items were assessed as good or quite good: access to research training and continuous development (3.69), recruitment (3.68), evaluation/ appraisal systems (3.65), recognition of the profession (3.65), complaints/appeals (3.61), value of mobility (3.61), and research environment (3.60).

#### Analysis of the challenges

Each item that was recognized as a challenge concerns the work conditions and social security at the University of Białystok. Strikingly, the most important factor affecting the results is the research degree of the respondents. In almost each case the largest discrepancies in the scores were found between the academics with the title of Professor and PhD students.

#### Funding and salaries (3.19) – principle 26 in the gap analysis

Among the academics with the title of Professor this point achieved 2.8 score. The highest mean score was achieved in the group of PhD students – 3.52.

Both results are unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, it is believed that this evaluation to a greater extent relates to funding rather than the salary. Teaching duties of the PhD students are included in the curriculum of the PhD studies. PhD students do not receive salary but a scholarship. The salary of academics with the title of Professor is much higher than this scholarship.

Although the research funding policy in Poland offers many opportunities of funding for both young scholars and professors, the academics at the University of Białystok have little assistance in preparing and applying for grants. Moreover, the academic staff of the University of Białystok submit around 90 grant applications per year but only fifteen percent of them are successful. The small rate of successful applications could be the main reason for a low score of this principle.

#### Access to career advice (3.22) - principle 30 in the gap analysis

Among academics with a PhD degree this point achieved 2.88 score. The highest mean score was achieved in the group of Professors – 3.80.

It is believed that this result is determined by different periods of academic seniority which is usually longer



in the case of academics with higher academic degrees. In the case of professors, the result is much higher because they have already completed the process of achieving their academic degrees. Young researchers, who are at the beginning of their academic career, do not receive support from supervisors and more experienced colleagues. Another reason for this result is the fact that the academic teachers, unlike the students, are not supported by the University Career Office. There is no unit in the university structure that might help the academics in their career development.

#### Stability and permanence of employment – principle 25 in the gap analysis

Among academics with the title of Professor this point achieved 2.4 score. The highest mean score was gained in the group of PhD students – 3.71.

Stability and permanence of employment is defined by the statutory regulations, mainly by the Law on Higher Education of 27 July 2005. This law is binding for all public universities. The provisions of this act determine the conditions of employment, thereby influencing the stability and permanence of employment. The professors' opinion about the stability and permanence of employment is worse (2.4) than PhD students' (3.71) because professors - having achieved all academic degrees – are more aware of instability of employment of young researchers. In addition, the academics are poorly informed about the requirements of the stability and permanence of employment which are determined by the state and internal regulations.

#### Teaching (3.39) - principle 33 in the gap analysis

Among academics with the PhD degree this point achieved 2.80 score. The highest mean score was achieved in the group of PhD students – 4.15.

In this case there is statistically a significant difference between responses of the academics with the PhD degree (2.80) and PhD students (4.15). PhD students evaluated the importance of teaching than academics better. Probably, this result reflects a different number of teaching hours. PhD students usually teach 90 hours per year and academics without the title of Professor have to teach the minimum of 240 hours per year. Moreover, teaching qualities of the PhD students, unlike academics, are not evaluated by the students. The academic teachers see teaching as an important component of their work because it takes a lot of time and effort to prepare and run classes in a solid manner. However, the university does not consider teaching activities as an important element in the overall assessment of an academic teacher.

#### Career development (3.51) – principle 28 in the gap analysis

Among academics with the title of Professor this point achieved 3.20 score. The highest mean score was achieved in the group of PhD students – 4.70.

Strikingly, direction of discrepancy between Professors and PhD students in this principle was opposite to that in Principle 30 (Access to career advice) though the same as in Principle 25 (Stability and permanence of employment). It may well reflect some 'generation gap': young people are more optimistic about their career prospects but lack guidelines and advice on how to achieve it, whereas older staff has this knowledge but, at the same time, is more aware of existing limitations.

#### Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) (3.55) – principle 17 in the gap analysis

Among academics with a PhD degree this point achieved 3.26 score. The highest mean score was achieved in the group of academics with the Master's degree – 4.50.

