# WZB

Social Science Research Center
Berlin

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers
incorporating the

# European Charter for Researchers

and the

# Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers

at the WZB

# Summary of the Internal Analysis and Action Plan

June 2013

# 1 Introduction

The WZB is one of Europe's largest research institutes conducting basic interdisciplinary social research. Around 160 German and international researchers work at the WZB, including sociologists, political scientists, economists, and legal scholars. The WZB is a non-profit limited company jointly financed by the Federal Government of Germany and the State of Berlin. The WZB is a member of the Leibniz Association.

The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers were adopted by the European Commission as a Recommendation to the Member States in 2005. The 40 principles of "Charter & Code" address both researchers and their employers. They serve as a framework for sound and comprehensive career management and transparent recruitment and appraisal procedures. The aim is to improve working conditions and to ensure attractive research careers within the European Research Area.

The WZB shares this ambition and furthermore continuously strives to best prepare itself and its researchers for the future. Thus it welcomes and strongly supports this European initiative. One visible sign of the WZB's commitment is the official endorsement of "Charter & Code" which was submitted to the European Commission in April 2013.

For the WZB continuous institutional development is key to success. Milestones in the last years have been the elaboration of "Standards and Guidelines for Career Development", the establishment of junior research groups, the provision of centralized services for researchers (e.g. advice on funding and career development), and the introduction of the monitoring and reporting system for academic performance. The reviewer panel of the evaluation procedure by the Leibniz Association in 2011 emphasized the role of the WZB as outstanding.

However, there are still projects under way and new initiatives on the horizon. A pre-screening in the beginning of 2013 revealed that many principles have already been implemented and that "Charter & Code" constitute a perfect complement to these processes.

The WZB thus decided to also officially implement "Charter & Code" by developing a Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R).

# 2 Procedures

At the meeting of the WZB's Academic Council on 19 March 2013 the content of "Charter & Code" and its European context were presented to the WZB's scientific staff, as well as the endorsement and the five steps of implementation. The subsequent discussion showed a broad agreement, and researchers indicated interest to participate in the process.

After the meeting a Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) Working Group was set up to conduct the internal analysis recommended by the European Commission. The Working Group consisted of the Head of Personnel Service and Legal Matters, the Career Development Officer, a Research Manager of one of the research areas , the Equal Opportunities Commissioner, one Representative of the Works Council, the Officer for International Affairs and, of course, a researcher, on Postdoc level, the former Spokesman of the Academic Council. The President of the WZB, the Managing Director and the Commissioner for International Affairs were constantly kept informed and consulted.

In order to investigate which principles of "Charter & Code" are already implemented at the WZB and which ones still need to be addressed the HRS4R Working Group applied the European Commission's "Example of a standard template for the internal analysis". The members met on 10 April 2013, 25 April 2013 and 2 May 2013.

Complementing the wide range of expertise within the HRS4R Working Group, additional researchers and stakeholders of the WZB were asked to measure the status quo of implementation of particular principles of "Charter and Code". Among them were the Ombudsperson for Good Scientific Practice, the Head of Data Management and Data Protection Officer, the Head of Finance and Accounting, the Head of the Library, the Head of Communications, the Head of the IT Coordination, the Officer for Research Planning and Strategy and the executive member of the Committee on Further Education and Training (Weiterbildungsausschuss).

During the entire process the scientific staff was kept informed and invited to contribute through the monthly meetings of the Academic Council and via the WZB Intranet. Also the members of the HRS4R Working Group constantly spread the word to their stakeholders and brought in feedback.

Recently a survey on balancing work and family was conducted among all the WZB employees. Moreover, there was an inquiry among PhD students on their working and career development conditions. The HRS4R Working Group included the results in the internal analysis and decided not to conduct another survey among the researchers at this point in time.

On 16 May 2013 the HRS4R Working Group integrated the results of the internal analysis into an action plan and identified indicators to keep track of the implementation process. The results were then presented to and approved by the Managing Director on 27 May 2013 and by the President of the WZB on 3 June 2013.

Finally the summary of the internal analysis and the action plan were presented and discussed at the WZB's Academic Council meeting on 11 June 2013.

## 3 Summary of the Internal Analysis

After the stakeholder consultation and thorough internal analysis of the current practices, the HRS4R Working Group summarized the specific strengths and weaknesses with regard to the implementation of "Charter & Code" at the WZB.

## 3.1 Ethical and Professional Aspects

Ethical and Professional Aspects (1–4, 7, 13, 29):

The freedom of research is guaranteed by the German Constitution and the Articles of Association. The members of the Leibniz Association have elaborated "Recommendations for the Assurance of Good Scientific Practice at the Institutes of the Leibniz Association". A company agreement[1] (Betriebsvereinbarung) addresses academic misconduct and essential procedures. An experienced senior researcher serves as Ombudsperson for Good Scientific Practice.

Moreover, the WZB seeks to foster a discussion among all WZB researchers on good scientific practice, professional attitude, its assurance and necessary procedures. The aim is to achieve an agreement on special guidelines. A Data Protection Commissioner ensures the responsible handling of data and provides consultancy also on the management of scientific data.

Legal Obligations, Accountability and Evaluation (5, 6, 28):

As a publicly funded research institute the WZB is bound to the regulations of German public service.

The use of research funding is governed by national budget regulations and third party funding contracts. It is continually monitored by the WZB's Finance and Accounting Department, by the German Federal Court of Auditors and by auditing firms contracted by the Federal Republic of Germany and Land of Berlin as public shareholders.

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[1] Company agreements are very important legal sources at the WZB. They are negotiated and signed jointly by the management and the works council.

The Senate of the Leibniz Association regularly evaluates the WZB scientifically.[2]
The internal monitoring and reporting system WZBaktiv allows for quarterly reports on e.g. publications, conferences, events, and courses taught.

Dissemination of Results (8, 9, 24, 25):

The WZB strongly encourages scientific publishing. It provides financial means and advice on successful publishing strategies, e.g. through special workshops. Also the WZB library offers services and consultation with regard to scientific publishing, Open Access and intellectual property rights. Furthermore, the WZB makes as many of its publications as possible freely available via its library catalog. It actively cooperates with other institutions (e.g. ZBW – German National Library of Economics, GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences) when it comes to making part of its publication output publicly accessible via subject-specific Open Access Repositories such as SSOAR, EconStor, and RePEc.

Following the principles of public science, the datasets produced by WZB researchers are made available internally and if possible externally to other researchers and institutions for use in their respective context.

Researchers disseminate their results also in their capacity as advisors and board members in civic associations and political bodies. They deliver lectures and take part in public discussions. Moreover, they write op-ed articles and analytical essays for the general media and respond to information and interview requests from the national and international media.

The WZB Communications Department produces a wide range of electronic and print media which present research findings in a concise way and in accessible language in German and English. It continuously monitors the presence of WZB research in the media.

Non-Discrimination (14) and Gender Balance (19):

New employees receive information on the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG). There are company agreements on equal treatment and on job advertisement regulations where gender balance is also addressed.

The WZB endorses the Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality of the German Research Foundation (DFG). The WZB promotes gender balance e.g. through target quotas. Regular monitoring has already revealed success in various wage groups.
The WZB has signed the German Diversity Charta.

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[2] http://www.leibniz-gemeinschaft.de/en/about-us/evaluation/the-evaluation-procedure-conducted-by-the-senate-of-the-leibniz-association

# WZB

## 3.2 Working Conditions and Social Security

Working Conditions (15, 16):

The WZB is proud to offer a stimulating research environment. It provides barrier-free adequate work spaces, a library, meeting and conference rooms.

Specialized services are made available among others by the library, the communications department and the IT department. The latter constantly supports mobile researchers by providing e.g. mobile devices, virtual private networks (VPN) and video conference equipment.

The WZB offers administrative support and strategic advice especially regarding career development and national and international third party funding.  The WZB supports its employees in the balancing of work/family obligations. The WZB contracted a Family Service Company to help find day care facilities or reliable caregivers for children or other family members, including in emergency situations.

In 2010, the WZB was distinguished with the *auditberufundfamilie* (Work-Family Audit) certificate. Included in the family-friendly measures are flexible working hours, various part-time work models, a parent-child office, as well as childcare during evening events. In spring 2013 a "Code of Conduct Family-Friendliness at the WZB" was adopted by the Academic Council.

The WZB is continuously searching for working time models which fit the needs of its employees. The management and the works council have just signed a company agreement on working time which explicitly allows more flexibility.

Employment Conditions (17, 18):

Regarding the stability and permanence of employment, the salaries, and social security provisions the WZB is bound to the national legislation, especially to the Collective Agreement for the Public Service (TVöD) and Academic Fixed-Term Contract Law (WissZeitVG). As laid down in the "Standards and Guidelines for Career Development", contracts that are short-term or/and not subject to social security (e.g. scholarships) are subject to strict restrictions. This practice is monitored by the management and the works council.

Teaching (27):

The WZB and the cooperating universities have formally codified cooperation in research, academic education and teaching. The teaching load for WZB's professors who are jointly appointed by the WZB and one of the cooperating universities is regulated by the Joint Science Conference (GWK) and the federal states.

Teaching experience is crucial for of a young researcher's career path. Therefore the WZB encourages doctoral and postdoctoral students to develop their teaching skills. In addition the WZB is working on a joint solution with the universities to improve the coordination of teaching.

Participation in decision-making bodies (30):

Researchers are elected to, represented in and encouraged to participate actively in the Academic Council, in working groups of the Academic Council or in committees. The WZB's young researchers are well connected, doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers have each elected representatives and regularly organize events. Researchers are invited to assume voluntary offices or to participate in the works council.

Value and Recognition of Mobility (21, 37):

International mobility is strongly fostered. The working language of the majority of the research units is English and since fall 2012 the monthly meetings of the Academic Council are held in English, too. This facilitates participation for incoming researchers. To allow research stays abroad financial means, as laid down in the "Measures for Continuing Professional Development", are provided including scholarship programs with three universities abroad and seed money e.g. for international summer schools.

The WZB also encourages interdisciplinary mobility by funding bridging projects that are co-developed and jointly carried out by up to three distinct research units. The aim is to allow for combining the units' individual strengths, methods and theories and thus to strengthen the WZB's interdisciplinary approach.

A challenge currently tackled is the mobility between sectors. A temporary staff exchange between the WZB and private sector partners is under negotiation.

## 3.3 Career Development and Training

Career Development and Continuous Training (12, 20, 22, 23):

A specific strategy for the career development of academic staff was elaborated in October 2009 after extensive consultation and intensive discussion. A revised version of these "Standards and Guidelines for Career Development at the WZB" was unanimously adopted by the Academic Council in February 2013. It comprises the "Code of Conduct for Good Scientific Supervision", "Measures for Continuing Professional Development" such as e.g. scholarships, seed money and mentoring programs, and the company agreement on further training. Additional financial means for continuous training are allocated within the budget of the Office for Career Development.

Supervisors, senior researchers and peers give personal advice on professional development. This topic is also addressed in annual staff appraisal meetings (Jahresgespräche). On institutional level the Career Development Officer and the Office for International Affairs provide strategic advice.

Supervision (26, 10, 11):

A milestone was the agreement upon a "Code of Conduct for Good Scientific Supervision". In case of conflict the Ombudsperson for Good Scientific Practice serves as mediator. The WZB seeks now to take this one step further by developing concrete "Progress Report Outline" (Gesprächsleitfaden) for regular talks between the supervisor and the young researcher.

## 3.4 Recruitment

Recruitment (31–40):

The "Standards and Guidelines for Career Development at the WZB" and the "Code of Conduct Family-Friendliness at the WZB" both address the recognition and judgment of merit in case of variations in the chronological order of CVs or the recognition of mobility. National law regulates the recognition of qualification. A company agreement addresses equal treatment.

Professors are usually jointly appointed with cooperating universities. Appointment procedures are laid down in the corresponding cooperation contract.

It is now the aim to further develop the existing practice and to elaborate a "Manual on Appointment Procedures" (Berufungsleitfaden) for all professorship positions and respectively a "Manual on Recruitment Procedures" (Leitfaden zur Stellenbesetzung) for Postdoc and PhD positions.

There is a company agreement on job advertisement regulations and in the future all open positions will be published on the EURAXESS web portal.

## 4 Action Plan

## 4.1 Ethical and Professional Aspects

| Topic/Principle | Action | Reference to internal documents | Indicators | Responsible | Term/Deadline |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Professional Responsibility and Good Scientific Practice (3-7) | Fostering awareness of the Ombudsperson's role as mediator | Company Agreement on Good Scientific Practice | Report of the Ombudsperson for Good Scientific Practice | Ombudsperson for Good Scientific Practice | Annually |
| | Discussion on criteria of good scientific practice and elaboration of guidelines | | Accomplishment of Guidelines on Good Scientific Practice | Management | End 2014 |
| | Constant awareness raising and consulting on data protection | Company Agreement on Information Technology Systems | Report of the Data Protection Officer | Data Protection Officer | Annually |
| Accountability (6) and Evaluation Systems (28) | Monitoring and reporting on scientific achievements and knowledge transfer activity | Company Agreement on Cost and Activity Accounting  Company Agreement on the Introduction and Operation of an Internal Reporting System on Scientific Achievements | KLR performance indicators  Reports via WZB aktiv | Head of Finance and Accounting  Scientific and Desk Officer of the Managing Director | Quarterly  Quarterly |
| Dissemination of results (8) and Public Engagement (9) | Fostering the dissemination of results through publication workshops | Open-Access-Policy | Number of events and workshops  Number of participants | Career Development Officer and Head of the Library | Annually  Anually |
| | Retro-digitalization of past publications and free access to selected publications | | Accomplishment of retro-digitalization  Number of open access publications | Head of the Library | Mid 2014  Annually |
| | Fostering the dissemination of quantitative and qualitative research data via data repositories | | Number of datasets | Head of the Data Management and Head of the Library | Annually |
| Non-Discrimination (14) and Gender Balance (19) | Monitoring of gender balance in all wage groups | Company Agreement on Equal Treatment  Company Agreement on Job Advertisements | Achievement of target quotas | Equal Opportunities Commissioner | Annually |

## 4.2 Working Conditions and Social Security

| Topic/Principle | Action | Reference to internal documents | Indicators | Responsible | Term/Deadline |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Working Conditions (15, 16), | Re-auditing process for the *auditberufundfamilie* (Work-Family Audit) certificate | | Accomplishment of re-audit | Equal Opportunities Commissioner | 30 August 2013 |
| | Further development of working time models which fit the needs of the WZB's employees and are in line with the legal provisions | Company Agreement on Working Time Code of Conduct Family-Friendliness at the WZB | Successful elaboration of adequate working time models | Management and Works Council | In negotiation |
| | Standard presentation "Introduction to the WZB Culture" for new researchers | | Successful concept development Number of talks Number of participants | Head of Personnel Service and Research Managers of all research areas | Fall 2013 Annually Annually |
| Employment Conditions (17) | Fostering the stability of employment/ Exhausting WissZeitVG | | Number and duration of contracts Early warning system for researchers with expiring contracts Revision of the "Guidelines on the term and non-imposition of fixed terms for employment contracts for researchers" (Entfristungsleitlinien) | Equal Opportunities Commissioner Research Managers of all research areas Works Council | Annually Mid of 2014 Mid of 2015 |
| Teaching (27) | Improving the coordination of teaching between the WZB and the cooperating universities | | Accomplishment of a joint solution | Officer for Research Planning and Strategy | In negotiation |
| Value of Mobility (21) | Monitoring international mobility | | Number of international researchers at the WZB | Head of Personnel Service | Annually |
| | Fostering mobility between sectors through a temporary staff exchange | | Successful development of a staff exchange scheme Number of staff exchanged | Management Management | End of 2013 Annually |

## 4.3 Career Development and Training

| Topic/Principle | Action | Reference to internal documents | Indicators | Responsible | Term/Deadline |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Career Development and Continuous Training (12, 20, 22, 23) | Fostering annual staff appraisal meetings (Jahresgespräche) | | Accomplishment of a Company Agreement on Annual Staff Appraisal Meetings | Management and Works Council | End 2013 |
| | Regular Evaluation of the Measures for Continuing Professional Development (e.g. seed money, scholarships) | Standards and Guidelines for Career Development | Evaluation report | Career Development Officer | Annually |
| | Development and provision of executive training for junior research group leaders | | Successful development of a training scheme<br><br>Number of training sessions<br><br>Number of participants | Career Development Officer | End 2013<br><br>Annually<br><br>Annually |
| Supervision (26, 10, 11) | Fostering supervision and regular talks | Standards and Guidelines for Career Development | Accomplishment of a "Progress Report Outline" (Gesprächsleitfaden) | Career Development Officer | End 2013 |

## 4.4 Recruitment

| Topic/Principle | Action | Reference to internal documents | Indicators | Responsible | Term/Deadline |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Recruitment (31-40) | Revision of standards and procedures for appointment (professorship positions) and recruitment (Postdoc and PhD positions) | Company Agreement on Equal Treatment, Company Agreement on Job Advertisements, Standards and Guidelines for Career Development at the WZB, Code of Conduct Family-Friendliness at the WZB | Successful elaboration of standards to define W1, W2 and habilitation equivalent merit | Academic council working group | End 2013 |
| | | | Accomplishment of a "Manual on Appointment Procedures" (Berufungsleitfaden) | Academic council working group | Mid 2014 |
| | | | Accomplishment of a "Manual on Recruitment Procedures" (Leitfaden zur Stellenbesetzung) | Academic council working group | Mid 2014 |
| | Efficient and international publication of all open scientific positions | | Successful elaboration of a best practice catalogue on publishing job advertisements | Research Managers of all research areas | Mid 2014 |
| | | | Number of published positions on Euraxess | Management | Annually |