EURAXESS

GAP Analysis (Charter and Code Checklist)

Case number

2023RO94290

Name Organisation under review

New Europe College

Organisation's contact details

Str. Plantelor, 21, Bucharest, Romania, Bucharest, 023971, Romania

Date endorsement charter and code

18/04/2023

Submission date to the European Commission

GAP Analysis overview

The Charter and Code provides the basis for the Gap analysis. In order to aid cohesion, the 40 articles have been renumbered under the following headings. Please provide the outcome of your organisation's GAP analysis below. If your organisation currently does not fully meet the criteria, please list whether national or organisational legislation may be limiting the Charter's implementation, initiatives that have already been taken to improve the situation or new proposals that could remedy the current situation. In order to help the organisation's recruitment strategy, a specific self-assessment checklist is provided for Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment

European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers : GAP analysis overview

- Status: to what extent does this organisation meet the following principles?
- Implementation (++ , +/- , -/+, --) :
 - ++ fully implemented
 - +/- almost but not fully implemented
 - -/+ partially implemented
 - -- insufficiently implemented
- GAP : In case of --, -/+, or +/-, please indicate the actual "gap" between the principle and the current practice in your organisation.
- Implementation impediments: If relevant, please list any national/regional legislation or organisational regulation currently impeding implementation.
- Initiatives undertaken/new proposals: If relevant, please list any initiatives that have already been taken to improve the situation and/or new proposals that could remedy the current situation.

Status

Ethical and Professional Aspects

1. Research freedom

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	Freedom of research is a core value at NEC, an institute that privileges "blue sky" research. Fellows and researchers have full freedom to choose their own research topics, to develop and submit new research projects, and to decide which research programs and competitions they wish to participate in. The NEC does not interfere with the freedom of its fellows and researchers to conduct scientific research according to their own interests and priorities, while respecting the ethical and legal provisions in their fields of study. Thus, freedom of research is fully respected at NEC, also in accordance with national and European legislation.	Action 1
. Ethical principles		

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	NEC adheres to recognised national and European ethical practices and fundamental ethical principles. References to such ethical principles are included in our mission statement and internal procedures, and at the beginning of their fellowship/working relationship with NEC, fellows/researchers sign contracts which also stipulate their adherence to the ethical principles and practices of academic research. However, NEC does not yet have a separate code of ethics and professional conduct.	Actions 1 and 2

3. Professional responsibility

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC adheres to best practices in research in terms of professional responsibility, originality of research, its societal relevance and intellectual property. By its design, by privileging individual research projects and by working with researchers who mostly pursue their own individual research topics, NEC fully respects good practices and national and European legislation (Law 206/2004 on good conduct in scientific research, technological development and innovation and Law 398/2006 amending and supplementing the aforementioned law). The NEC Yearbook has its own very clear procedures that authors follow when submitting their texts for publication: the declaration of authorship consists of three clauses: 1) The work submitted is free from any form of plagiarism. It is an original creation and does not violate the intellectual property rights of others. 2) The work has not been previously submitted or published elsewhere. 3) The work is the result of human intellectual effort and has not been created or significantly influenced by artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-enabled technologies (https://nec.ro/guidelines-for-authors/). According to the survey results, NEC grantees/researchers are aware of the societal responsibility of research.	Actions 1 and 2

4. Professional attitude

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC fellows and researchers are familiar with the strategic objectives that govern their research environment and funding mechanisms. According to institutional procedures, they need all necessary administrative approvals before starting their research or accessing available resources. Researchers submit monthly reports to the coordinators of their respective research projects, in which they can inform the project coordinators and NEC management about various issues related to their work, including delays or other unexpected changes in their activities. NEC also fully complies with national legislation in this area (the laws mentioned in point 3 above).	Actions 1 and 2

5. Contractual and legal obligations

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC fellows and researchers are aware of their contractual provisions, legal obligations and regulations concerning their working conditions, as well as the specific requirements of the organisations funding their fellowship programs/research projects. The contracts signed by each fellow/researcher at the beginning of his/her working relationship with the NEC contain clear references to the required deliverables (number and expected date of deliverables). Draft contracts are sent to fellows/researchers prior to their employment and NEC administrative staff answer their queries so that they are fully aware of their contractual and legal obligations. According to the survey results, the vast majority of NEC fellows/researchers responded that they are aware of the rules, procedures and legal principles governing their scientific research activities.	Actions 1 and 2

6. Accountability

Initiatives undertaken/new Implementation **GAP / Implementation impediments** proposals As an institution funded by various national and international, private and public donors, the NEC follows the best Romanian and European financial practices. All research projects are audited annually or as requested by the respective sponsor. Annual institutional financial audits are also carried out and their results are discussed with the international Administrative Board (https://nec.ro/about-us/nec-boards/), which takes strategic decisions. The same principles of sound, transparent and efficient financial management apply to each research project or fellowship program managed by the institute. Project leaders (PIs) are academically responsible for their projects, but they also ensure that their teams' research activities comply with the budget agreed with their projects' funders and with ++ fully implemented Action 1 current legislation. Fellowship coordinators send regular reports, usually on an annual basis, to sponsors. All such reports include financial details as provided by the Financial and Administrative Coordinator. Fellows and researchers are provided with clear details on the use of available financial resources. NEC has clear and rigorous accounting procedures (in Romanian) and research-related expenditure is subject to internal approvals and internal and/or external audits in accordance with grant agreements or other contractual and legal provisions. In accordance with national accounting legislation, all financial information is available for internal and external audit whenever necessary and requested by the competent authorities.

7. Good practice in research

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
+/- almost but not fully i…	NEC has clear internal policies and procedures for its researchers and staff, in line with national and European legislation, to ensure a safe working environment. The IT department provides training and support to prevent information technology disasters. Backup strategies are in place for the entire institutional intranet. The NEC and all its staff fully comply with the provisions of the GDPR, both in English and in Romanian. However, NEC does not yet have a separate code of ethics and professional conduct.	Actions 1 and 2

8. Dissemination, exploitation of results

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC encourages its researchers and fellows to disseminate the results of their research in accordance with the provisions of their grant agreements. Fellows are expected to publish a research paper in the NEC Yearbook, a peer-reviewed publication, which is available in open access on the institution's website and also in an academic database. NEC is currently working to increase the visibility of this yearbook. Researchers are expected to disseminate and exploit the results of their research in accordance with their respective grant agreements with the funders of these projects. Pls are responsible for ensuring that their projects are available to the relevant academic communities, but also to the public at large.	Actions 1 and 4

9. Public engagement

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
+/- almost but not fully i…	NEC fellows and researchers are encouraged to make their research known and accessible to society at large in a way that is understandable to non-specialists. Some projects have a clear focus on science communication, and the NEC is happy to use social media platforms or newsletters to communicate its activities to the wider community. However, more could be done by organising special events to promote contact between the local community and researchers and the wider public, although this is not always easy for an institute for advanced study.	Action 1

10. Non discrimination

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC does not discriminate in any way against its fellows and researchers on the basis of gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, social or economic condition. The principle of equal opportunities is an integral part of our organisational culture. NEC is committed to ensuring that all its employees and scholarship holders are respected. It promotes equal pay for equal work, promotes gender equality and work-life balance, tackles gender stereotypes and promotes positive role models, combats gender-based violence and ensures equal participation and representation in decision-making and leadership positions. NEC has adopted a gender mainstreaming approach to promote cooperation, remove barriers, raise awareness and combat all forms of discrimination. Fellows from disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (such as war-torn Ukraine) have been supported through some specially funded programs. The Gender Equality Plan is available at the following link: https://nec.ro/about-us/regulations/gender-equality-plan/	Action 1 The Gender Equality Plan is available at this link: https://nec.ro/about- us/regulations/gender- equality-plan/

11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC follows best practice in the evaluation/appraisal of the professional performance of its researchers, in accordance with the grant agreements with our various national and European funding bodies. All necessary quantitative and qualitative elements for evaluations are mentioned in the contracts signed with fellows and researchers. Academic decisions are also made in conjunction with the NEC Academic Advisory Board (https://nec.ro/about-us/nec-boards/), which is composed of internationally renowned scholars in the humanities and social sciences. For research projects, Pls are responsible for evaluating the professional performance of their teams. The NEC encourages Pls to do this in a transparent manner and, where relevant, with committees of international scholars.	Actions 1 and 6

Recruitment and Selection - please be aware that the items listed here correspond with the Charter and Code. In addition, your organisation also needs to complete the checklist on Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment included in a separate section, which focuses on the operationalization of these principles.

12. Recruitment

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	Recruitment procedures for researchers and fellows are open, efficient, transparent, internationally comparable and tailored to the type of position to be filled. For NEC-hosted research projects, recruitment procedures follow the requirements set out in the funding guidelines. They are managed by HR and Pls. NEC publishes its calls for proposals in English or Romanian, depending on the requirements of its sponsors. Announcements of vacant research positions are posted on the NEC notice board, at other partner research institutions, on specialised academic job platforms (https://jobs.mcid.gov.ro/, https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs) as well as on the NEC website and social media channels. Announcements include the following details: - Employer and project for which the position is being created; - Duration and type of employment (part-time, on-site, etc.); - Working conditions, salary, other benefits; - Description of activities and responsibilities expected of successful candidates; - Eligibility criteria and conditions, stating that NEC will follow the OTM-R guidelines; - Application documents (application form, covering letter, etc.); - Calendar of application, selection and result appeals.	Action 6

13. Recruitment (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	At NEC, recruitment and selection processes comply with the following principles: - "open recruitment" means ensuring internal and external visibility of the recruitment announcement. Information about vacant positions is disseminated through Romanian and European communication platforms dedicated to researchers (https://jobs.mcid.gov.ro/, https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs.etc.); - equal opportunities and non-discrimination – NEC rejects any form of discrimination, such as ethnic or religious beliefs or sexual orientation. Academic excellence is the only criterion, defined in relation to the specific requirements of the vacant position; - confidentiality - Personal data is protected by national and European legislation. NEC fully complies with GDPR regulations; - objectivity and equal treatment; - decisions on the recruitment and selection of researchers are made on the basis of criteria that are applied equally and objectively to all candidates; - transparency – relevant data concerning the recruitment and selection processes are public and accessible to candidates and those who are legally entitled to request them.	Action 6

14. Selection (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	Selection committees are set up in a transparent manner in accordance with national legislation and institutional rules. The selection of members of selection committees follows guiding principles such as: - the qualifications and expertise of the members in relation to the vacancies to be filled; - independence and absence of conflicts of interest, including, where possible, external and foreign experts; - the objective of ensuring gender equality. As mentioned above, the NEC relies on its Academic Advisory Board (https://nec.ro/about-us/nec-boards/) for the selection of fellows.	Action 6

15. Transparency (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
+/- almost but not fully i	Candidates will be informed of each stage of the selection process as set out in the Notice of Competition. Before the selection committees evaluate the application on its academic merit, an administrative check is carried out to ensure that candidates meet all eligibility requirements. The results of the selection will be communicated to candidates in accordance with the timetable for the vacancy, normally by posting an announcement on the NEC website, in accordance with GDPR regulations. At the focus group, some participants mentioned that it would be useful for applicants if NEC stated more clearly from the start how many positions are available, what the rate of acceptance is, the calendar of the stages of assessment and of the interviews.	Action 6

16. Judging merit (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	The evaluation of applications is based on the following guiding principles: - assessment of the candidates' academic achievements, expertise and potential; - evaluation on the basis of both qualitative and quantitative criteria, in direct relation to the job description and expectations, also in relation to national and European documents defining necessary and desirable competences (e.g. European Competence Framework for Researchers or European Framework for Research Careers).	Action 6

17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC relies on selection procedures that privilege academic excellence, with an emphasis on the skills and achievements of candidates rather than on the period or institutions in which those skills were acquired. NEC does not discriminate against candidates with atypical CVs or career breaks.	Action 1

18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC complies with national legislation that provides for the principle of national and international mobility. NEC strongly encourages its fellows and researchers to undertake international research mobility that contributes to their professional development. In fact, for most NEC fellows their fellowship contract includes funding for international mobility. According to the online survey, all researchers and fellows agree that at NEC mobility is considered a valuable contribution to professional development.	Action 1

19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC recognises diplomas and qualifications according to the usual national and European standards and legislation. This includes studies, degrees and diplomas obtained abroad, as well as doctorates and academic titles awarded in other countries.	Action 1

20. Seniority (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	Recruitment at NEC is based on merit and excellence of academic projects rather than age. There are no restrictions on the institutions at which candidates have worked prior to joining NEC. However, for some fellowship programs and postdoctoral research positions, some restrictions are imposed by the funding institutions. As a private research institution, retirement at age 65 is not mandatory and senior researchers in the staff are encouraged to continue academic work under a different contractual arrangement.	Action 1

21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
	NEC has a strong focus on postdoctoral fellowships awarded to excellent candidates.	
	Postdoctoral programs are organised according to the grant agreement signed with the	
++ fully implemented	funding institutions. While the criteria vary depending on the sponsor and program, NEC	Action 6
	follows the practice of similar institutes for advanced study. Postdoctoral researchers	
	are also employed in NEC projects.	

Working Conditions and Social Security

22. Recognition of the profession

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	The profession of researcher is recognised by Romanian law, according to the Labour Code. As mentioned throughout this document, NEC hosts both post-doctoral fellows, who receive tax-free stipends as part of various fellowship programs, and researchers, who receive all social security benefits provided for in the national legislation.	Action 1

23. Research environment

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC aims to provide a stimulating working environment for its employers and fellows, with appropriate equipment, facilities and opportunities, including remote collaboration via research networks. National and European health and safety regulations are fully implemented and respected. According to the online survey, most researchers and fellows agree that they have access to the appropriate research infrastructure for their needs at the NEC, although there are access issues to online journals and collections, which is recognised as a much broader problem pervading the academic publishing industry and based on the inequalities between a few rich institutions in the Global North and academia in the rest of the world.	Action 2

24. Working conditions

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	The relationship between NEC and researchers/fellows is governed by their contracts, which contain detailed information on the rights and obligations of both parties. Particular emphasis is placed on flexibility, including the possibility for staff, fellows and researchers to telework and to work flexible hours. Most researchers and fellows agree that the NEC allows for a good work-life balance. NEC aims to provide all the flexibility deemed essential for successful research performance, in accordance with existing national and European legislation.	Action 2

25. Stability and permanence of employment

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
+/- almost but not fully i	By its institutional design, NEC does not offer permanent employment to its researchers. However, NEC offers short term fellowships (one or two semesters), which are crucial for younger researchers who decide to return to Romania/South East Europe and are looking for other opportunities. It also provides employment for researchers working on medium-term projects (up to five years). While NEC recognises the importance of improving the stability of employment conditions for its researchers, there is little it can do under the current institutional organisation. It is interesting to note that in the online survey, most researchers and fellows consider that the working conditions offered by the institution are stable and predictable under the conditions they know and agree to when they join the NEC.	Action 3

26. Funding and salaries

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC aims to provide fellows and researchers with stipends and salaries that are fair and attractive, in line with the cost of living in a city such as Bucharest. Fellows who receive a tax-free stipend are also provided with accommodation and household utilities. Researchers receive adequate social security benefits in accordance with national legislation (including sickness and parental benefits, pension rights and unemployment benefits). This includes researchers at all career stages, including early-stage researchers, according to their legal status, performance and level of qualification and/or responsibility. The results of the survey indicate that the majority of respondents believe that NEC offers an attractive stipend/salary, comparable to similar institutions in Romania.	Action 5

27. Gender balance

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	The principle of equal opportunity is an integral part of our organisational culture. NEC is committed to ensuring that all its employees and scholarship holders are respected. It promotes equal pay for equal work, promotes gender equality and work-life balance, tackles gender stereotypes and promotes positive role models, combats gender-based violence and ensures equal participation and representation in decision-making and leadership positions. NEC has adopted a gender mainstreaming approach to promote cooperation, reduce barriers, raise awareness and combat all forms of discrimination. NEC management and staff are actively involved in the implementation of the GEP. A committee of two staff members has been set up to work with management and the Human Resources/Accounting Office to collect and analyse gender-related data. An internal report is produced each year and the results help management to take corrective action in areas where improvements are needed. Gender Equality Plan: https://nec.ro/about-us/regulations/gender-equality-plan/	Gender Equality Plan: https://nec.ro/about- us/regulations/gender- equality-plan/

28. Career development

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	Based on the design of similar institutes, NEC functions as an institution where peers work together horizontally rather than vertically. NEC provides some career development advice for fellows and researchers, but it does not do so in a systematic way. It reacts to specific needs rather than being proactive. At the focus group discussions, participants mentioned a certain lack of equal access to information: researchers who 'know the tricks' (i.e., how to apply to grants, where to find out about them) are not placed in a position to share their knowledge, and the success of individual researchers' future career trajectories depends on their personal connections at the end of the day. NEC is thus aware that it can do more to provide spaces for this information to circulate more broadly.	Actions 3, 4 and 5

29. Value of mobility

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC recognises the value of geographical, intersectoral, inter- and transdisciplinary or virtual mobility as an important means of enhancing the scientific knowledge and professional development of its fellows and researchers. As mentioned above, NEC strongly encourages its fellows and researchers to undertake international research mobilities that contribute to their professional training. For most NEC fellows, funding for international mobility is contractually included in their fellowship.	
30. Access to career advice)	
Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	Career guidance and job placement support is not sufficiently available, at least in a formal way. When hosting large numbers of international scholars at all levels of their academic and professional lives, mentoring and guidance activities need to be tailored to the needs of each individual scholar. At the same time, the quantity and quality of the human resources that the NEC has on its premises is an asset that can be better utilised for the benefit of younger colleagues.	Actions 3, 4 and 5

Status

31. Intellectual Property Rights

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC guarantees the intellectual property rights of all its colleagues/researchers in accordance with national and European legislation.	Action 1

32. Co-authorship

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC encourages collaborative research, although research projects are, by their very nature and in line with standard practice in the humanities and social sciences, individual. In cases of collaborative research as part of a larger project, NEC provides the necessary conditions for junior colleagues to enjoy the right to be recognised and listed and/or cited as co-authors of papers.	Action 1

33. Teaching

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	As a pure research institution, there's no teaching taking place at NEC. However, several of our fellows and researchers have also held teaching positions, so we recognise the importance of teaching as an essential means of structuring and disseminating knowledge and as a valuable option within the career paths of researchers.	
34. Complains/ appeals		

Implementation GAP / Implementation impediments NEC does not have an impartial (ombudsman-type) person to deal with complaints/appeals from researchers, including those relating to conflicts between staff or PIs and early-stage researchers. NEC does have program coordinators on its staff who act as intermediaries between researchers and management. During the focus group discussion, one researcher suggested that there should be an ombudsman, a member of staff who would be advertised from the outset as the point of contact for personal/professional complaints. At present, complaints/appeals are dealt with according to national and internal rules and procedures.

Status

35. Participation in decision-making bodies

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
+/- almost but not fully i…	The NEC recognises that it is entirely legitimate and indeed desirable for researchers to be represented in the relevant information, consultation and decision-making bodies of the NEC. This is usually done, as far as possible, by inviting NEC alumni and researchers to be part of the NEC Academic Advisory Board or by inviting them to get involved in the selection of fellows.	Action 1
Training and Development 36. Relation with supervisor	rs	
Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	In research projects where there is a clear subordination of researchers at doctoral or postdoctoral level to their supervisors, PIs and senior researchers supervise the work of junior researchers. Timetables, milestones, deliverables and research outputs are agreed with the PIs in accordance with the grant agreement.	Actions 3 and 4

37. Supervision and managerial duties

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	At NEC, senior researchers in the academic staff and in various research projects pay particular attention to their roles as supervisors, career advisors, leaders, project coordinators, managers or science communicators. As an institution of academic excellence, we believe that they perform their roles to the highest professional standards. However, NEC does not have a separate procedure to define these duties.	Actions 3 and 4

38. Continuing Professional Development

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	NEC encourages fellows and researchers at all stages of their careers to continually improve themselves by regularly updating and developing their skills and competencies. NEC organises various reading groups, workshops, conferences, etc., to which all our fellows and researchers are welcome.	Actions 3, 4 and 5

Status

39. Access to research training and continuous development

GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
NEC fellows and researchers have free access to various research training and development programs mentioned above, and organised on our premises by NEC staff, fellows and researchers.	Actions 3, 4 and 5
	NEC fellows and researchers have free access to various research training and development programs mentioned above, and organised on our premises by NEC

40. Supervision

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	By design, NEC is mostly an institution that encourages peer collaboration rather than one that runs programs that require hierarchical supervision. Where this is required, as in various research projects, PIs and other senior staff acting as supervisors are encouraged to provide all necessary support to their junior colleagues.	Actions 3, 4 and 5