

June 2020

The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers

The Institute of Transport Economics (TØI) declared its commitment in December 2014 to The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (Charter & Code). TØI wishes to support European efforts to promote researcher mobility in Europe. TØI is using the Charter & Code internally as an instrument to raise awareness and quality in the work on recruitment, working conditions and career development for researchers as well as an active instrument in its strategic effort to increase international activities.

TØI has completed a self-evaluation process based on the statement's principles in relation to common practice at TØI (Appendix 2: Gap analysis), and produced a two-year action plan (Appendix 1) for the development of human resources. TØI's initial declaration of commitment to The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers is presented at https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/cc-declarations/TOI_DoC.pdf.

[The European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers consist of 40 principles](#), describing best practise in Europe as to recruitment, working conditions and career development for researchers. The Charter also describes the responsibilities of researchers in terms of ethical norms, legal and contractual obligations. The Gap-analysis shows that TØI policies and guidelines and the practicing of such for most parts are well in line with the Charter and Code principles. However, we acknowledge this as a continuous improvement process and have identified some areas we will focus on in the coming years.

The efforts included in the TØI Action Plan for the implementation of the Charter & Code, are firmly embedded in the TØI Strategy.

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Action plan 2020-2023 to fill the identified gap of The European Charter for Researcher and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers

1.1 Process

The institute has prepared an Action plan (this section - appendix 1) with a focus on the identified gaps. The Action plan has been worked out and will be further elaborated in cooperation with the employees. This Action plan will be supported by a more general HR strategy and incorporated in this strategy when it is finalised.

The Gap analysis (appendix 2), reviewed by management, shows the identified gaps between the Charter & Code principles and common practice at TØI. The appropriate measures, responsible person, and realistic due date for implementing the measures is included in this action plan.

This Action plan and the Gap analysis are published on the institute's website toi.no.

1.2 Summary of gap analysis

The following four areas were identified in the gap analysis. These four areas are merged into two Action areas; PhD students and International Mobility. In addition, we need to translate parts of our Digital researcher and staff Handbook.

Section I The European Charter for Researchers – applicable to Researchers	Section II The European Charter for Researchers – applicable to Employers	Section III Principles and Recruitment of Researchers
<p>Principle 36. Relations with supervisors - Gap: We need to improve this dual supervision role; project responsibility at TØI and PhD studies at Universities. See digital Employee Handbook (PHB) 8.3</p> <p>36</p>	<p>Principle 29. Value of mobility - Gap: Clarify and - if possible - improve the procedure for welcoming guest researchers at TØI and increase mobility among TØI researchers. Improve information in English on social security provisions etc.</p> <p>29</p>	<p>Principle 13. Recruitment – Gap: Clarify the demands on skill in the Norwegian language for different positions</p> <p>13</p> <p>Principle 18. Recognition of mobility experience - Gap: In order to ensure fulfilment of TØIs strategy for international research, we will increase our recognition of international mobility among researchers at TØI</p> <p>18</p>

1.3 PhD students (principle 36)

TØI employs young researchers and give them the opportunity, within externally funded projects, to engage in doctoral studies at relevant Universities. In addition, we encourage senior researchers to complete doctoral studies. As of today (May 2019) we employ and finance 17 PhD students.

TØI is, as an independent research institute, not authorized to award PhD exams to students. We therefore cooperate with Universities which have this legal right. The cooperation is made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the profile and discipline of the PhD student, the project and the most appropriate University. The official supervisor role is handled by a University professor, while the secondary supervisor or internal advisor roles are covered by project leaders and/or senior researchers at TØI (Researcher level I). It is common practice at Universities in Norway to charge for work carried out by a supervisor.

The guidelines for PhD students at TØI are presented in the Personnel Handbook (section 8.3) and include a number of applicable models for the employment of the PhD student; 1) 100% employed at TØI, with 75% PhD studies and 25% external projects; 2) 75% employment at a University and 25% employment at TØI, with other projects; 3) PhD exam based on existing work in ordinary research projects; 4) PhD studies directly financed by other projects and 5) external PhD students. Most PhD students at TØI are of type 1, where the PhD studies are financed through

projects from the Research Council of Norway (RCN). The remuneration from the RCN is substantially lower than salaries at TØI, both for young students and senior staff, and TØI adds the necessary economic resources to keep the student on the same level of salary as other TØI researchers. TØI does not demand a lock-in period after their exams.

Researchers with a PhD degree are important for the institute. However, the dual responsibility for PhD students (TØI and University) sometimes creates episodes of conflict for the students, who can potentially be drawn between two “supervisors”, which may sometimes prolong the duration of the studies. The institute allocates substantial resources to PhD students, both in salaries and University fees, and the institute needs to have an improved financial plan, including risk assessment.

1.3.1 Actions

- a) Create a process that ensures smooth cooperation between University supervisors, project leaders at TØI and the PhD student.
Responsible: Human Relations Manager. To be completed by 2021.
- b) Examine the financial plan and risk assessment of PhD projects. Responsible: Management Board. To be completed by 2021.

1.4 International mobility (principles 29, 13 and 18)

A substantial international network is important for research, and TØI’s strategy highlights internationalization as a key focus area. This includes participation in European Union research projects, increased Nordic cooperation, and a strengthening of global activities in the future.

The Institute has already today a substantial level of cooperation within European and Nordic research projects, we send PhD students and other researchers to work abroad, and encourage guest researchers to work at TØI.

We have identified three areas in the gap analysis with a connection to internationalization; Value of mobility, Recruitment and Recognition of mobility experiences. However, to further improve international cooperation, we realize the need to increase the number of TØI researchers spending time in international research environments. In addition, we need to strengthen the presence of visiting researchers from international research environments, as an important part of the main strategy for TØI.

To go abroad and work for a couple of years is a large step in the career and in the family life in general. This is true both for TØI researchers and for guest researchers at TØI. Issues such as ordinary living costs including apartments and travel are obvious; for researchers with a family mobility more complicated and includes issues of childcare etc. Finally, social security systems are not aligned between countries, and taxation and deduction systems are often complex.

To apply for a position at TØI it is necessary to understand the responsibility and performance which the Institute expects from a researcher at different levels.

To further highlight the importance of internationalization and mobility, the Institute could to a greater extent make international mobility part of the internal career track system, and be more explicit regarding the value of mobility in recruitment.

1.4.1 Actions

- a) Strengthen support to TØI researchers going abroad and improve the procedure for welcoming guest researchers to TØI. The support will essentially consist of providing improved information but could also be given in the form of financial assistance in cooperation with the RCN. Responsible: Human Relations Manager. To be completed by 2022.
- b) Also, if possible, include international mobility as a KPI in the internal career system as well as in external recruitment processes. Responsible: Management Board. To be completed by 2022.

1.4.2 Actions

Translate the most important sections of the Personnel Handbook to English. The aim is to 1) inform guest researchers about the positive working conditions at TØI and 2) for guest researchers with minimal Norwegian language skills to quickly become operational at the Institute. Responsible: Human Relations Manager. To be completed by 2023.