Concept Note

EUROCADRES – COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN PROFESSIONAL AND MANAGERIAL STAFF

Working Conditions of European Researchers – challenges researchers face as workers

There is a broad consensus in the EU that research and development are key factors for future growth, economic performance and social development of modern economies. The EU has defined ambitious goals for R&D to improve the overall economic and social situation. This includes the perspective to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent. Part of the EU policies are large joint research programs like Horizon and a numerous number of multinational collaboration projects in all fields of science.

The overall political will in the European Union member states is to invest up to 3% of GDP in R&D. In 2021, roughly 311 billion euros were spent on research and development. Therefore, employment in R&D has strongly increased over the last decades. Following OECD figures in 2020 1.89 million researchers were employed in the EU countries. With the Horizon funding the EU Commission expects to create up to new 179,000 jobs by 2030 and increase the gross domestic product in the 400 to 600 billion euros.

To archive these goals working conditions and stable career opportunities are decisive factors for attracting enough talented young employees into the research but also maintaining them. Eurocadres – as the trade union of almost six million professionals, researchers, and managers – wants to continue and deepen the social dialogue on working conditions in research to improve knowledge and competence for a fair and sustainable knowledge-based research in Europe, ensuring quality of work life for professionals, researchers and managers.

The goal of the project is to intensify social dialogue and to train and inform employee representatives about the working conditions in research, including universities but also commercial research

institutions and enterprises. The project will contribute to develop and strengthen social dialogue in Europe by:

- Improving knowledge of working conditions in the different research institutions, research areas and across countries
- Broadening the debate on the need for sufficient funding of research in the European Union
- Raising awareness of specific problems like the lack of stable career planning, gender inequity.
- Identifying relevant steps to foster social dialogue in EU member states The main activities are three policy and training seminars and a results conference at the end of the project.

Topics of the workshops and the conference are among others working condition in research, specific challenges for woman in research; geographical mobility of researchers; perspectives of European and national funding strategies for research, challenges of intellectual property rights etc.

The project includes an information and dissemination package with a web page, the publication of a best practice guide and the creation of a permanent profession network of researchers organized by Eurocadres and its member organisations. The specific project objectives are the following:

- Raise awareness of working and employment conditions of researchers in Europe
- Raise awareness of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers on working conditions of researchers and assessment of their impact
- Identify national and European trade union policies and activities directed towards the needs of researchers in Europe and consequently developing policy guidelines
- Exchange of good trade union practices on supporting and representing researchers The effectiveness of the project will be measured by Eurocadres by the number of people participating the workshops and the conference.

Additional Eurocadres sees a high value in establishing the planned new permanent communication platform for researcher and Eurocadres as their representative organisation. Workshop on communication will be used to develop appropriate strategies and instruments to have high multiplier effects in R&D institutions.