RM ROADMAP

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D1.2 Final report on ERA-wide landscape

The report at hand aims to provide comprehensive analysis on the current state-of-the-art of the profession of Research Management (RM) within the European Research Area (ERA). The research focused on the following topics: 1) Terminology, definition and areas of Research Management, 2) Professional development and career path in Research Management, 3) Skills and competences of Research Managers, 4) Good Practices in Research Management in building up Research Support Services.

WP1: Intelligence, HETFA Institute

June 2025

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Project full title

“Creating Framework Conditions for Research Management to Strengthen the European Research Area”

Project acronym

RM Roadmap

Grant Agreement no.

101058475

D1.2 Final report on ERA-wide landscape

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List of Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ARMA	Association of Research Managers and Administrators (UK)
ASTP	Association of European Science and Technology Transfer Professionals
CRM	European Certificate in Research Management
EARMA	European Association of Research Managers and Administrators
ERA	European Research Area
EU	European Union
IP	Intellectual Property
KCP	Knowledge and Community Platform
PI	Principal Investigator
RAAAP	Research Administration As A Profession – survey
RFO	Research Funding Organisation
RM	Research Management
RM Comp	European Competence Framework for Research Managers
RMs	Research Managers
RMA	Research Management and Administration
RMSP	Research Management and Support Professional
RPO	Research Performing Organisation
RSO	Research Support Office
RSS	Research Support Services
R&I	Research and Innovation
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
WP	Work Package

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. Aim and Methodology

The report at hand aims to provide comprehensive analysis on the current state-of-the-art of the profession of Research Management (RM) within the European Research Area (ERA).

Methodological framework: Three main data sources were integrated to ensure comprehensive coverage:

- **Large-scale survey:** An online survey was conducted, resulting in over 2,200 valid responses from RM professionals in 65 countries. The survey collected demographic data, job roles, employment conditions, challenges, motivations, and skills.
- **Co-creation sessions:** These participatory sessions involved national and thematic RM communities across Europe. Professionals discussed terminology, definitions, skills, and the future adoption of a professional development framework. The workshops validated survey findings and captured national specificities and bottom-up perspectives.
- **In-depth interviews:** Interviews were carried out with selected Research Managers (RMs) from diverse institutional settings. These interviews explored institutional challenges, good practices and success factors in building up Research Support Services (RSS).

The research focused on the following topics:

1) Terminology, definition and areas of Research Management,
2) Professional development and career path in Research Management,
3) Skills and competences of Research Managers,
4) Good Practices in Research Management in building up Research Support Services.

1.2. Key Findings

Terminology: There is currently no single, universally accepted term to describe professionals working in Research Management across Europe. However, the term “Research Manager” emerged as the most widely preferred umbrella term, while “Research Manager and Administrator” as well as “Research Support Professional” are almost as widely accepted. Regional preferences vary across Europe, which has to be taken into consideration when defining the national terminologies. This diversity highlights the need for a flexible and inclusive terminology that respects national contexts but is also accepted at EU level.

Definition: We initiate an inclusive and flexible approach enabling the reflection on constantly emerging fields and job profiles when defining Research Management. Accordingly, Research Managers enable, facilitate and support the performance of research in all its applications. Research Managers hold generalist or specialised roles within the research and innovation ecosystem. Research Managers are based in all types of research performing organisations, including public and private universities, research institutes, research funding organisations, medical institutions, NGOs, companies, public authorities, and so on.

Roles and areas: Most RMs work across multiple areas. Beyond pre-award and post-award tasks, many research managers are involved in areas such as research strategy, researcher training, innovation, and data management. In practice, most RMs engage with a broad range of responsibilities in their daily work. This reflects a broad and dynamic role profile, requiring adaptability and a wide range of expertise and skills.

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Professional development and career paths: The Research Management workforce is highly educated, with 89% of survey respondents holding a Master's degree or PhD. However, formal training opportunities in RM remain limited. Most professionals enter the field indirectly, often transitioning from research or administrative positions. Career pathways are fragmented, with job titles and progression routes varying widely across institutions and countries. Leadership roles are relatively scarce, frequently prompting RMs to change institutions in pursuit of advancement. To further professionalise the field, there is a clear need for strategic, structured frameworks for professional development, including training, certification, and well-defined career pathways, that acknowledge the multidimensional, dynamic, and continually evolving nature of the profession.

Importance of professional associations and sector related networks: These entities are essential for knowledge sharing, peer learning, long-term capacity building, as well as for advocacy.

Skills and competencies: The findings also reveal the need for structured training opportunities to facilitate continuous professional development, address current skill gaps as well as to support career progression. The findings indicate that Research Managers need a broad and continually evolving skill set, reflecting the diverse and complex nature of their roles. Core competencies in Research Management primarily include soft skills and transversal abilities. In addition, a solid understanding of the research and innovation (R&I) funding landscape and institutional structures is widely regarded as essential. Proficiency in English is particularly important in non-native English-speaking countries. Moreover, specific roles within Research Management demand tailored knowledge, skills, and expertise. The results also highlight a clear need for structured training opportunities to support continuous professional development, address existing skill gaps, and foster career advancement.

Challenges: The most frequently cited challenges include a lack of professional recognition, unclear career structures, and excessive workloads. Many RMs feel their roles are misunderstood or undervalued. Better-defined roles in RM and stronger advocacy for the profession would be forward-looking.

Good practices: Despite the challenges, the report identifies numerous examples of well-functioning institutional models. These good practices are multifaceted, can focus on 1) offering high-quality research support for researchers, 2) solidifying research support, 3) facilitating professional development and career advancement of professionals, 4) increasing recognition of RMs and the Research Support Office. These include comprehensive onboarding processes, internal and external training schemes, peer learning, mentoring programs, and the best use of national or thematic RM networks. Such initiatives demonstrate how RM offices can increase the strategic value of RM within research-performing organisations.

1.3. Recommendations

The professionalisation of Research Management in Europe is advancing, however, to enable the progression, visibility, and recognition of Research Managers, the report recommends the following key actions:

Strengthening the identity and recognition of the RM profession

- ➔ **Reinforce the umbrella term of Research Manager** as an inclusive concept that incorporates a huge diversity of areas, roles and contexts in RM at the European level. If necessary, revisit the common terminology to ensure the self-identification of professionals from diverse areas.
- ➔ **Promote formal recognition of RM as a profession across ERA countries:** Greater institutional and policy-level recognition is needed to acknowledge RMs as integral actors of the research ecosystem.

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Enabling multidimensional career path and professional development

- ➔ Position Research Management as **a real alternative to an academic career and enable interoperability within the sector.**
- ➔ **Establish clear and multidimensional career pathways for Research Managers** by adopting and adapting the European Competence Framework for Research Managers.
- ➔ **Improve employment conditions and promote fair employment**: Aligning salary structures and offering appropriate incentives are crucial for retention and motivation.
- ➔ **Improve training offer and enable strategic professional development:** It is essential to develop structured and strategically planned opportunities for professional development that are formally recognised by Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) as employers.
- ➔ Acknowledge **more leadership roles in Research Management:** Institutional career paths should provide more opportunities for senior professionals, in order to reduce fluctuation and support the retention of experienced professionals.

More strategic approach to build, solidify and promote Research Support Services.

- ➔ **Build partnerships between researchers and RMs:** This involves building trust, partner relations and promoting collaboration throughout the research lifecycle.
- ➔ Develop **micro (institutional) and macro (national & European) level methodologies to measure and assess the impact** of Research Managers in the R&I ecosystems: Research Managers' expertise must be made more visible to researchers and leadership by demonstrating the added value and measuring the impact of RSS.
- ➔ **Securing the funding of RSOs** and **rewarding the work** of RMs: RSOs could develop such activities that can secure stable income for the RSOs.

Securing the future capacity in RM

- ➔ **Strategic use of AI in RM:** Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) should initiate a strategic assessment of the implications of AI tools on Research Management (RM) tasks and workflows. Such a proactive approach will ensure that RM functions remain future-proof, efficient, and aligned with evolving scientific and technological landscapes.

- ➔ **Ensuring stable and long-term funding for professional networks and associations**: European and national policy-makers should provide sustained financial support to RM networks and associations.

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2. Introduction, aim and methodology

2.1. RM Roadmap

RM Roadmap aimed to chart a course for the future of Research Management (RM) in Europe and a community to support its delivery. It was conducted over 36 months and was funded by an amount of €1.5m by the European Commission Horizon Europe funding programme.

The overarching objective of RM Roadmap was to identify and adapt the Research Management capital base of the EU, including the widening countries, and emerging needs of its current and future Research Management workforce to improve the EU's competitiveness and sustain its economic performance.

RM Roadmap allowed existing European networks to connect on a smart community platform which will enable an unprecedented consultation process in Research Management. This co-creation process gathered the existing communities and expand upon them to reach two main objectives: to create and inform a bottom-up consensus on the future of RM in a roadmap, and to inform the community about existing training, networking, funding, and career mobility opportunities.

Eight partners were working together on this project: European Association of Research Managers and Administrators (Belgium); HETFA Research Institute (Hungary); Nova University Lisbon (Portugal); Association of European Science & Technology Transfer Professionals (Netherlands); Crowdhelix Limited (Ireland), The Cyprus Institute (Cyprus) and associated partners Janssen Pharmaceuticals (J&J) and Una Europa (Belgium).

Work Package 1 'Intelligence' led by HETFA had the following aims:

- To gain a better understanding of the current status, positions and needs of the RM community.
- To develop working definitions and terminology at large and for the professional categories.
- To create consensus on the understanding of the profession and clarification of requirements.
- To pave the way for better recognition and a clearer career path.

Deliverable 1.1 Preliminary report on the ERA-wide landscape was based on the in-depth study of existing literature, assessment of previous surveys and results, as well as the outcomes of dedicated activities of the first year of the project. Deliverable 1.2 Final Report on the ERA-wide landscape is based on the results of the RM Roadmap survey, the co-creation exercises with the involvement of national and thematic RM communities, as well as interviews. The three-year-long work within the framework of the project, backed by significant policy support at the EU level, enabled us to present a detailed and precise picture on the current landscape of Research Management across the ERA and to contribute to the overarching RM Roadmap.

2.2. Survey

2.2.1. Methodology and sampling

The data collection and analysis were conducted by HETFA Research Institute. The main aim of the survey was to gather quantitative data to assess the current state-of-the-art of the maturity of the Research Management profession across different countries of Europe; to depict different Research Management (RM) professional categories, current needs and gaps in the field of recognition, career path, and professional development.

The questionnaire presented in the analysis was administered online via the survey tool Alchemer, using anonymous and self-completion methods over several waves between November 2023 and May

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2024. The questionnaire was distributed to respondents via online platforms. The main channel of dissemination was RM Roadmap partners' and ambassadors' networks; however, relevant national and European associations, umbrella organisations, and networks were also directly involved and targeted, starting with EARMA and ASTP. The data collection targeted all ERA countries and diverse professional groups of RMs. The survey was distributed via LinkedIn, the project website and social media platforms, the consortium partners' networks, as well as RM societies and associations.

In designing the questionnaire and subsequently interpreting the results, we relied extensively on the findings of previous studies and the conclusions of the RM-ROADMAP project – in particular, the preliminary report on the ERA-wide landscape by Blanka Csite and Virág Zsár (Csite & Zsár, 2023). In order to enable longitudinal data collection, several questions were incorporated from the 'Research Administration as a Profession' (RAAAP) series.[1] To date, the global survey has had three iterations, conducted in 2016, 2019 and 2022, reaching RM professionals in Europe as well.

The respondents were asked to fill in a 40-question questionnaire. Out of the 40 questions, 26 were focusing on topics relevant for WP1, inquiring about job profile and RM categories, professional development, career path, skills and competencies, as well as the most common challenges they face in Research Management. The questions included in the RM Roadmap online survey are presented in Annex 2 of this report. Online data collection is an effective method for reaching the examined population, as professionals working in the RM field utilise IT tools at a proficient level in their daily work and possess advanced digital skills.

The survey sample was designed using non-probability sampling, which means that the responses are not representative of the population. However, they still provide significant insights into the respondents' opinions and preferences. A total of 3,069 responses were received by the closure of the questionnaire. Of these, partial responses and responses sent from the same IP address were excluded. The criteria for the screening of partial completions included the requirement for the respondent to complete a block of questions on demographic data (gender, age, education). They were also required to answer question number 9, which related to the area within Research Management, in order to be included in the database. Following the screening process, 2,212 respondents' responses were entered into the database. **As a result, this survey became a milestone in RM related data collection in Europe, surpassing significantly all previous efforts.** In order to analyse each question, we interpreted the answers to that question as a sample. Following the cleansing and coding of the data, the analysis was conducted utilising the SPSS software, employing statistical techniques. Among these, descriptive statistical methods were employed and in order to identify potential correlations through the utilisation of two-tailed bivariate correlations and a two-step cluster method.

2.2.2. Demographics

The main demographic questions in the questionnaire were gender, age, country of origin and years in Research Management. For all four questions, groups were created in order to facilitate the interpretation of the results. In some cases, the characteristics of the respondents were compared with the CARDEA[2] and the RAAAP3[3] survey sample to better assess possible sample bias.

[1] Research Administration as a Profession (RAAAP) Taskforce. https://inorms.net/activities/raaap-taskforce/

[2] **CARDEA** is the sister project of RM Roadmap, launched in 2022 and aims to increase professional recognition of RM with a strong experience in HR management and excellence. https://www.ucc.ie/en/cardea/

[3] **RAAAP3**, conducted in 2022, focused on the research manager/research administrator experience, including how they entered the field, their experience of research impact and engagement, and demographics

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Table 1: Gender identification

	Frequency	Valid Percent	CARDEA	RAAAP 3 (European sample)
Female	1639	74%	73%	79%
Male	535	24%	26%	20%
Other	6	0%	1%	
Prefer not to provide	32	1%		1%
Total	2212	100%		

In terms of gender, nearly two-thirds of the respondents were women, highlighting the female predominance in Research Management. The CARDEA survey also demonstrated a comparable predominance of females, while RAAAP3 gathered an even higher percentage of female respondents, thereby corroborating our hypothesis regarding the gender ratio. However, as none of these data are representative, no significant correlations can be drawn between gender and other variables.

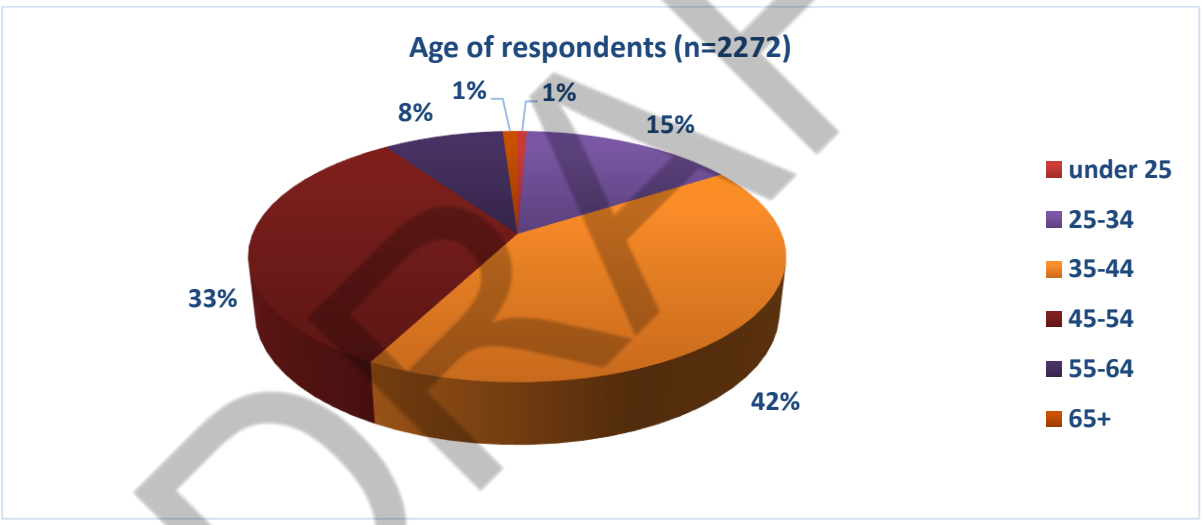


Figure 1: Age of respondents of the RM Roadmap survey

In terms of age, the majority of respondents can be classified as middle-aged: more than three quarters of respondents are aged between 35 and 55. Additionally, the sample included minimal representation from youngest and oldest age groups. The mean age of the sample was 43, which is similar to the CARDEA sample (O'Regan at al., 2023).

(educational background, the country of work, age range, and gender). Although it was a global effort, it collected 1,483 responses from Europe.

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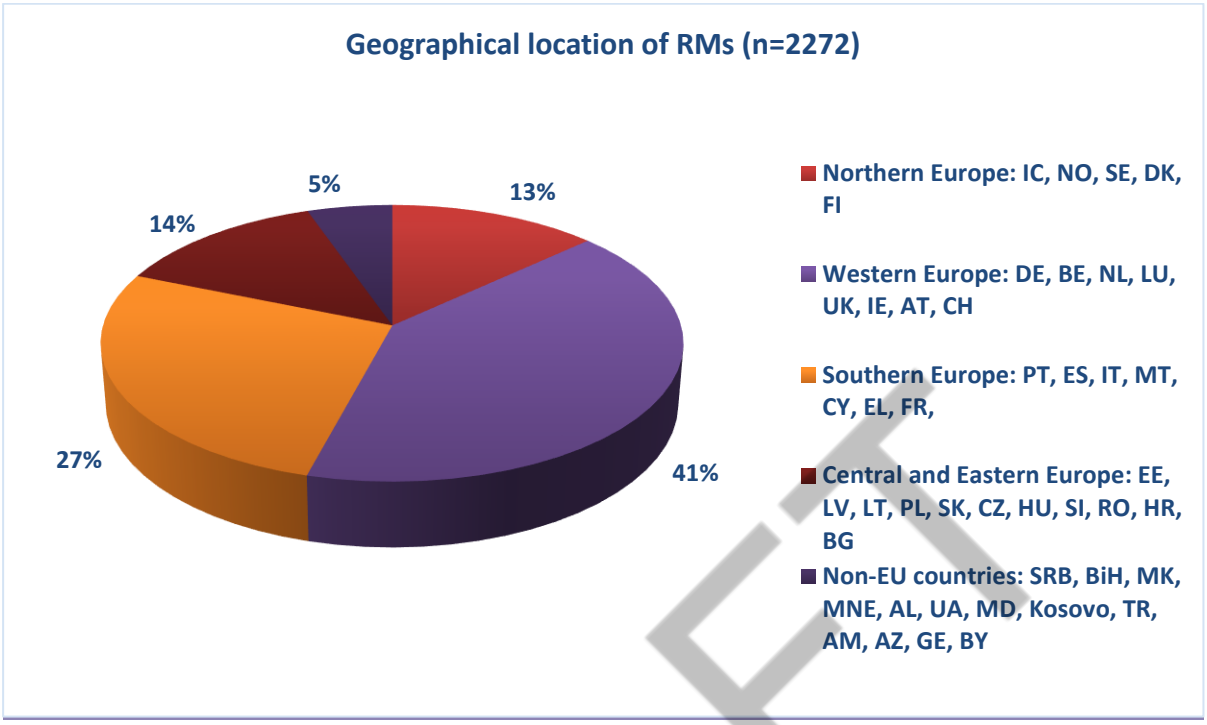


Figure 2: Geographical location of RMs responding the RM Roadmap survey

The respondents represented a total of 65 countries. The majority of respondents (93%) are based in EU countries representing the main focus of the assessment. A total of 100 or more respondents were collected from Spain, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Italy; while Finland, Norway, Belgium, Ireland, Turkey, Denmark, and Poland each had over 50 respondents.

With regard to the country groups, the sample seems balanced and reflects the estimated proportion of the RM population within each regional group. 40% of respondents originate from Western European countries. Additionally, there is a notable representation of Research Managers from Southern European countries, comprising 27% of the sample, while 13% of respondents are from Northern European countries and a similar proportion hail from Central and Eastern European EU member states. The majority of non-EU respondents are based in European countries outside the EU (5%), while 2% of respondents are from outside Europe.

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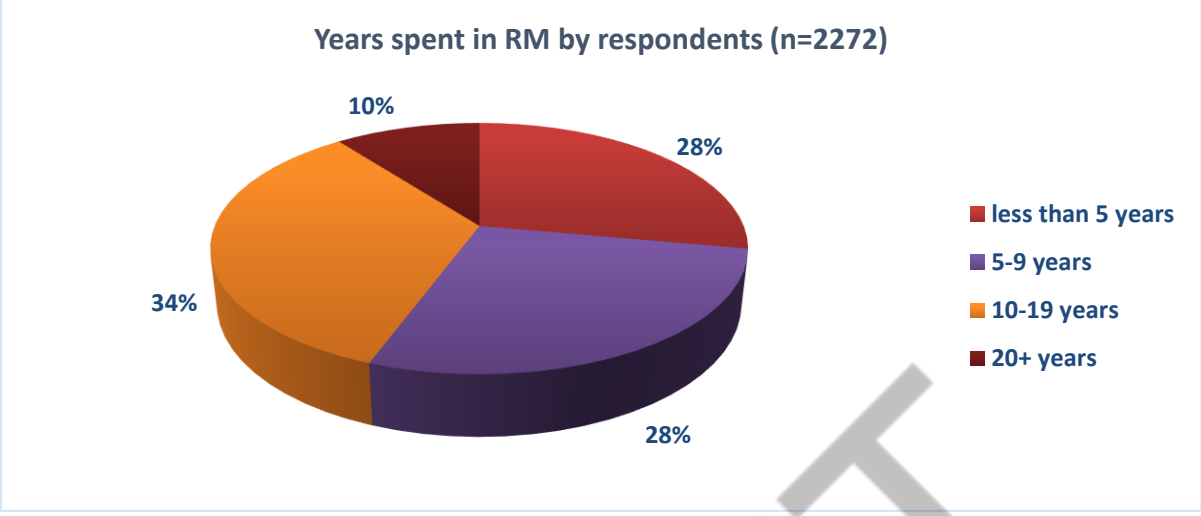


Figure 3: Job history of RMs responding the survey

The sample is dominated by those with 10–19 years of experience in Research Management, which suggests that almost half of the respondents have sufficient experience in the field. This distribution also corroborates the assertion that a **considerable proportion of respondents possess pertinent and sustained experience, whose recommendations for enhancements in the domain of Research Management could be proven invaluable**. This assertion is substantiated by the fact that the respondents have been engaged in the field of Research Management for an average of 9.5 years. No significant differences were found with respect to country, gender, or employment status.

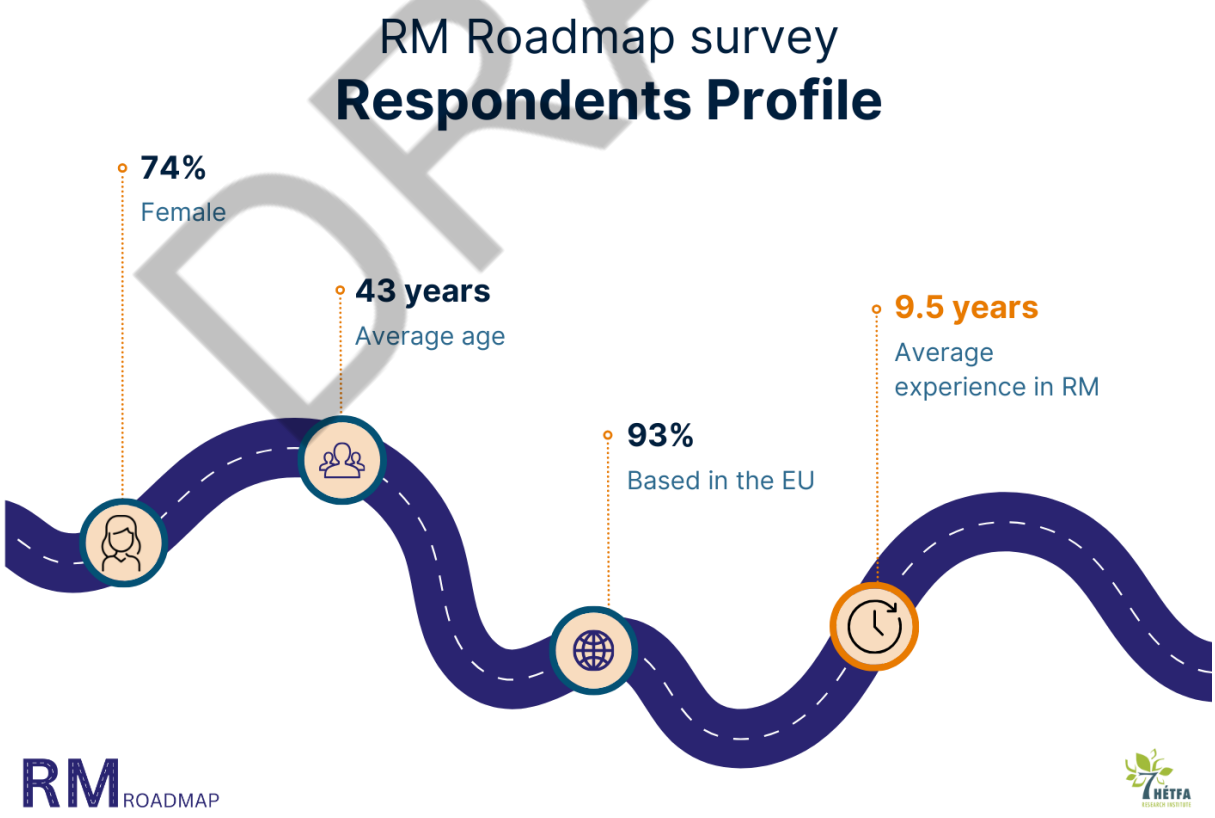


Figure 4: RM Roadmap survey Respondents Profile

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2.3. Co-creation sessions

2.3.1. 2nd co-creation session

As described above, the RM Roadmap survey having been launched on 2 November 2023 included specific questions designed to provide evidence from the RM community in all countries of the European Research Area on the current status, position and needs of Research Managers. The set of questions addressed in the second co-creation session is included in Annex 3 of the present report.

By relying on the preliminary outcomes of the survey, the 2nd co-creation session aimed to validate and expand the survey results with the national and thematic RM communities, and to further elaborate on these results with specificities reflecting the various national contexts.

The following areas were addressed in the second co-creation session:

- Who are Research Managers?
- What are their key skills & competences?

The focus of the second co-creation session was two-fold: first**, the terminology and definition of professionals working in Research Management** was discussed**.** Second, the **skills and competences relevant for the different job categories/RM fields** were addressed.

Data included in the questions for the co-creation session were retrieved from the initial results of the RM Roadmap survey as of 28 January 2024. The session aimed to gather feedback and validation from the national and thematic communities with two main objectives: first, to identify any potential gaps or missing aspects; and second, to collect evidence regarding any national circumstances that may be relevant when applying the results at the national level. The second co-creation session ran between 14 March 2024 and 7 May 2024. In total, 28 national communities and 4 thematic communities submitted their consensus documents to the project consortium. The brief assessment of these consensus documents is presented in the 'Report from the 2nd co-creation session of the RM Roadmap project'.[4]

RM Roadmap Ambassadors and Associate Ambassadors made significant efforts to engage the national and thematic communities in order to generate discussions and obtain valuable feedback. They either shared the questions through an online survey, organised online or face-to-face discussions, or arranged individual consultations with group members. In addition, several communities managed to hold a lively discussion at the KCP as well. The table below summarises the methods used by the communities to gather inputs.

Table 2: Methods used by the communities during the 2nd co-creation session

KCP	Online survey (No. of responses)	Online meeting (No. of attendants)	Face-to-face meeting (No. of attendants)	Individual consultation
AT, BE, CZ, EE, EL, ES, DK, FI, FR, HR, IS, IT, LV, MT, NL, NO, RO, SE, SI, TR Pre-award group	CY (13), PT (34), HR (40), IE (26), UK Research Knowledge and Technology Transfer (14), Research Evaluation and Assessment (67), Research Impact (76) groups	BE, CZ (33) PT (62), TR (58)	CY (16), HU (70)	LU, SE, RO, SRB

[4] Available at: https://www.rmroadmap.eu/s/RM-Roadmap-2nd-Co-creation-Consensus-Report-c8ct.pdf

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The report on the 2nd co-creation exercise summarises the results of the co-creation exercise with regards to the two main questions introduced above.

The co-creation exercise, and consequently the report, have limitations. First, not all national and thematic communities submitted their consensus reports by the deadline, resulting in the fact that information was provided by 28 national and 4 thematic communities. Second, the engagement of the RM communities in these discussions was diverse: in some countries, more than 100 professionals were involved, while in others, fewer than 10 participated. Therefore, the results cannot be considered representative, eliminating any generalisable conclusions. Again, the aim was to collect specific insights that could not be captured otherwise.

It is important to highlight that the results do not represent official opinions or statements of the countries, but rather the opinion of the members of the communities of Research Managers based in those countries.

2.3.2. 3rd co-creation session

The 'Report from the third co-creation session of the RM Roadmap project'[5] describes the outcomes of the third RM Roadmap co-creation exercise, which aimed to engage the Research Managers community in assessing how to: i) **adapt or adopt the European Competence Framework for Research Managers (RM Comp) published in 2025**; and ii) design a suitable EU-wide training scheme to enhance the professional development of Research Managers. Only the first point falls within the scope of this D1.2 report, i.e. **assessing what the RM community considers as necessary steps** – at national or thematic area level – **in order to adapt or adopt the Europe-wide professional development framework at national and institutional levels**. The set of questions addressed in the third co-creation session is included in Annex 4 of the present report. It is important to note that at the time of the third co-creation session, a preliminary version of the RM Comp was available, as the final document was published in January 2025.

The report is based on the results gathered in the 34 consensus documents generated between November 2024 and March 2025 in 28 European countries and in 6 RM thematic communities, and draws conclusions about the most consensual opinions of the community. It is intended to create a solid and participatory basis for formulating new pathways for political action and/or initiatives at the European, national, regional, or local level.

The content of this document is based on data collected through a range of methodological approaches. The majority of the Ambassadors used the Knowledge and Community Platform made available by the RM Roadmap project, whereas, similarly to the previous exercise, several Ambassadors complemented the co-creation process using other methods for data collection such as on-line surveys, online and face-to-face meetings, and individual consultations. The table below summarises the methods used by the communities.

[5] Available at: https://www.rmroadmap.eu/s/3rd-co-creation-session-Report.pdf

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Table 3: Methods used by the communities during the 3rd co-creation session

KCP	Online Survey (No. of responses)	Online meeting (No. of participants)	Face-to-face meeting (No. of participants)	Individual consultation
National communities: AT, BE, CH, CZ, DK, FI, FR, HU, IS, IE, IT, LV, MT, NL, NO, PT, RO, RS, SI, SE, CH, TR **Thematic Communities:** Research Ethics and Integrity, Research Grant Officer/Adviser (Pre-award), Research Impact, Research Project Management (Post-Award), Research Training and Research Career Development	**National communities:** HR (80), IE (28), PT (45) **Thematic Communities:** Research Impact (23), Research Training and Research Career Development (15)	**National communities:** CZ (50), FR (14), IE (32), IT (22), TR (1) **Thematic Communities:** Research Impact (25 + 33)	**National communities:** BE, FR (22), HU (80+), PT (30), RS (36), TR [2 hybrid (42, 67)] **Thematic Communities:** Research Impact [2 events in Brussels (25, 33)]	**National communities:** AT, IS, ES, CH, DK, NL, NO

It is important to highlight that the results do not represent official opinions or statements of the countries, but the opinion of the members of the communities of Research Managers based in the given countries. The results cannot be considered representative, eliminating any generalisable conclusions.

2.4. Interviews

In order to expand the institutional good practices presented in the preliminary report, the main aim of the interviews was to identify and analyse further good practices in the fields of recognition, professional development and career frames. Originally it was envisaged to conduct at least 16 interviews to present institutional RM best practice and capacity adoption in the form of case studies, 8 from Widening and 8 from non-Widening countries. At the end, 18 interviews were conducted in total.

The interviews were conducted in two phases: first, potential interviewees were identified through the network of the consortium and the recruited ambassadors, network of professional associations' relevant committees, such as EARMA Professional Development and Recognition Committee, ASTP Professional Development Committee. These interviews were carried out between May and July 2023, and the preliminary findings were presented in D1.1 Preliminary report.

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The second phase was conducted between February 2025 and April 2025. Interviewees were identified among those respondents of the RM Roadmap survey who indicated their willingness to contribute to the investigation.

Based on the data available from the survey, several criteria were defined for the selection of the interviewees, as follows:

- leading a Research Support Office (RSO) OR being responsible for the coordination of Research Support Services (RSS),
- working at either central or decentral level at the RPOs,
- covering various fields of RM, either pre-award, post-award, impact, knowledge and innovation management, technology transfer, research infrastructure management, and others,
- based in RPOs with different profiles (university, research institute, etc.), statuses (public, private, non-profit) and countries (Widening vs. non-Widening).

The aim of the interviews was to identify both success and failure factors along the following topics:

1) definition of the profession;
2) job profiles;
3) institutional practices and challenges in the operation of research support;
4) career frames;
5) opportunities for professional development;
6) professional recognition.

The interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes, were recorded, and subsequently transcribed. Most interviews took place online and one in-person. Ethical considerations and data management measures related to the interviews are detailed in Annex 1: Research Data Management. The interview guide can be found in Annex 5.

During the second round, 11 interviews were conducted with interviewees having diverse but complementary profiles. Table 1 summarises the main characteristics of the interviewees:

Table 4: Overview of interviewees

Country	Organisation	Type	Size of Personnel	Gender	Years in RM
AT	University	Public	45	Female	24
DE	Research institute and research funder	Public		Female	15
EE	University	Public	4-5	Male	3
FI	University	Public	13	Female	6
FR	University	Public	30	Male	4
IE	University	Public	3	Male	8
IT	Research institute	Private	10-11	Female	25
NL	Research Infrastructure	Public		Female	13
PL	Research institute	Public	13	Female	6
SI	Research institute	Public	1	Male	8

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The analysis of the interviews started with the preparation of the raw data. Transcripts were generated using a specific feature of MS Windows and were subsequently corrected manually. Transcripts were then coded both manually and with IT software (NVIVO & Atlas.ti). The most important concepts are visualised on the concept tree map below.

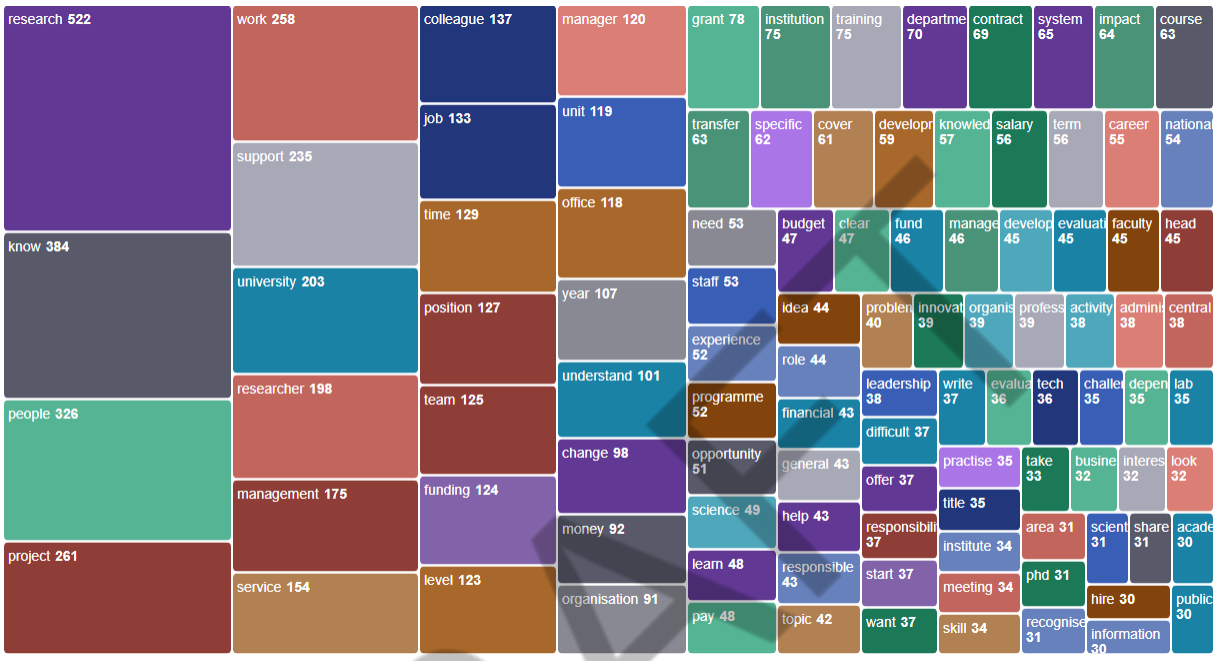


Figure 5: Key word tree map from the interviews

This was followed by the interpretation of the results and their integration into the relevant sections of the current report, as well as to the collection of good practices.

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3. Terminology, definition and areas of RM

Since the recognition of Research Managers is part of EU R&I policy debates, there is an urgent need to develop a consensus-based terminology and definition which is understandable by stakeholders. RM Roadmap defined it among its main goals, to propose a common terminology and definition based on the investigations carried out and with the involvement of several stakeholders.

3.1. Terminology

3.1.1. Survey results

One of the key areas of the RM Roadmap questionnaire was to identify the terminology preferred by RM professionals. In the questionnaire they were asked to select the three most preferred options for an umbrella term from the list of options we provided. This approach allowed us to become familiar with the terminology that most accurately defines them, while also facilitating the search for a consensual term that is acceptable to a broad range of stakeholders.

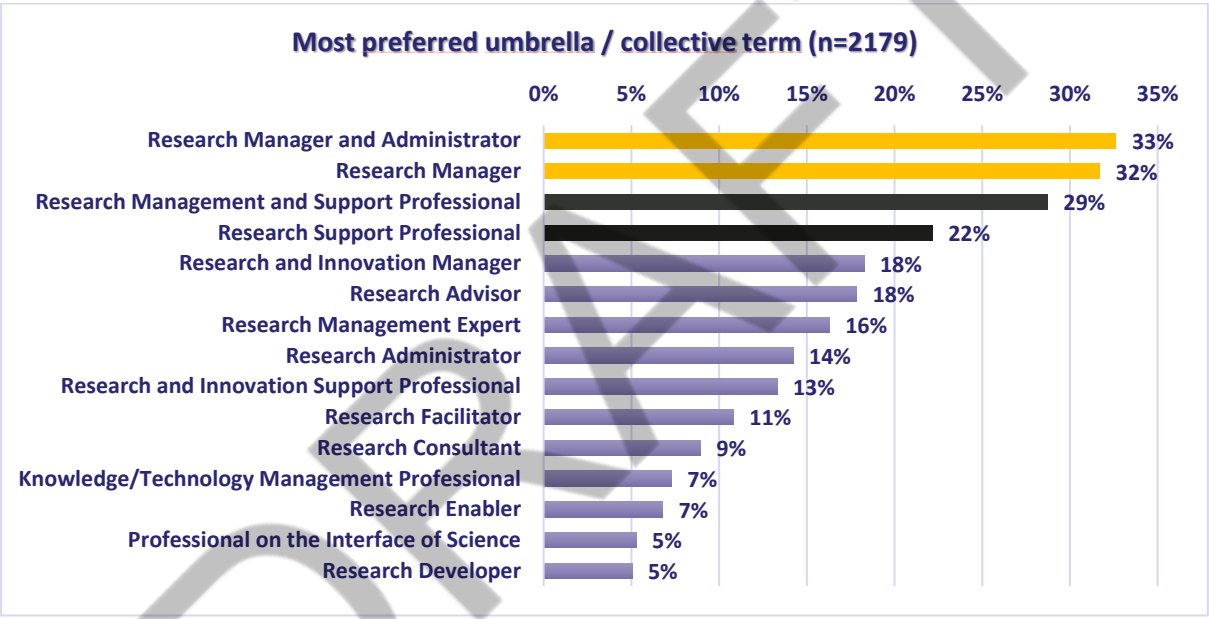


Figure 6: Responses to the question "If we should have an umbrella term to define the group of professions in RM you fit in, which of the following options do you identify with?"

On average, respondents marked 2.3 umbrella terms. 67% of respondents identified themselves with one of the three most popular umbrella terms. These are research manager and administrator (33%), research manager (32%), Research Management and support professional (29%).

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Based on the survey, certain regional specificities can be observed regarding the preferred terminology.

Table 5: Preferred terminology of respondents in line with geographical groups

Northern Europe (IC, NO, SE, DK, FI)	Western Europe (DE, BE, NL, LU, UK, IE, AT, CH)	Southern Europe (PT, ES, IT, MT, CY, EL, FR)	Central and Eastern Europe (EE, LT, LV, PL, SK, CZ, HU, SI, RO, HR, BG)	Non-EU countries (SRB, BiH, MK, MNE, AL, UA, MD, Kosovo, TR)
Research Advisor	Research Manager	Research Manager	Research Manager and Administrator	Knowledge/Technology Management Professional
Research Support Professional	Research Management and Support Professional	Research Manager and Administrator	Research Management and Support Professional	Research Enabler
Research Administrator	Research Manager and Administrator	Research Management and Support Professional	Research Manager	Research Developer

3.1.2. Results of the co-creation exercise

When examining the feedback of the RM communities from the 2nd co-creation session, it has to be underlined that different methodologies were used by the RM Roadmap ambassadors, therefore no scientific and generalised results can be derived on that basis. Some of the communities gave a 1-5 ranking to the 5 terminologies, whereas others just indicated the top 1 or 2 most popular ones. A few countries underlined that reaching a consensus was impossible within the national community. Some interesting features can be nevertheless highlighted, with special regards to certain national circumstances that influence the choice.

The selection of national communities is mainly in line with the survey results; however, the co-creation exercise provides a more nuanced understanding on the choices of the national communities. The arguments for and against the selected terms are presented in more detail in the report.

Research Manager was ranked at first place by 14 countries (DE,[6] IS, NL, LU, PT, ES, IT, CY, EL, FR, HU, SI, HR, TR) and at the second by 2 countries (BE, MT). Among the 4 thematic communities, 3 ranked Research Manager at the first place (Pre-award, Research Evaluation, Research Knowledge and Technology Transfer). **Research Managers and Administrator** was ranked at the first place by 10 countries (NO, SE, DK, FI, NL, AT, PT, EE, LV, RS) and at the second place by 6 countries (IS, LU, ES, IT, CY, EL, CZ) and one thematic community (Research Impact). To a certain extent, some geographical patterns can be observed: communities from Southern Europe almost unanimously prioritised the term Research Manager, placing RMA in second place, whereas Northern European communities gave priority to the latter. The terms **Research Management and Support Professional** was favoured at first

[6] It is also worth adding that the German definition of "Wissenschaftsmanagement" is mostly translated as Research Management, but technically speaking, a more accurate translation would be Science Management.

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place by the IE, UK, CZ and RO communities, while **Research Support Professional** generally appeared at third or fourth place, except for BE, who put it on first place. **Research Advisor** was also favoured by the German community, as this term emphasizes the professional parity between Research Managers and researchers.

Some communities suggested new terms or such terms which were included in the survey but were not favoured by the respondents. For instance, the term **Research and Innovation Manager** – suggested and surveyed by the RM Roadmap survey – was promoted by the Croatian, Turkish, and Dutch communities as being broad and inclusive. It can expressively cover the fields of knowledge and innovation management as well as knowledge and technology transfer. The concrete reference to innovation was also missed by the Portuguese community.

Issues related to the translation of the different terminologies were also articulated in some cases. For instance, Research Manager works better in translating to Greek than RMA. Or in case of the Latvian translation, RMSP can result in misunderstanding.

To sum up, communities agreed that the definition and the terminology should meet the following criteria:

- cover a broad range of fields, roles and responsibilities;
- reflect the type of work fulfilled by RMs, instead of research, doing everything to support it;
- include a huge diversity of identities;
- be flexible and adaptable to reflect the future of the profession and the professionals that take on new responsibilities or specialise in specific areas, i.e. can be specified by adding the RM area: Research Manager specialised in Impact;
- foster recognition and regard RMs as partners in research.

Each of the proposed terms for describing Research Management roles has its own merits and drawbacks. In some countries, the terms "administrator" or "support" may carry negative connotations, potentially undermining the perceived value of the profession. However, in other contexts, these terms can help clarify the nature of the work involved. The importance of including the term "professional" was emphasised by several communities, highlighting the specialised skills and added value that Research Managers bring to their roles. As the Research Impact group described: “We are more than pure "managers"; and more than "support" professionals. We are "advisers" guiding our research community with advice on how to promote impactful research.” The suitability and inclusiveness of these terms also vary depending on national contexts and community perceptions, which can lead to differences in the preferred terminology or even the absence of a standard term altogether.

3.1.3. Findings of the interviews

During the interviews, some interviewees, who cover more, or other fields than pre-award and post-award, were asked about how they identify themselves and whether they can identify themselves with the term research manager. The reason behind was that this can be an issue for some of the groups which cover a sub-field of Research Management, such as technology transfer, research funding or research infrastructures. It is important to highlight that the interviewees confirmed they have no issues identifying themselves as part of the wider professional group of Research Managers, despite the areas they are working in differs from the so-called ‘mainstream’ RM areas.

> *“I don't have issues with that because I covered, as I told you, I covered both things. I've been, I guess, project support, support for, you know, more than 10 years, maybe 15 years. And then we set up the tech transfer office. And I'm from that time on tech transfer office.*

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> *Yeah. I don't have issue with that." Interviewee, SI*
>
> *"I don't see a difference. I think the difference is coming from the type of organisation you're sitting in. And if you're working at the level of one institute where you're supporting research at, you know, the local level, it's not the same as working for European wide organisation. So that's the difference. But whether it's research or research infrastructure, I don't think it's a big difference, no." Interviewee, NL*
>
> *"Uh, well, my job…. if someone asks me, I would always say I'm in research funding, because that is the most comprehensible term, I think. I see myself as a research manager, I have been for a long time, also in my previous job, which was also in research funding. But still I am a research manager." Interviewee, DE*

Nevertheless, it must be noted that all these interviewees have more years of experience in the field, and might have a broader and more advanced understanding of policy developments than the rest of professionals in their field. This necessitates more communication and more dialogue to reinforce a common understanding of the terminology.

Based on the findings, for the time being, **Research Manager shall be used as a collective / umbrella term at the EU level**. It shall include all groups and sub-groups of professionals working in the related areas which are presented in sections 3.4 and 3.5. As this terminology is considered as "agreed language" in policy documents at EU level, any further changes need time and further efforts. However, to ensure the engagement of all professional groups, it might be relevant to work for more inclusive terms, such as Research Management and Support Professional or Research and Innovation Manager.

However, the translation of Research Manager into the national languages of EU Member States shall not take place automatically, but must respect and acknowledge the national specificities described above.

3.2. Perception of the role of Research Managers

Linked to the previous topic, interviewees also reflected on their perception and self-perception of their roles. These are strongly in line with the findings of the preliminary report. An outstanding emphasis was put on the support role and the provision of services.

> *"And as I say to researchers who come and see me, I say, well, if you see me, it's really that you have a big problem. So yeah, yeah, basically that's what I do. I solve these problems." Interviewee, FR*
>
> *"… we are supporting everyone who requests for support no matter where they are from, what school they are from." Interviewee, EE*
>
> *"I would always say I support research. I ensure that researchers can work properly and effectively." Interviewee, DE*
>
> *And making a service and this is for me important personally. .... There's a service, although we have a really nice contact and exchange with our researchers and this is maybe something we have different to other universities. … I'm more kind of firefighter, so seeing what is coming in today and then I have to solve some problems" Interviewee, IT*

This was shaped by interviewees who, as leaders of Research Support Services, emphasised their role in leading, coordinating, and coaching.

> *"And then I'm a coach like, it's a matrix. I'm like a matrix head for the senior advisors. So, the leads are not their supervisors, but I am and I support all of these people who work in a similar position throughout the university. … I'm in a dream job, to be honest. I can provide and lead service that supports the academic leaders." Interviewee, FI*

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3.3. Research Managers' employers

It should be noted that the RM Roadmap survey successfully reached a diverse group of Research Managers based in diverse organisational settings.

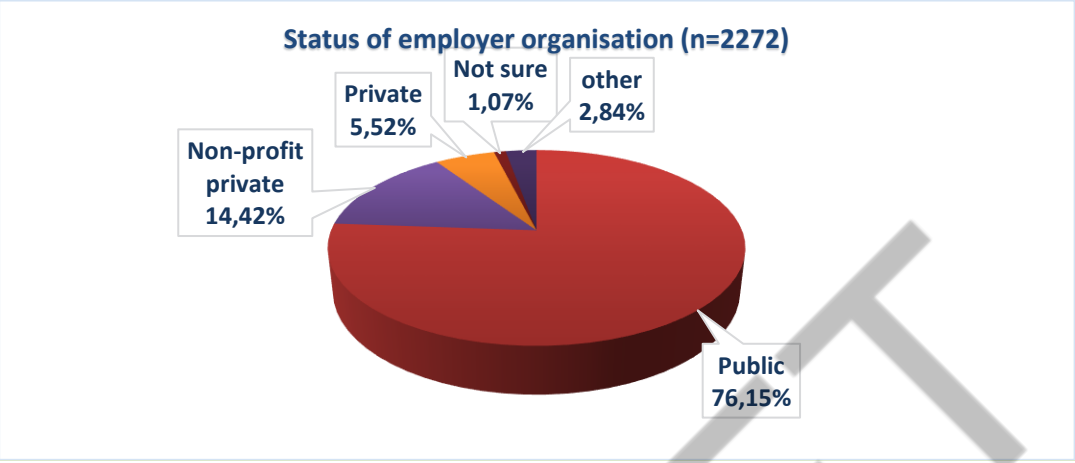


Figure 7: Status of your employer organisation

Most of the Research Managers work in public organisations (76%), while 14% work in non-profit private and 6% in private organisations or companies. The fact that the RM Roadmap survey was able to engage a broader group of Research Managers working beyond the public sphere can be considered a great achievement.

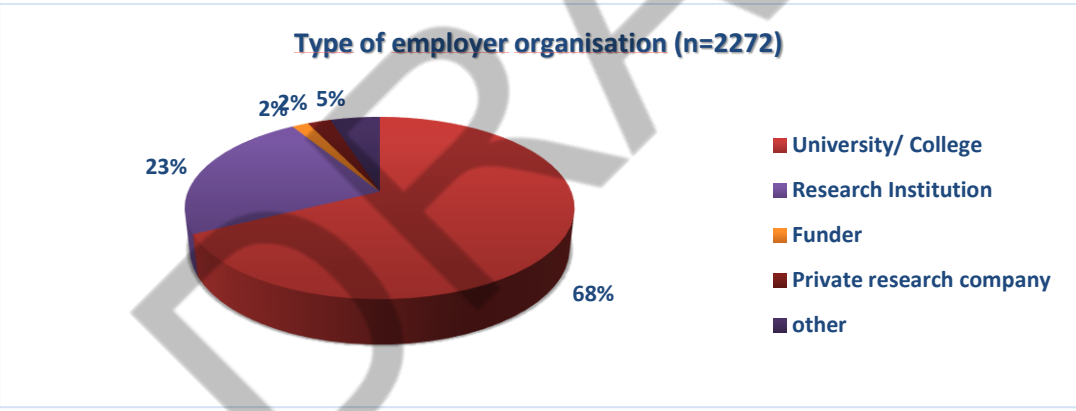


Figure 8: Type of employer organisation

This is also demonstrated by the fact that beyond universities, colleges and research institutions, an important proportion is employed at other types of organisations, such as private companies and research funders. Approximately one-third of Research Managers were affiliated with a top-tier university, while an additional 22% were employed at a research-active university and a further 7% were engaged at a primarily teaching university. Additionally, 22% of respondents were engaged in research institutes, and 2% were employed in private companies.

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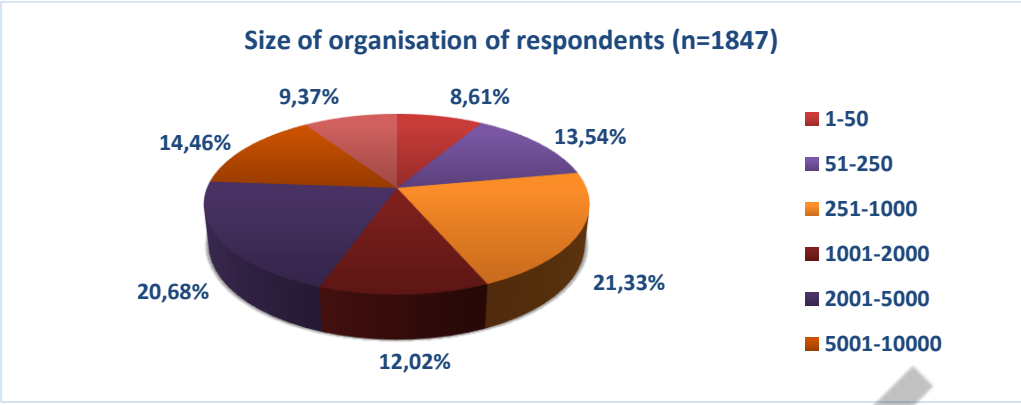


Figure 9: Size of organisation

The diversity of the employer organisations is also demonstrated by the fact that the number of employees shows a huge diversity and the different sizes are represented proportionately. Interestingly no major correlation can be found between the size of the organisation and the areas covered by Research Managers in their everyday work, so the size does not necessarily imply specification.

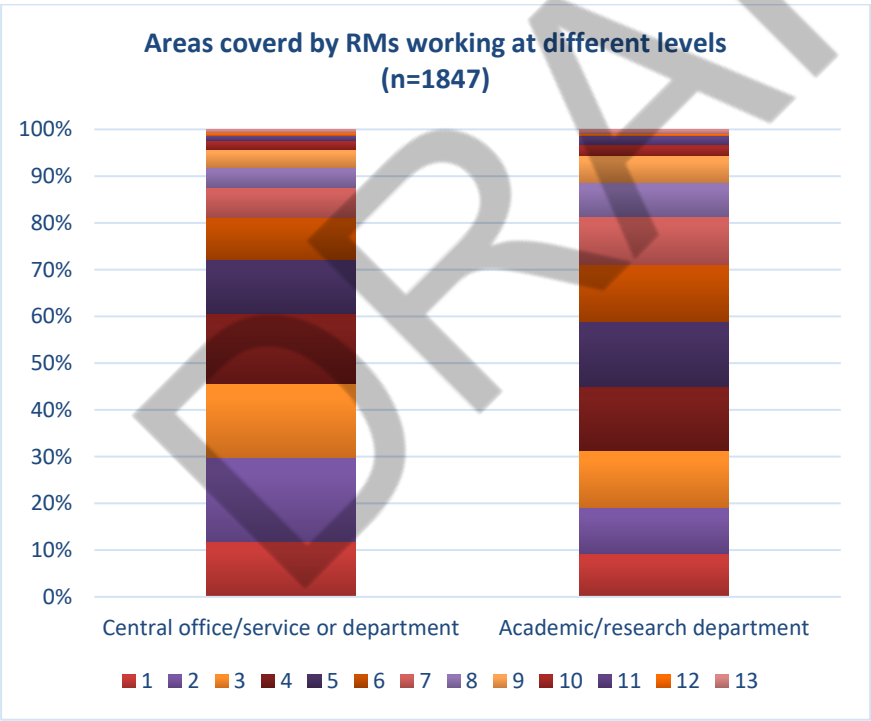


Figure 10: Number of areas of work indicated by type of institution

Most Research Managers work at the central level of their organisation (58.63%), while less than one quarter of them work at departmental level (22.78%). Research Managers working at the central level tend to cover less areas in Research Management then their colleagues at the decentral level. While 30% of Research Managers at the central level cover a maximum of 2 different RM areas, the same proportion at the departmental level can cover 3 different RM areas. This suggests that RMs at the departmental level tend to provide more diverse support, while those at the central level offer more

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focused support.

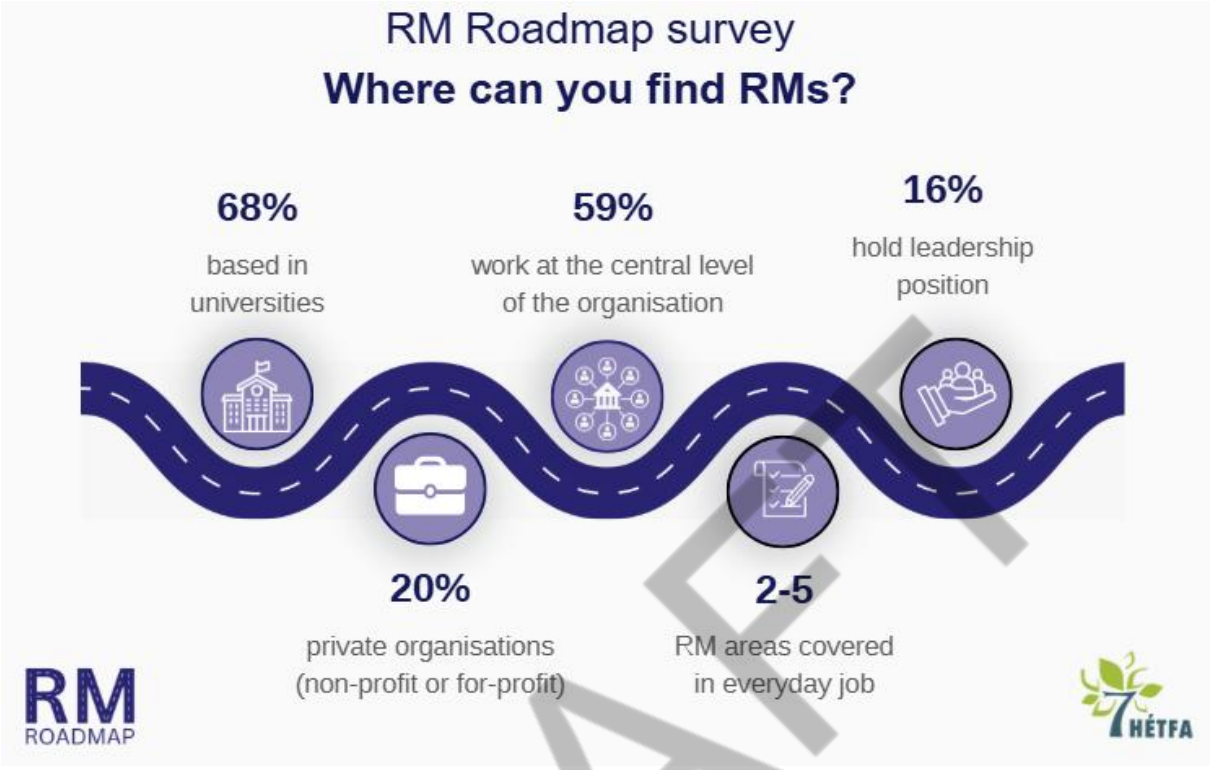


Figure 11: RM's organisational background and roles

3.4. Areas of RM

3.4.1. Survey results

Identifying the main areas of Research Management is important for defining the profession. Respondents to the RM-ROADMAP questionnaire were asked to indicate the areas of expertise within the RM profession that they deal with in their work.

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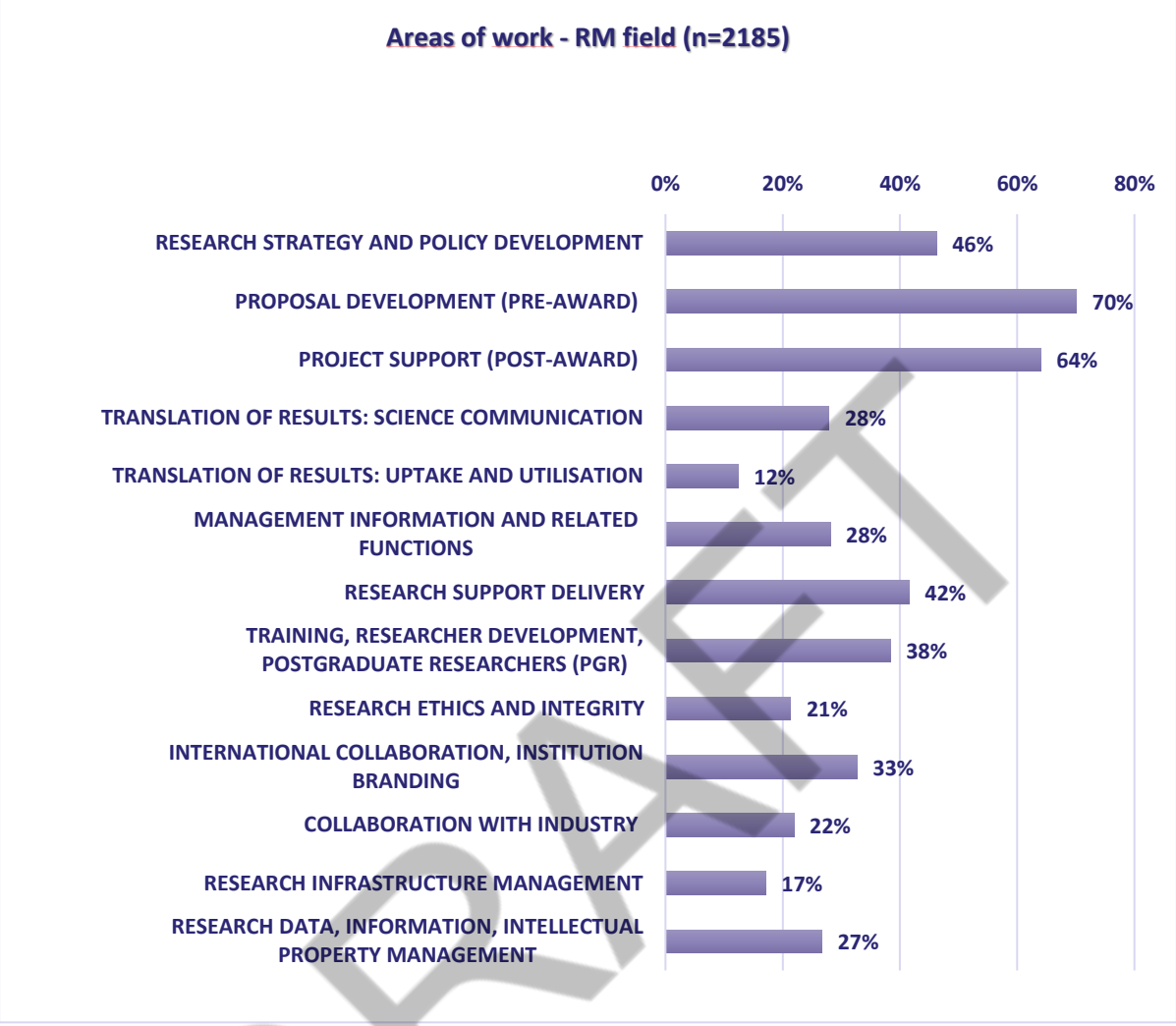


Figure 12: Areas of RM

Most respondents (70%) identified Proposal Development (Pre-Award) as one of the areas they work with. This means that the majority of RM professionals are involved in issues such as identifying and disseminating funding opportunities, general application support, research project planning, internal negotiations for project formulation, framing the writing process, formulating the content to be written, external negotiations and consortium building, costing, pricing and enforcing internal budget rules, legal aspects and providing organisational legal documents.

The second most common area is Project Support (Post-Award) (64%), which includes negotiating contracts and sub-awards, managing changes, setting up the project internally, managing the consortium and communication within it, liaising with funders, administrative support, progress monitoring, accounting, project evaluation, reporting to funders, legal advice.

However, Research Management today extends well beyond the traditional boundaries of pre-award and post-award: nearly half of the respondents work in research strategy and policy development (46%), research support delivery (42%), and around a third in training, researcher development, postgraduate researchers (38%), international cooperation, institutional branding (33%), translation of results: science communication (28%), management information and related functions (28%), research data, research information, intellectual property management.

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Research ethics and integrity, research infrastructure management, translation of results: uptake and exploitation were indicated by less respondents. This suggests that they represent smaller groups in RM or they could not identify themselves as the main target group of the survey.

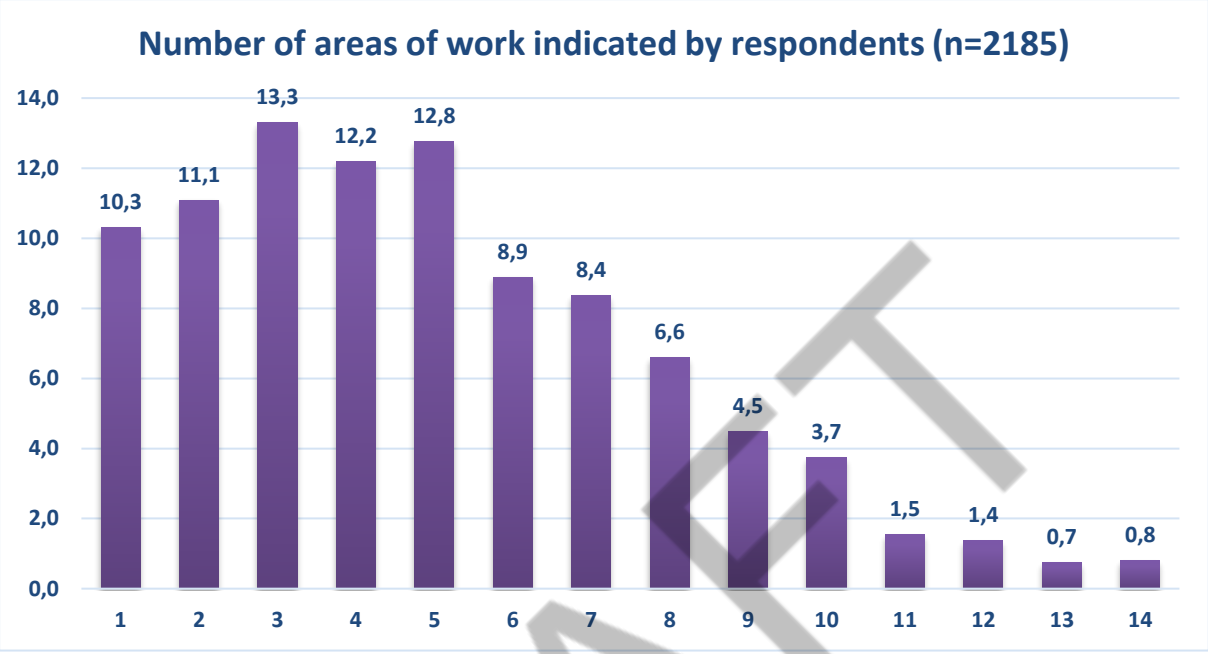


Figure 13: Number of areas of work

Only a small portion (10.3%) covers only one RM area in their daily work, while a quarter of them (24.4%) cover 2 or even 3 different RM areas, while another quarter (25%) cover 4 or even 5 different areas. On average, respondents indicated six areas. In other words, it can be said that the RM professionals who completed the questionnaire tend to work in more than one area, and their work is characterised by diversity rather than specialisation within one area. There is therefore a considerable overlap in the designation of areas, so that it was not possible to identify clear, specialised groups in the sample. Due to the way the questions were asked, respondents were not able to weigh the role of each task in their daily work. Rather, it is possible to see the variety of tasks that they can cope with individually.

3.4.2. Results of the co-creation exercise

The 2nd co-creation exercise of the RM Roadmap also aimed to gather the inputs from national and thematic communities to pave the way for the common definition. In general, several national communities highlighted that during the creation of the definition it is of utmost importance to raise awareness on several aspects influencing the profession. These aspects include **the fluid and/or flexible nature of the profession, the wide range of roles fulfilled by RMs, the constantly emerging roles (SE), the diverse and complex activities (FR), the shifting environments (EE), the blended roles of RMs (TR) or the hybrid nature of their roles (NL, IE),** meaning that there are overlaps with the roles of researchers and other parts of the administration.

The Swedish community underlined the importance of building the definition on the fact that RMs do everything beyond research. In line with that, the Danish and other Scandinavian communities also argued to include the 'support' role in the definition.

In some countries it was also underlined that many areas are not yet mature, therefore it is not possible to find professionals being solely responsible for that field, but in general, RMs have to deal with them.

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The contributions of the consensus documents showed two tendencies: first, some national communities argued for the separation of certain subareas; second, most of the national communities gathered additional areas which are also covered by Research Managers.

First, the **following sub-areas were mentioned as having the relevance to be considered as separate areas** of Research Management:

- **financial management and advising**;
- **legal advising, support and contract management,** as well as **ensuring compliance**;
- **management of and advising on open science** (related or not to the library services);
- **AI and emerging technologies**;
- **collaboration with other stakeholders;**
- **impact management**.

Secondly, the outcomes of the consensus documents suggest that

- **management of human resources** should be the overarching category including the training, career development of researchers and RMs as well as taking care of mental health;
- **innovation management and business development** should be merged and should replace the existing categories of "Translation of Results: Uptake and Utilisation" and "Collaboration with the Industry".

3.4.3. Findings of the interviews

The diversity of topics handled by Research Support Offices were underlined by the interviewees. The exact areas that one office is covering depends mainly on the size of the RPO, the size of the RSO, the scientific fields covered by the RPO, and on their "appetite" in national and international research funding. Delineating strong boundaries can hardly happen, however.

> *"So, this happened in our in our institution at the end we just had to deal with all the topics. So Open Access, then we had data management and ethics and we have. Gender. So who wrote the gender equality plan? It was, you know, and yeah. And and. Uh, and I try to have at least one person covering these topics because we need it in the project writing. So I had lease and writing the data management things and ethics, and now I have another colleague doing this. But at the end we can't be expert in everything." Interviewee, IT*

Strongly related to the diversity of RM areas, two important messages should be highlighted from the interviews. The first is the importance of a strong continuum from the moment when a research idea is born through carrying out the research project and then exploiting and valorising the research results. Although RM professionals providing support at different stages of the research project lifecycle may be at varying levels of maturity – from self-identification to full recognition – they should be aware that they are indispensable elements of the same ecosystem. Therefore, strong collaboration among them and a continuum in the field of research support is inevitable. This is what the interviewee from Slovenia referred to, based on examples that he learnt in the US.

> *"…we visited - it was in Colorado - one Energy Institute and they were talking about TRL0, TRL0, TRL0. What … is TRL0? And then [colleagues at the institute] explained to me that basically every idea, and it's basically the idea that a researcher has. And he wants to even, even before he wants to talk about it, not even ask for grant or something like that. He has to come to the tech transfer office to validate the idea from the very beginning. Where the idea is leading, what he wants, how it looks like and it's more or less regarding also commercialisation but more or less the focus on protection of IP. So, basically, that's the idea … has to go through their [TT] office before everything is publicly now one way or another.*

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> *…my perfect world would be that actually the project support and tech transfer really work together when it comes to commercialization when it come to IP, OK, the project support they call the tech transfer options they have them and so on. And we have organised it like this here now. When it comes to IP, when it comes to know simple things. So, for example, when you have a project, you have this not grant contract, but consortium contract. Yeah. Consortium agreement. OK. All those clauses dealing with the, I don't know, the IP, they just send it to me and then and I checked them out and I took the research. This is basically one way how to communicate. But yeah, otherwise this communication should be much deeper, I think. If you really want to make an impact." Interviewee, SI*

This was also highlighted by other interviewees, who mentioned a lack of expertise in knowledge and innovation management, data management, as well as Intellectual Property as a current gap of knowledge in their office.

> *"…we lack some expertise in intellectual property approach, but we are also mainly humanities university. ... We have one colleague only, but who is not so available. She has not only support for applications to do, she has only concrete issues, uh, when projects are implemented or something like that. And maybe data management. Data management is also something that they don't know well, we are not also specialists of that." Interviewee, EE*

> *"There's one other aspect I think which is missing in our office, but which is also covered in a neighbouring division. That is business development for innovative projects and for, you know people preparing for funding spin-off companies or something. We do have a basic service for that. But like the hard skills to actually do business development is not something that my team would be able to cover." Interviewee, AT*

Another important field of support which is getting more and more relevant for RSOs according to the interviews, is the strategic support provided by RMs to institutional leadership. This can take several forms but definitely underlines the added value that RMs can bring into defining institutional research strategies, given the fact that they are constantly following EU and national policy development.

> *"I'm doing a lot of strategical work also, for example feeding into the national roadmap for research infrastructures, and supporting her in everything that is the Rectors' Conference." Interviewee, CH*

> *"So, my people do not work so much with the researchers, but with the faculty leadership providing strategic support and this type of administrative support that relates to strategic decision making or the operation management…" Interviewee, FI*

> *"Now, yeah, we, we, we constantly have to follow up on with the new development on, on, on the policy level, which is quite time-consuming and and this is also something maybe other institutions to have a more. Research strategy department. We don't have it, but this is something I see that we do a lot of more than a lot more than management. So this strategy research strategy is I think an issue." Interviewee, IT*

> *"We have about 400 projects running within the funding scheme and well, you may say I'm more of the administrative head of the funding scheme, but I also work closely with my colleague who is responsible for the whole strategy department. And you always have to develop new funding programmes at some point, so it's more conceptual work and I do that too. I think it encompasses both sides, the rather administrative work and the conceptual work." Interviewee, DE*

Two topics related to the additional fields of RM suggested during the co-creation exercise were also revealed during the interviews: first, the importance of legal knowledge; second, the issue of AI skills. When talking about the areas covered by RSOs, three interviewees mentioned that while they lack

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colleagues with legal background, they need to have good working relations with the RPOs legal department. However, colleagues in these legal departments do not have an in-depth understanding of EU or national funding requirements in the field of contracts or legal obligations. This knowledge is owned by Research Managers, who generally just ask about really specific legal issues.

> *"…we definitely need is legal knowledge and people who review contracts from a legal perspective. Because we do that content wise and management wise and we give advice as how to organise the project. But I do not have legal people in my team, which does not matter really because we have a very close cooperation with our legal department and they are very experienced." Interviewee, AT*

> *"…so, we are trying to complement each other with the legal services…" Interviewee, IT*

On the other hand, other institutions have legal experts as part of research support services, covering all legal issues related to the entire project lifecycle, including IP rights.

> *"…let's say around 10 in all legal issues, including IP and transfer and patents, etcetera,…" Interviewee, FR*

Four interviewees addressed the topic of Artificial Intelligence as an emerging field. According to their opinion, it is not only urgent to develop skills to use AI tools by professionals, but it is also important to reflect on the possible changes that the use of AI can cause on the future of the profession.

> *"[my concern is] more to the future of my space, because the… what I'm getting in terms of feedback is, is that we are not going to add any more people because it's easier to add the AI tools." Interviewee, IE*

3.5. Definition

All these insights and data revealed important information for the formulation of an overarching definition of Research Management at European level. As a conclusion, the following definition has been developed and proposed as a result of a co-creation exercise during the elaboration of RM Comp:

Research Managers enable, facilitate and support the performance of research in all its applications.

Research Managers hold generalist or specialised roles within the research and innovation ecosystem.

Research Managers are based in all types of research performing organisations, including public and private universities, research institutes, research funding organisations, medical institutions, NGOs, companies, public authorities, and so on.

Based on the policy developments, the results of recent investigations as well as a Europe-wide co-creation in the frame of ERA Action 17 and RM Roadmap, **we initiate an inclusive and flexible approach enabling the reflection on constantly emerging fields and job profiles** when defining Research Management. Thus, Research Managers can work as research policy advisers, pre-award and post-award officers, project managers, impact managers, science communicators, financial managers and advisors, legal advisors, contract and compliance managers, data stewards, open science officers, research infrastructure managers and operators, equality, diversity and inclusion advisors, research ethics advisors, knowledge and technology transfer officers, innovation managers and business developers, knowledge brokers, human resource managers in research, AI experts, and leaders of research facilitation offices, etc.

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Professional development and career path

Professional development and career path are key components of any profession. Similarly to the other components, RM shows diverse maturity levels in this field as well. This chapter aims to give an overview on the current state-of-the-art, starting with the educational background of RMs, their routes to RM and then elaborates different aspects of career progression.

3.6. Education and experience of Research Managers

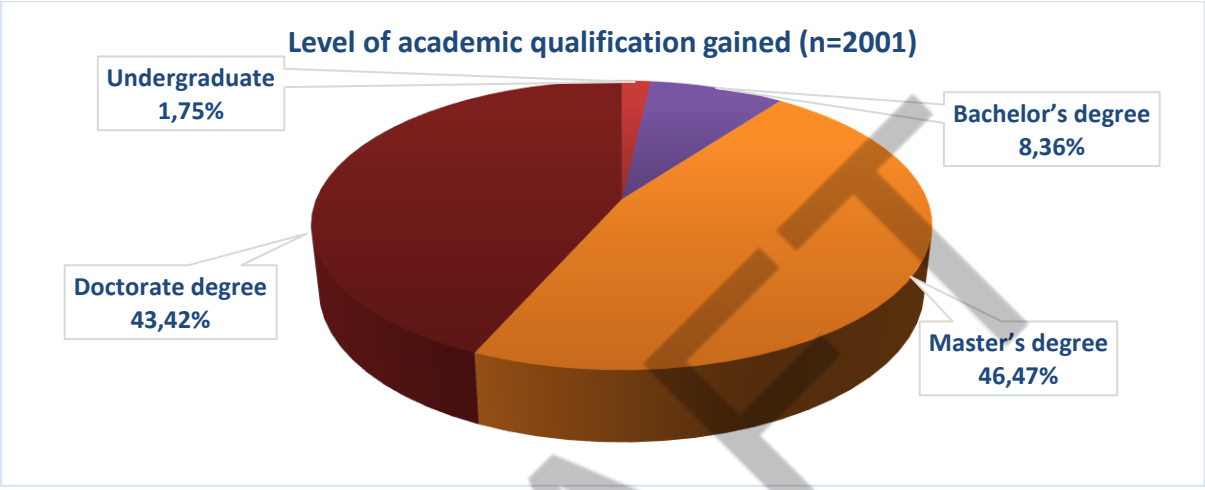


Figure 14: Level of academic qualification gained

The questionnaire also sought to ascertain the educational background and qualifications of RM professionals. As mentioned above, the level of education of the respondents is high, with 43% holding a PhD and 46% a Master's degree.

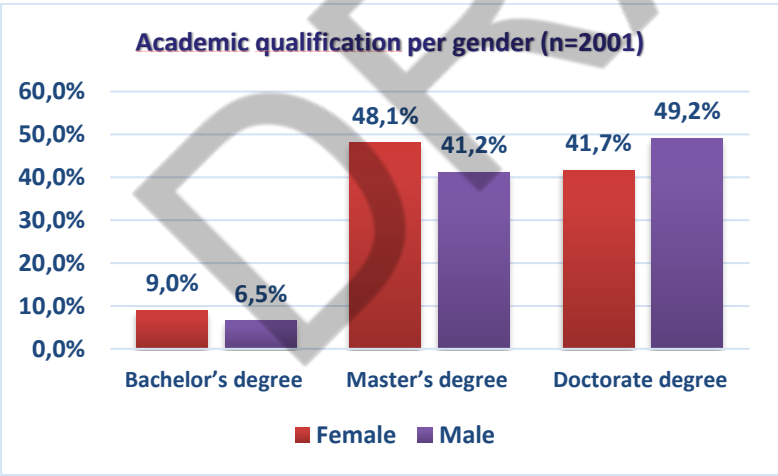


Figure 15: Academic qualification per gender

Significant differences cannot be found between women and men, though slightly more men hold doctorate degree and slightly more women have Master's degree. Research Managers have diverse educational backgrounds.

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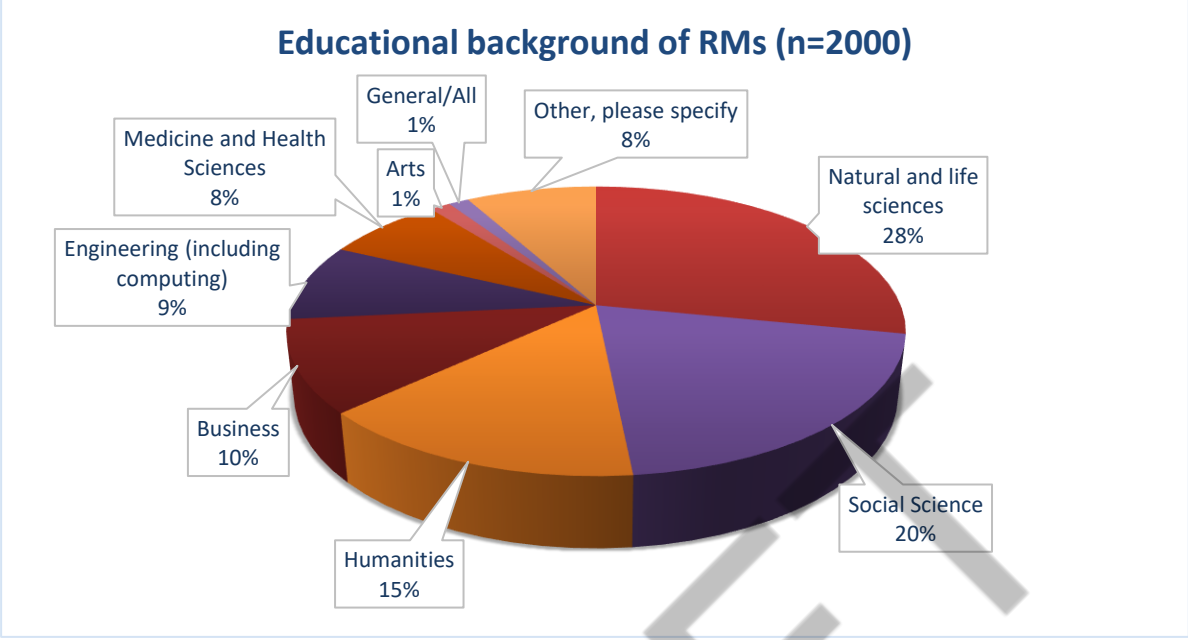


Figure 16: Educational background of RMs

28% of respondents have a degree in natural and life sciences, but there is also a significant proportion of respondents from social sciences (20%), 15% have a degree in humanities, 10% in economics and 9% in engineering.

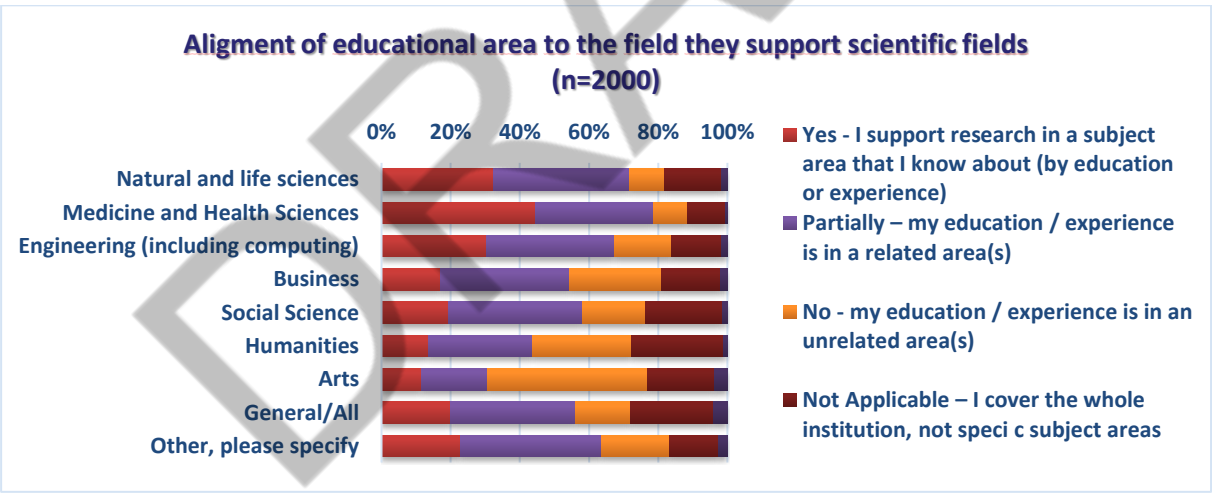


Figure 17: Responses according to the educational areas of respondents to the question "Is your education background aligned to the subject area(s) that you support in?"

The extent to which RM professionals provide support within their own fields of research was also examined. The majority support research in an area in which they have some expertise. 25% of respondents support research entirely in an area in which they have expertise; a further 38% support research partly in an area that is in a related field, 18% support research in an unrelated field, and 19% do cross-cutting work that covers several fields or the whole institution.

RM professionals in the fields of medicine and health sciences were the most likely to express support for research in their respective areas of study, with 45% of respondents indicating such a position. This phenomenon was confirmed by some interviewees too:

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> *"So, we are from life sciences, health and natural life sciences and it is fine for us I think so it is a general - as I can say - competence, some kind of competence because we are from the field. For example, we graduated from the field that we are working on, where we are supporting." Interviewee, PL*

In the natural and life sciences and engineering, approximately one-third of respondents similarly expressed support for research in their own fields. In other fields, they have either partial or no relation to the scientific area they support. On the other hand, Research Managers covering the whole institutional profile are coming primarily, but not exclusively, from Humanities and Social sciences.

It is important to note that 64.81% of Research Managers do not have professional accreditation in Research Management, illustrating the emerging nature of the profession. Only 10% accomplished either Master or PhD studies with an emphasis on Research Management. Regarding the certificate programmes, 5.41% accomplished the EARMA Certificate in Research Management (CRM), and almost 3% one of the ARMA certificate programmes. This proves the emerging nature of the profession and, despite the fact that RMs are highly educated, they continuously do learn on-the-job.

3.7. Routes to RM

There are numerous pathways that may lead an individual to pursue a career in Research Management. The career path is shaped by a multitude of factors; and the RM profession is still relatively unknown.

3.7.1. Survey results

In the questionnaire, respondents were asked what role the listed factors played in their decision to move into a Research Management position.

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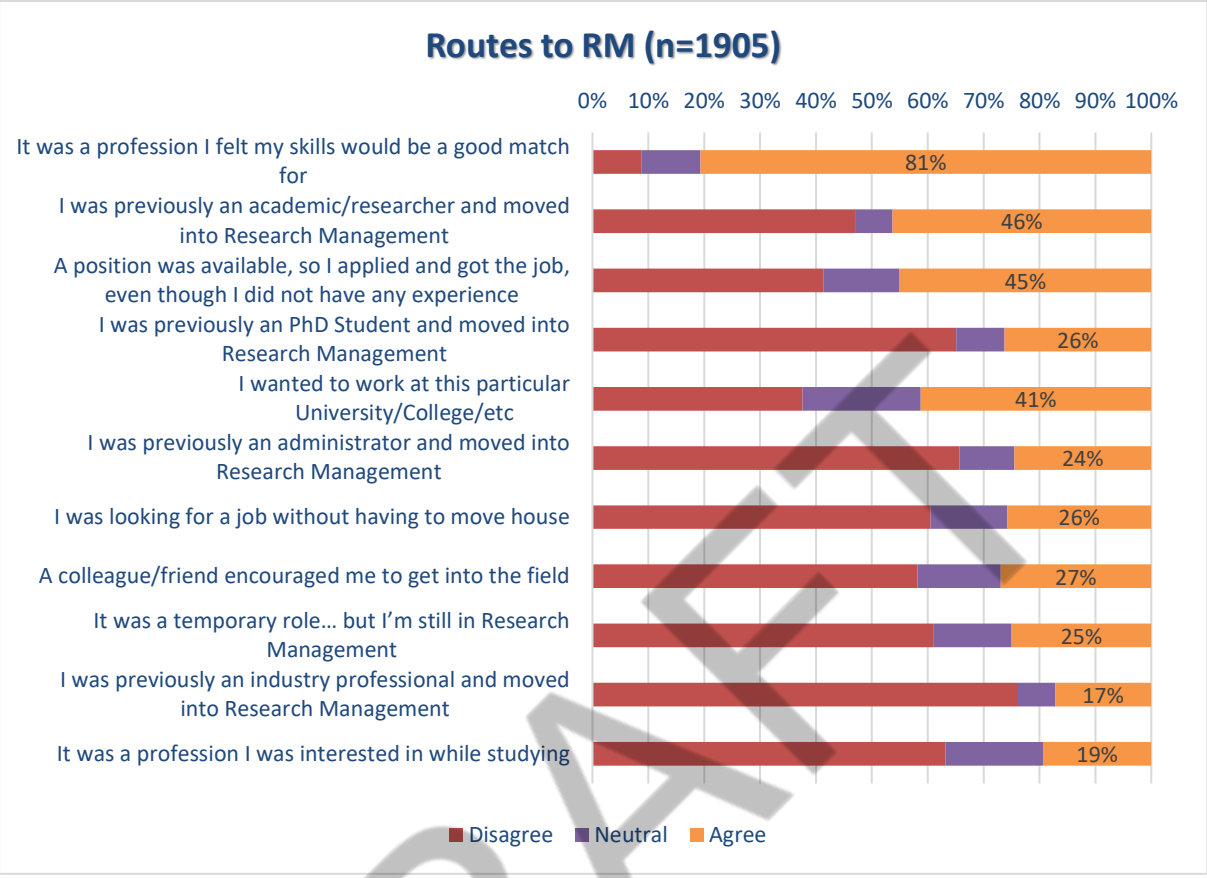


Figure 18: Responses to the question "How important were the following factors to move into Research Management?"

Most respondents agreed that RM is a profession for which they feel their skills were a good match (81% agreed to some extent that this factor played a role in their choice of RM career).

Approximately half of the respondents were previously engaged in academic or research activities and subsequently transitioned into a role in Research Management (46%); or the availability of the position (45%) played a role in their decision. For some, the RM job opened the door to working at a particular university/college/etc (41%). In addition, being a former PhD student and moving into Research Management (26%), looking for a job without having to move (26%), being a former administrator and moving into Research Management (24%), and having a colleague's/friend's encouragement to get into the field (27%) were factors that contributed to the career path into RM. A mere 19% of respondents indicated that they had been interested in the field during their university studies. **In other words, it is uncommon for RM professionals to have engaged in conscious preparation for the RM field during their studies.**

The experience of the interviewees on the previous phase of the research also corroborates the assertion that the field is largely unknown to them during their studies and that they are introduced to the RM profession at some point in their careers, whether consciously or not. This fact confirms the developing nature of the profession and the relative unavailability of graduate programmes in Research Management.

The results of this study are strongly echoed in Chapter 2.3 of the Emerald Handbook of Research Management and Administration Around the World (Dutta, Oliveira, Fischer, & Kerridge, 2024), which similarly demonstrates that entry into Research Management is rarely the result of a deliberate career

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plan, but rather shaped by circumstantial opportunities and a perceived alignment between personal skillsets and the demands of the profession. In both studies, a majority of respondents report having applied to RMA positions without prior experience or specific training in the field, with decisions driven by practical factors such as job availability, the desire to remain in a research environment, or life circumstances such as caregiving responsibilities. Notably, both sets of findings underscore the consistent role of transferable competencies – particularly communication, organisational, and learning skills – as decisive in shaping entry into RMA, while simultaneously highlighting the field's low visibility during higher education and the limited presence of formal preparatory pathways.

3.7.2. Findings of the interviews

The interviews from this phase provided further details on this topic, especially on the transition pathways between research and Research Management. Interviewees with extensive experience in RM explained that this profession is a valuable alternative for those who wants to stay in science but do not have opportunity or motivation to pursue a scientific career. According to their experiences, this phenomenon is highly useful for the profession itself, as those highly educated colleagues who understand how research works end up in Research Management and enrich a scarce talent pool of RM professionals.

> *"…we have a lot of young, brilliant scientists who want or who need to leave science, academia because after their first postdoc or second postdoc, they understand that they have no chance for a professorship or they understand that they won't or don't want to continue inside academia because they have kids, or they want to have kids and they want to have a broader research environment and just research. So, there are plenty of young, brilliant people with a PhD, very often with two or three languages, four languages with international background who want to leave science and they apply for our job," Interviewee, CH*

Several interviewees noted that women who are planning to have children or already have them often face significant challenges in building an academic career. In this context, positions in Research Management are seen as a viable and sometimes more accommodating alternative. This observation also invites reflection on how academic career paths should better support diverse life circumstances and offer greater flexibility, especially for those balancing caregiving responsibilities with professional ambitions.

> *"I am in [name of the RPO] since 2000 so and I started. It was supposed to start as a researcher, but then I got my kids and …and I switched to Research Management in 2008." Interviewee, IT*

Rarely, it might also happen that people return from RM to research, as it was explained by the interviewee from Austria.

> *"So, some of these people have been in my office for 15 to 20 years. … but I also have to admit we have lost a few people who after a while did turn to a scientific career again. For some of them it was maybe an attempt or like a bridge? But really, they aspire to a scientific career. They went back to that scientific career once an opportunity was there." Interviewee, AT*

3.8. Positions and job titles

The survey included dedicated questions to gather an overview about the positions and jobs covered by Research Managers.

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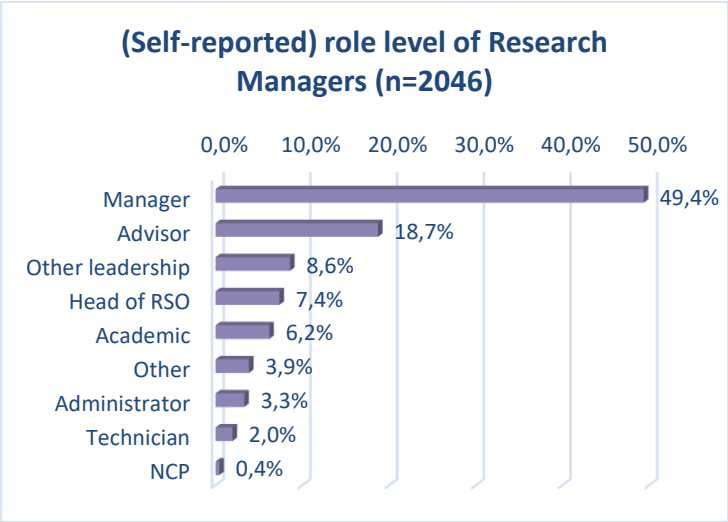


Figure 19: Role level of RMs

Almost half of Research Managers (49.4%) reported holding managerial positions, while 18.7% identified as advisors (internal or external), 3.3% as administrators and 2.0% as technicians. 16% declared holding leadership positions, either by leading the Research Support Office or having leadership positions within their RPO, such as Head of Research, Vice Dean, etc. Compared to previous surveys, no significant differences regarding gender in the different positions can be found.



Figure 20: Diversity of job titles

The emerging nature of the profession is also proven by the diversity of job titles. Respondents inserted more than 1000 different job titles, while the most common job titles are project manager and research manager. We notice a lack of consistency at both national and institutional levels.

The diversity of job titles was also noticed during the interviews. Interviewees mentioned several different titles which are used in the RPOs, including scientific collaborator, administrative collaborator, lab manager, (EU) project manager, EU project assistant, team assistant, academic consultant, etc. Almost of all of them confirmed that there are several factors which influence the job titles used, and they listed several obstacles that make it difficult to change them, i.e. the existence or the lack of national catalogues of professions, specificities of the institutional set-up, and the broad

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diversity of responsibilities covered by colleagues.

3.9. Employment conditions

Employment conditions were investigated from different angles in the survey, but also brough up during the interviews.

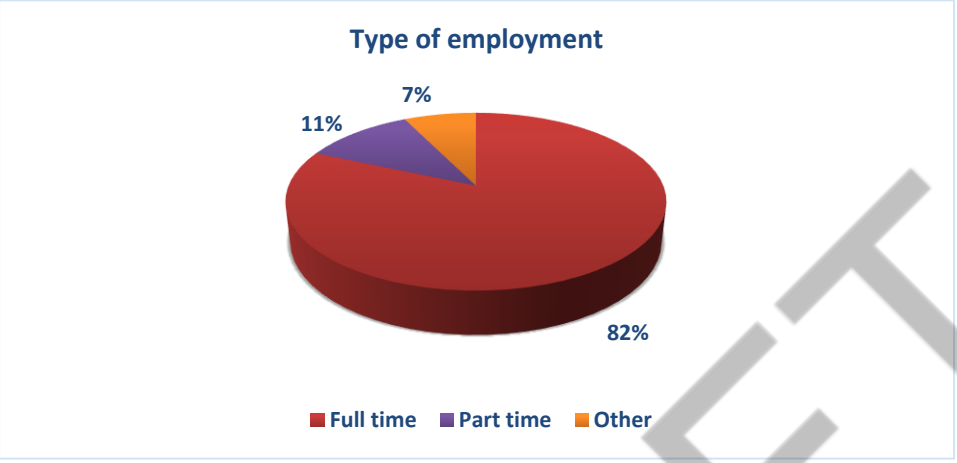


Figure 21: Type of employment

Compared to previous surveys, the results indicate a positive trend in the employment conditions and professional characteristics of Research Managers. The type of employment was grouped into categories by working hours, the nature of the job and the contractual circumstances. Full time employment is the most common among the respondents (82%); only about one-tenth of the respondents has a part-time job contract.

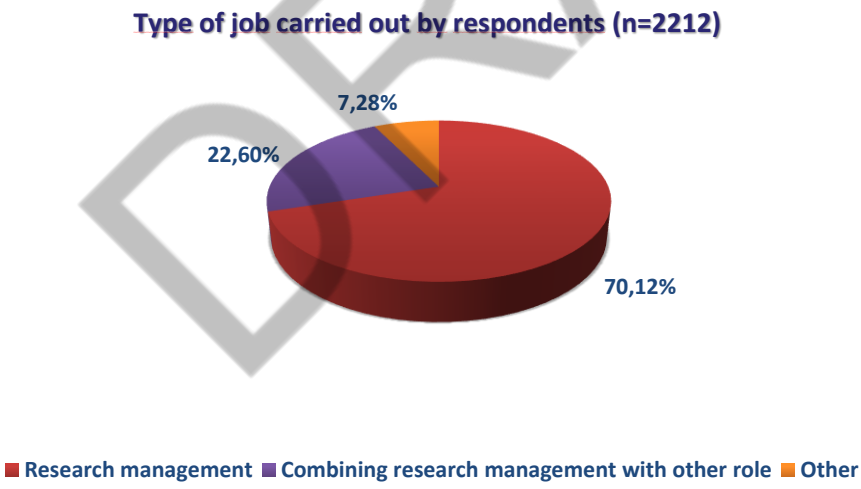


Figure 22: Type of job

About 70% of the respondents were working only on Research Management tasks and about fifth of them were combining this role with something else.

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Table 6: How would you define your current employment?

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Full-time Research Manager	1,389	62.8%
Part-time Research Manager	162	7.3%
Full-time, combining Research Manager and research/academic role	199	9.0%
Full-time, combining Research Manager and another (not research/academic) role	217	9.8%
Part-time, combining Research Manager and research/academic role	35	1.6%
Part-time, combining Research Manager and another (not research/academic) role	49	2.2%
Self-employed	11	0.5%
Retired	4	0.2%
Currently not active in this role	20	0.9%
Not sure, none of these options seem to describe my role. Please specify:	126	5.7%
Total	2,212	100.0%

In terms of employment, the majority of the sample identified themselves as full-time Research Managers (63%). Another 19% of the respondents were employed full time but combined Research Management with other roles, 9% with academic roles and almost 10% with non-academic roles. A total of 7% of respondents indicated that they were employed on a part-time basis as Research Managers, while a further 4% were employed on a part-time basis and concurrently assumed a managerial role in addition to other academic or non-academic roles. It is notable that self-employment and other forms of employment were relatively uncommon.

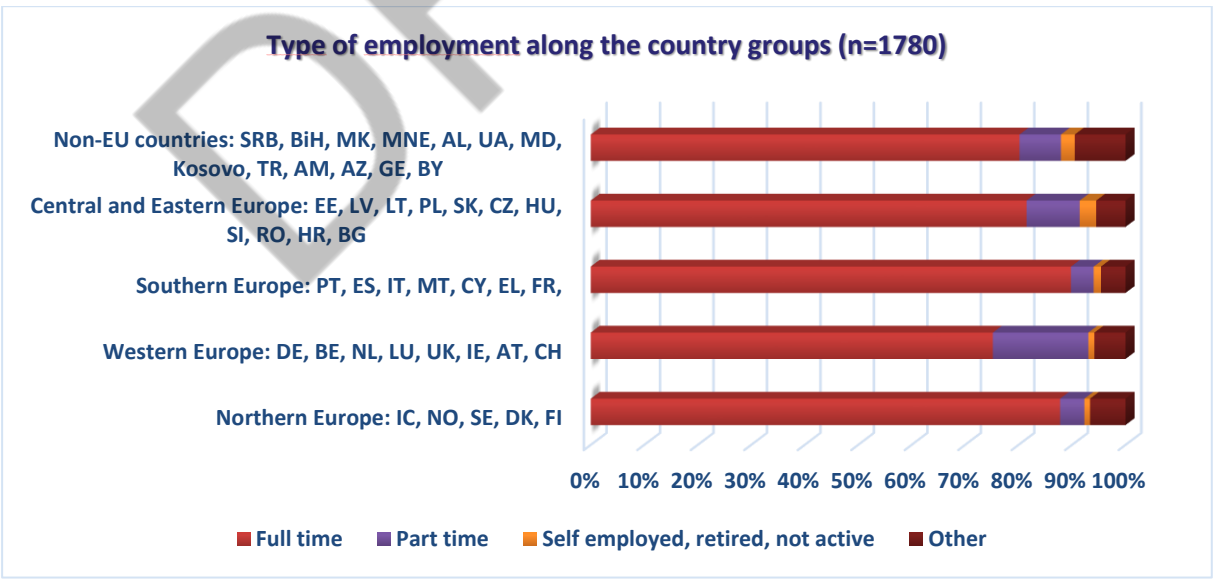


Figure 23: Type of employment along the country groups

Furthermore, there are minor regional variations in employment patterns. Full-time employment is

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more prevalent in Northern and Southern Europe (88% and 90% compared to 82% for the total sample). Conversely, in Eastern Europe and outside the EU, self-employment and other forms are slightly more common (3% and 6% respectively compared to 2% of the total sample); while the share of part-time workers is higher in Western Europe. Furthermore, part-time work is more prevalent among those with less work experience (12% for those with less than five years' experience), while it is less common among those with more than 20 years' experience.

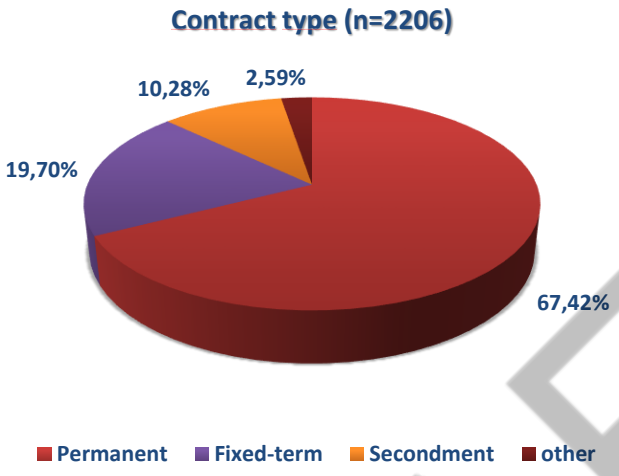


Figure 24: Contract type

The most common contract type is permanent contract (74%); 22% of the respondents have fixed-term contract and 11% have secondment. These figures suggest that RPOs tend to invest in employing Research Managers less and less on a project basis, but rather on a long-term basis. This was also confirmed by the interviewees: in most cases, the funding of the RSO is covered by the RPO and most of their colleagues hold long-term contracts.

> *"…our office, our services are paid, let's say 80%, 70% of the services are paid via the university budget … yeah. So, these FTEs, this is around perhaps 5 FTEs, these are stable." Interviewee, CH*

It also happens that overheads from research grants are collected by the central services to cover their operation.

> *"It's more or less it's covered by the overheads and the contracts. Yes, so all our overheads except a small part is centralised and kept to fund these offices and there are also some grants." Interviewee, FR*

In those cases where permanent positions are limited, interviewees are actively working toward securing more stable, long-term positions.

> *"When we created this, uh, project coordinator network we made a kind of, uh, survey at the same time, and one point we discovered is that these people in average stay two years at university. …And it's a real issue…" Interviewee, EE*

The reason why it is an issue is related to the huge investments needed to train new colleagues, as it is explained by the interviewee from Italy:

> *"I don't want to hire someone for two years, three years and then leaving to another institution and so on because there's a lot of investment since we are still doing this learning on the job, training on the job." Interviewee, IT*

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3.10. Working conditions

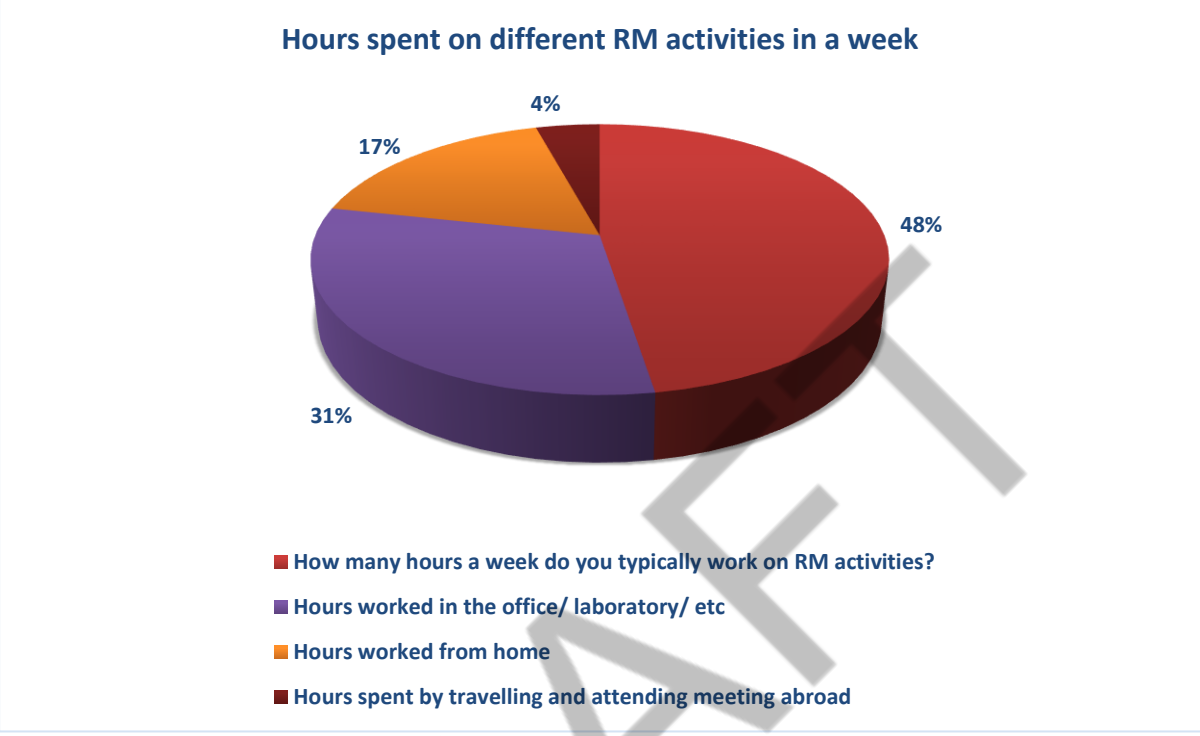


Figure 25: Hours spent on different RM activities in a week

The questionnaire also looked at the average time spent by respondents on various Research Management tasks. The average number of hours per week worked by respondents is 37, with an average of 24 hours spent in the office or laboratory, 13.5 hours spent working from home, and an average of 3 hours per week spent travelling and attending meetings abroad. **Working from home is a common practice among RM professionals, with 86% of them reporting that they also work in this way**. Furthermore, 60% of respondents regularly spend time travelling and attending meetings abroad. On average, they spend 1-1.5 days abroad per month.

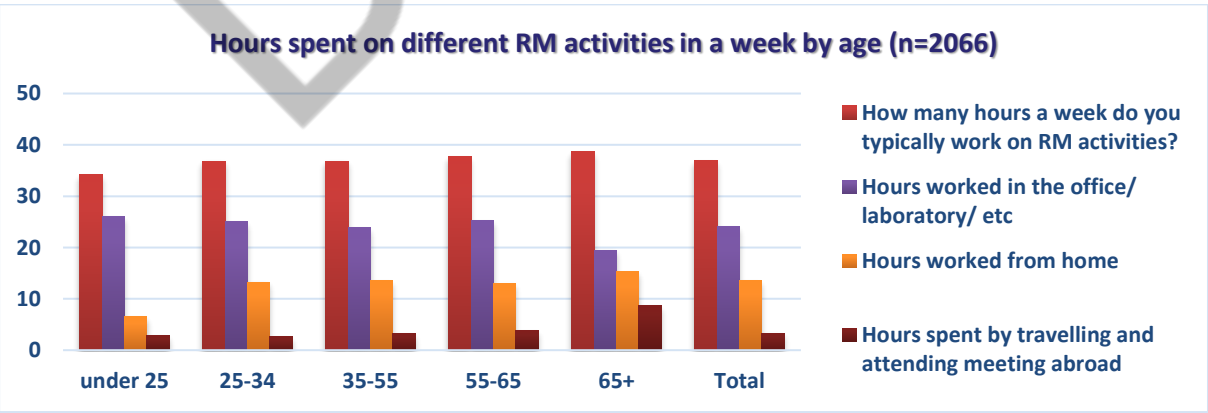


Figure 26: Hours spent per week on different RM activities, by age

In relation to age, the under-25 age group spends on average less time working from home each week,

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while the older age groups spend the majority of their time working from home. However, it is important to note that the youngest and oldest age groups are underrepresented in the sample. Therefore, no significant conclusions can be drawn for these groups.

There are no significant differences in the time spent by men and women working in different locations. However, female employees do tend to spend slightly more time working from home than their male counterparts. Nevertheless, the majority of time is still spent at the workplace, with Research Managers averaging more than 24 hours per week.

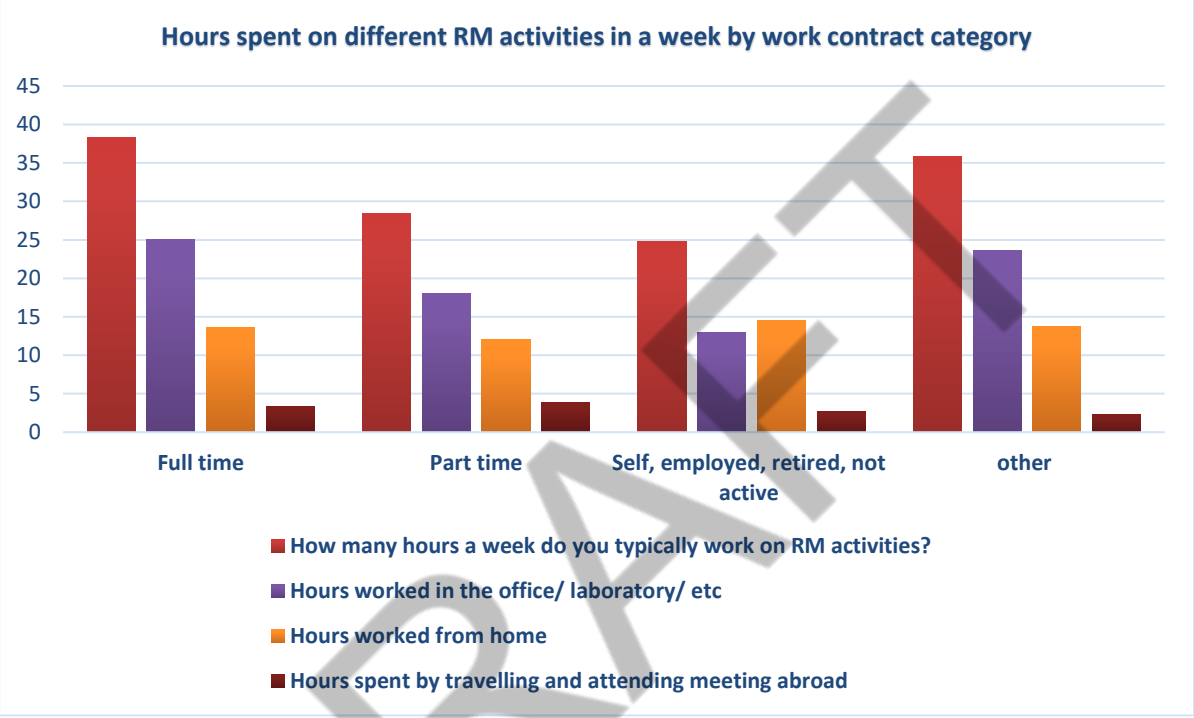


Figure 27: Hours spent per week on different RM activities, by work contract category

Research Managers reported a diverse range of weekly time-use patterns, which were influenced by their employment contracts. By definition, full-time respondents dedicate a greater proportion of their time to RM activities than part-time respondents. Additionally, they spend more time in the office and laboratory. However, the time spent by working from home is not significantly different from that of part-time employees. Part-time workers also undertake slightly more travel for meetings held abroad.

The questionnaire included a question on overtime for RM duties. In relation to overtime, the survey aimed to determine the percentage of respondents who had experience with working overtime. An additional goal was to determine if and how Research Managers were compensated for overtime work.

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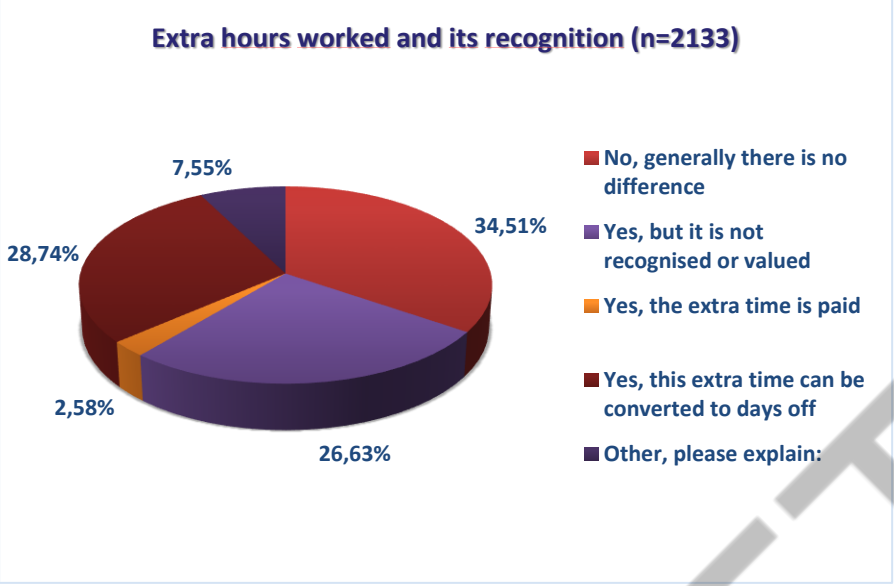


Figure 28: Extra hours worked and its recognition

The data indicates **that over a third of respondents (35%) have not experienced significant overtime** outside the limits of their formal contract. However, a notable proportion of respondents have not only worked overtime, but **have not received any form of compensation from their employer for the overtime they have worked (27%)**. A total of 29% of the respondents are able to convert their overtime into days off. Furthermore, there is a smaller proportion of respondents (3%) who receive financial compensation for the overtime they have worked.

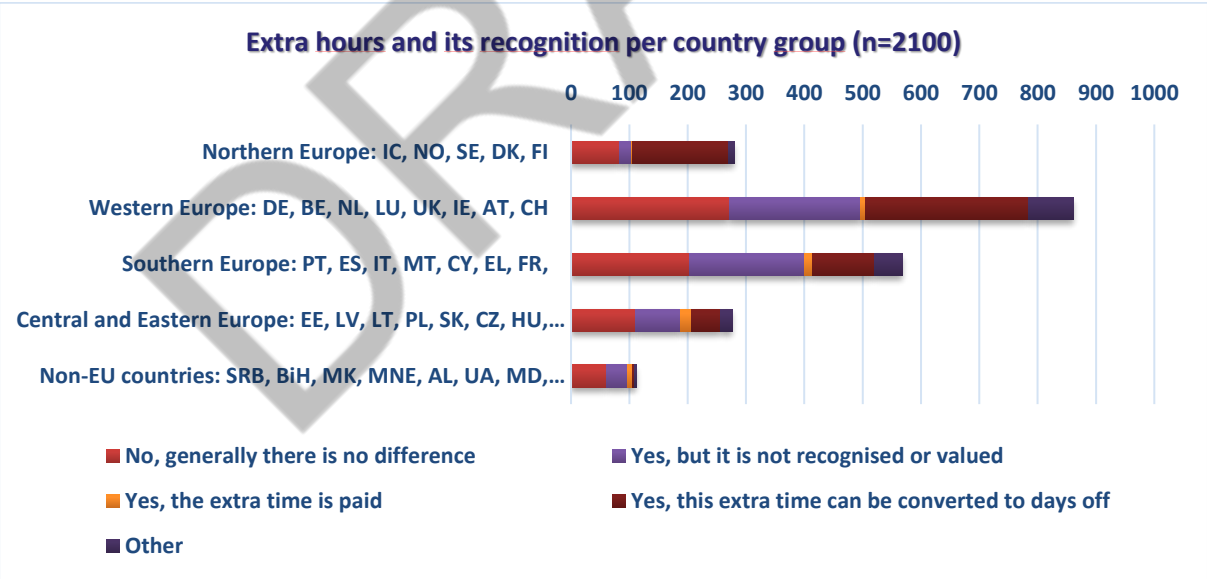


Figure 29: Responses per country groups to the question "If there is a difference between the total weekly working hours does your employer recognize and/or value this in some way?"

The data indicate disparities in the prevalence of overtime across regions. A lower incidence of overtime was observed in Central and Eastern Europe and in European countries not belonging to the EU. However, in these regions and in Southern Europe, instances of uncompensated overtime were most prevalent. No significant differences were observed by gender, age or type of employment

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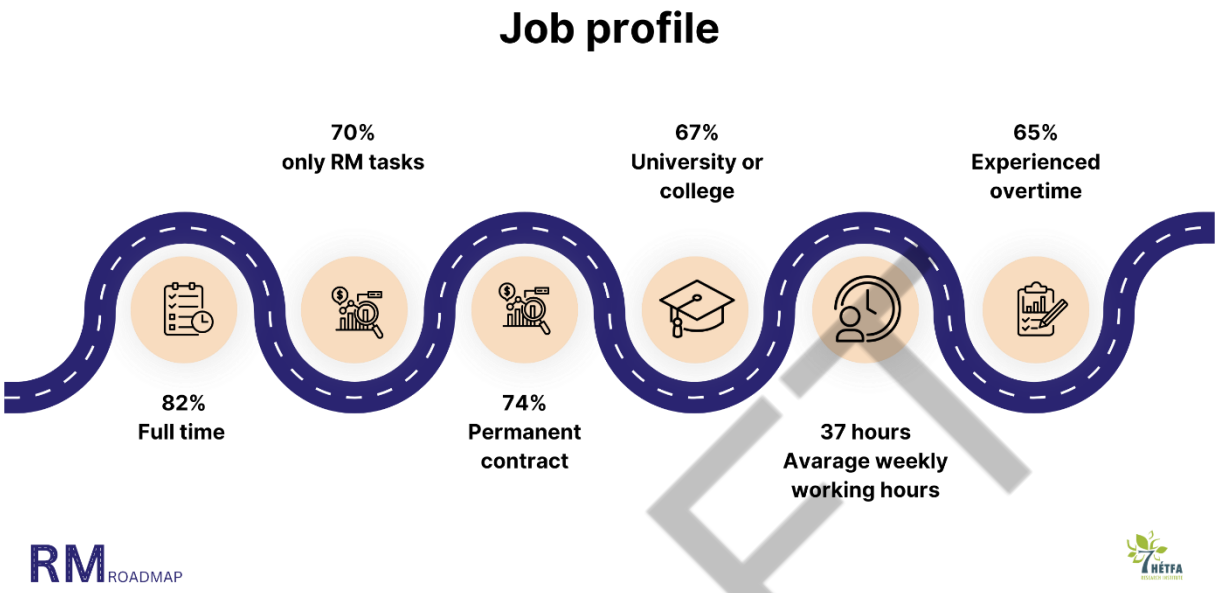


Figure 30: Overview of RM job profile

3.11. Reasons to stay in RM

Based on the previous RAAAP survey, the questionnaire aimed to investigate the factors motivating RMs to stay in the profession.

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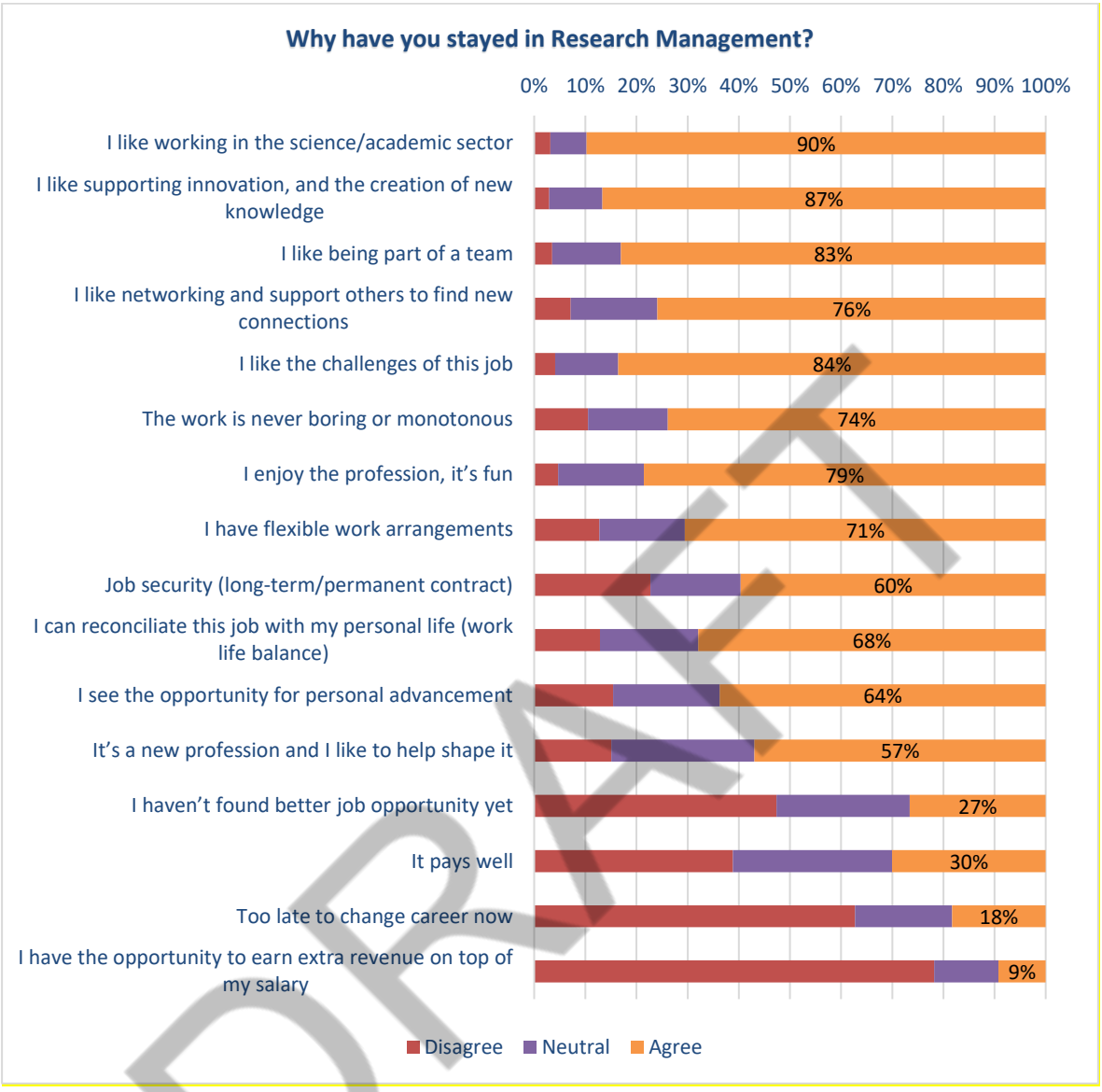


Figure 31: Responses to the question "Why have you stayed in Research Management?"

The two most commonly cited motivational factors were related to the perceived attractiveness of the academic field. **The majority of respondents (90%) indicated a strong motivation to work in the science/academic sector, with a significant proportion (87%) also expressing a desire to support innovation and create new knowledge**. This was followed by motivational factors related to teamwork, working with people and networking (I like being part of a team: 83%; I like networking and helping others make new connections: 76%). This was followed by the diverse challenges of the day-to-day tasks that make the RM job varied and not boring (I like the challenges of this job; The work is never boring or monotonous). This was followed by factors related to work organisation and working conditions (flexible working arrangements, job security, reconciling this job with personal life). At the bottom of the scale were factors related to future opportunities or lack thereof (It's too late to change jobs now, I haven't found a better job opportunity yet, I see the opportunity for personal development), and motivational factors related to pay were also rated lower. However, it is important to remember that the question was about what motivates current RM professionals to stay in the profession, which means they decided on the importance of these factors based on their lived

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experience and awareness of the profession's realities.

3.12. Professional Associations

Membership in various national and European associations is constantly growing over the years. While the results of the survey conducted by Viragh et. al (2020) showed that 36% percent of all respondents were member of any professional association in 2019, the results of the RM Roadmap survey indicates that only 32% of all respondents are not members of any professional association which is the same proportion that the RAAAP3 had for Europe. 32% of respondents indicated that they are members of EARMA, the European association of RMs. In terms of memberships numbers, ARMA (based in the UK) and ARMA-NL (based in the Netherlands) stand out among national associations.

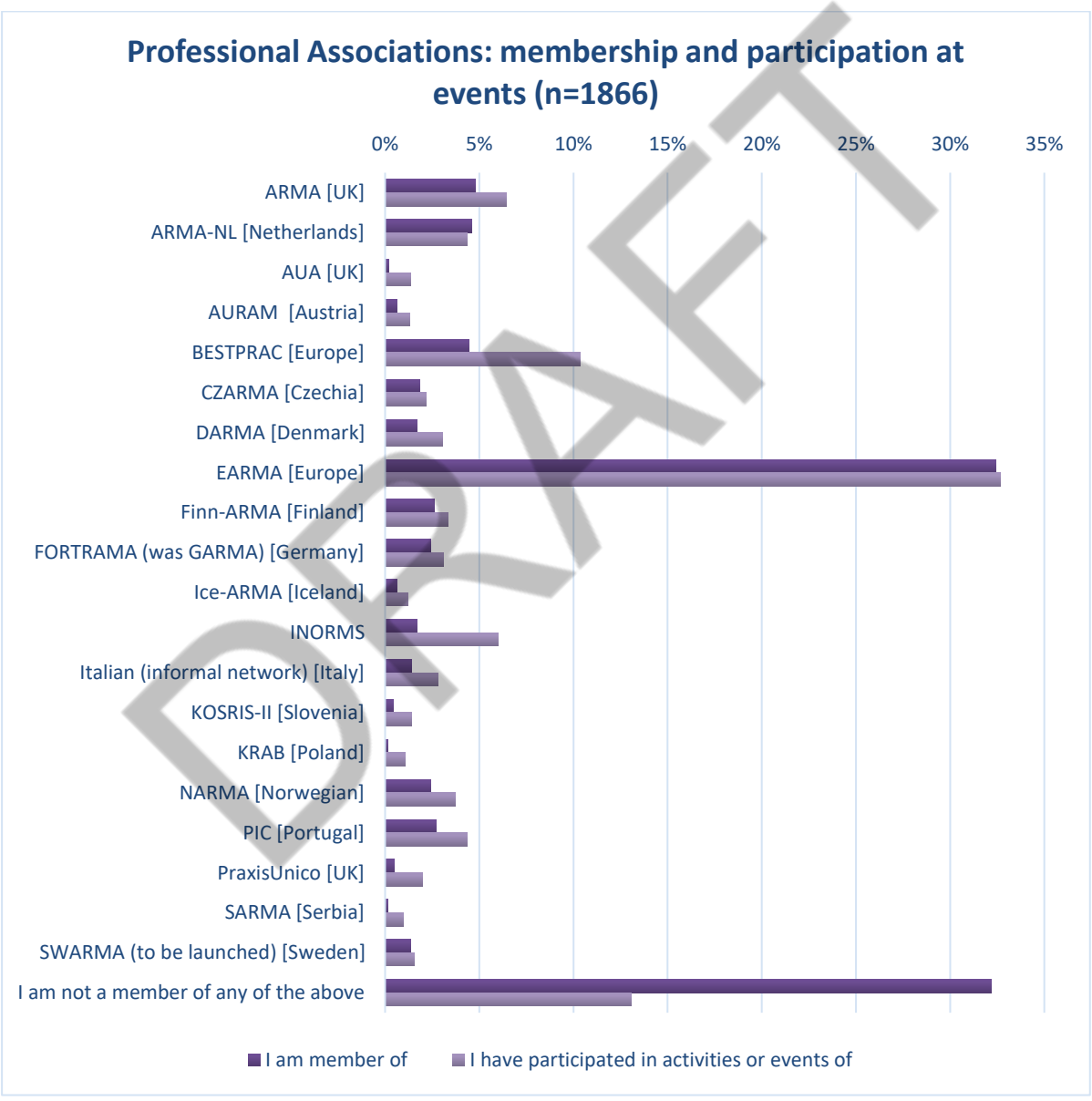


Figure 32: Membership in RM associations and attendance at their events

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3.13. Challenges in RM

3.13.1.Survey results

The questionnaire, based on RAAAP, also looked at the most significant challenges and difficulties faced by RM professionals. In these questions, respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with pre-set answers. The design of the listed problem areas was based on the qualitative studies carried out before. The problems can be grouped into four main categories. These are:

1. **Institutional environment-related challenges**: These include unclear job descriptions, tasks, and work environments, as well as a lack of institutional policies and support. Additionally, job security is often a concern.
2. **Job-specific challenges**: These pertain to the specific tasks and responsibilities of the job. Examples include overtime work and monotonous tasks.
3. **Career and knowledge-related challenges**: These include a lack of professional development opportunities, lack of training, and low salaries. Additionally, lack of expertise is a concern.
4. **The lack of professional recognition, or identity, less respect** from researchers, lack of a supporting network, and the novelty of the position were the challenging factors in this group.

The responses indicated that challenges related to professional recognition were perceived as more significant in this case, while those related to career opportunities were perceived as less significant. However, there was greater variation along each specific question. It is important to note that the questionnaire was conducted within the framework of the RM-ROADMAP, which means that a significant proportion of respondents are familiar with it and aware of its objectives. These include the creation of framework conditions for Research Management with the aim of strengthening the European Research Area. This may have made it more important for many to express their need to strengthen the RM profession.

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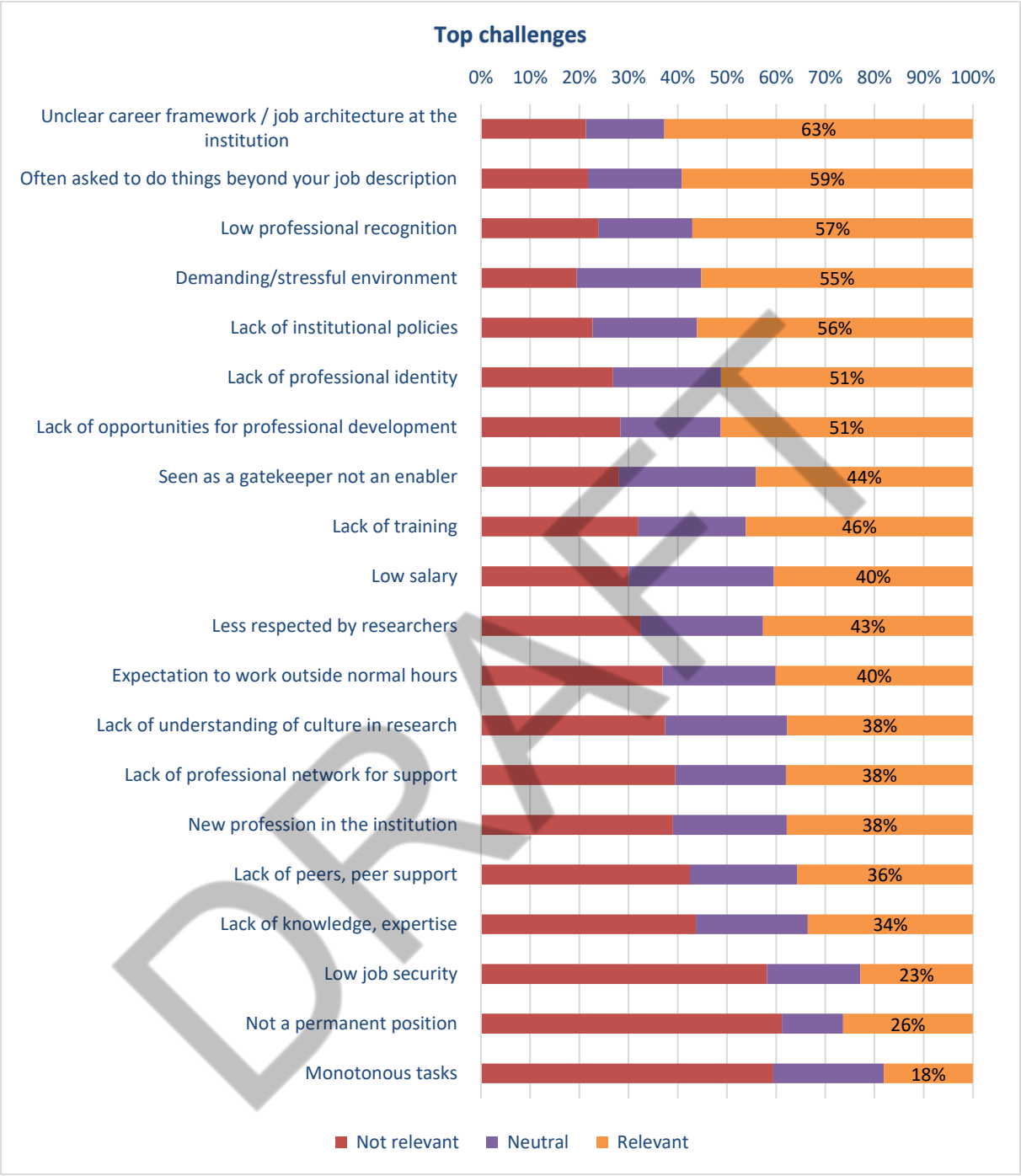


Figure 33: Responses to the question "What are the top challenges and problems you face in your current RM job?"

The most prevalent challenge identified by respondents was the **lack of clarity regarding the career framework and job architecture (63%). Additionally, over half of the respondents cited the frequent expectation to perform tasks beyond their job description (59%), the absence of professional recognition (57%),** the high-stress environment (57%), the lack of institutional policies (55%), the lack of professional identity (56%), and the lack of opportunities for professional development (51%) as significant obstacles.

Among the **institutional environment-related challenges,** the most significant were those pertaining

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to unclear career frameworks and job architectures, demanding and stressful environments, and the lack of institutional policies. Conversely, the least significant were those pertaining to the lack of peers, peer support, low job security, and the lack of permanence in the position.

In the **domain of job-specific challenges**, the most significant challenges were identified as the expectation to perform tasks beyond one's job description and the requirement to work outside of normal hours. Conversely, the least significant challenges were found to be monotonous tasks in RM.

In the **domain of career and knowledge-related challenges**, professional development and an understanding of research culture were identified as the most common challenges, while a lack of knowledge was found to be less significant.

In the **domain of professional recognition**, lack of professional recognition, lack of professional identity, perceived as a gatekeeper rather than an enabler, and less respected by researchers were particularly noteworthy.

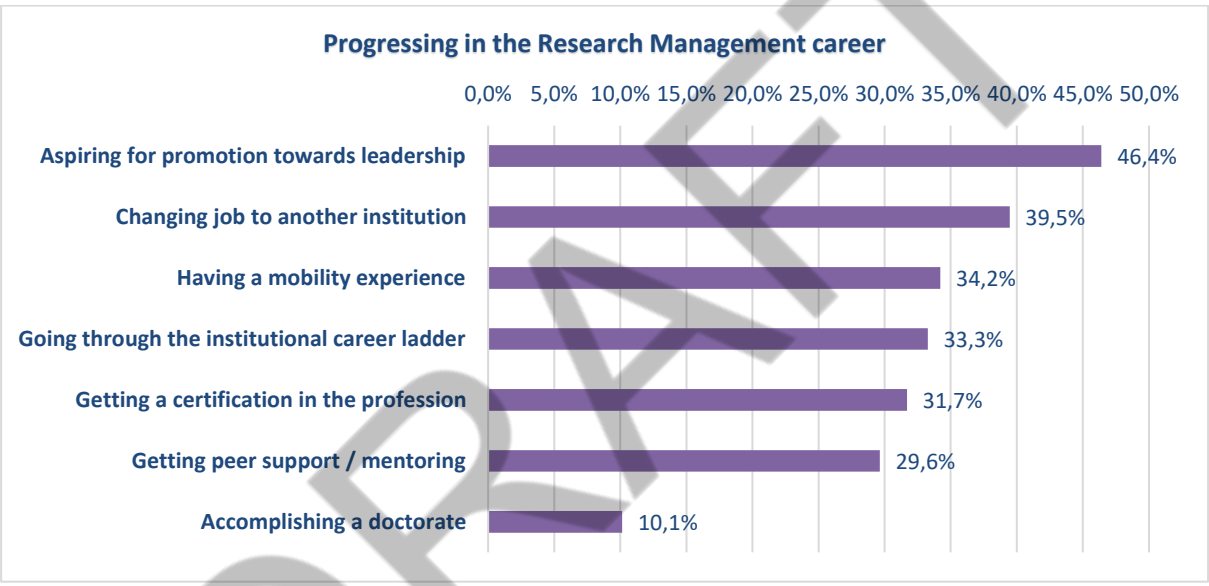


Figure 34: Responses to the question "How do you see yourself progressing in the Research Management career?"

3.13.2.Findings of the interviews

Interviewees also elaborated several challenges that they have to cope with which are in line with the survey findings. Without going that much into the details, the most significant challenges are mentioned briefly below. Interestingly, the problem of the invisible nature of the work refers back to the findings of the focus group discussions and the online interviews presented in the preliminary report. In addition to them, two more challenges were raised by interviewees.

While it is a fact that the recognition of the profession still needs further development, four interviewees reported that Research Support Services operate for decades in their organisations. These interviewees unequivocally stated that research support remains an **invisible form of work**: its importance tends to be recognised only when something goes wrong, claiming that this is called the administration paradox.

> *"Let's say the streets and the highways, they are there, there is an infrastructure behind that is keep going, the highways of a country, so that the traffic can use these highways, and there's a whole management behind. And this is the same in research. We are keep going the highways of research and we need to professionalise that, and to name, to name this.*

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> *Very often it is already professionalised in countries like Switzerland and Germany. It's quite professionalised, but we need to name it." Interviewee, CH*

> *"But to recognise them [Research Managers] in what they're doing and what effect they're having, this is something that is very, very difficult. Well, we call it the administration paradox. If you're doing your job well, nobody sees you're doing it." Interviewee, DE*

Several interviewees also highlighted **the challenge of setting boundaries**, noting that Research Support Services often face the "problem of saying no." Due to the supportive nature of their role, there is a tendency to take on tasks beyond their core responsibilities, which can lead to overload and blurred professional boundaries.

> *"… I mean, we are in a position where it's not so easy to say no. Because our job is just to support them. But we try not to go too far, like, writing on behalf of them, because we have some request for that writing the full application and that's all. This, we do not do. Uh, but we, I mean the boundaries, let's say, is that, at least for the excellence section, it's their part. … But for the impact and implementation sections, we can contribute a bit more. … So here we have a real added value, most of the time." Interviewee, EE*

This can be a real issue, especially when the workload increases – due the fact that the organisation is involved in more and more externally funded projects – while the number of professionals in RM does not.

> *"UM, there are several challenges. One of the challenges, naturally, is the increase in contracts. So, we typically we've seen an increase of about 40% of the research grants over the last five years or so. So, and we still have the same number of personnel more or less. Certainly not plus 40%. So, this is hard." Interviewee, FR*

Moreover, another interviewee highlighted the **potential contradiction** in the supportive nature of Research Management and the control they hold to ensure compliance with institutional and funding related requirements.

> *"On the one hand, as a service unit that tries to be helpful and support researchers and help them with whatever question they have. And on the other hand, I think most of our offices also have a sort of, I'd call it like control function for the Rector. So, considering that we do budgeting and contracts management and we're trying to ensure compliance to funding guidelines that is sometimes also considered as a sort of policing function and it sometimes requires colleagues to say no and to tell researchers that this or that is not possible or is not allowed. And I think some colleagues see this as a contradiction in their job. Which I don't think it is. Yeah, that's I think it's sort of bidirectional kind of work that is inherent in many of these grant offices." Interviewee, AT*

Three interviewees brought **the issue of gender** into the discussion closely related to the challenge of saying no. While 74% of Research Managers are women, they primarily work with researchers, 67.2% of whom are men. This dynamic creates a gendered pattern in professional interactions, where female research support staff are frequently in a supporting role to predominantly male researchers whose proportion is even higher in senior scientific positions. The importance of the topic is underlined by the fact that not only female, but also male interviewees referred to this issue.

> *"I hate it when I have to talk to a researcher because three persons have told him or her that something cannot be done. But he needs someone like me to say 'No, you cannot do.' I hate that. I hate that, especially because I'm an old white male and I have younger females which have told him that or told that and it doesn't work. I hate that, but that happens." Interviewee, FR*

This was emphasised by female interviewees too, who mentioned t**he lack of dedicated training for**

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women in RM as a critical gap that needs to be addressed.

> *"Which we have to do with the fact that large part of the research service community I think is female and they're not well trained in saying no." Interviewee, AT*

> *"Then at the level of my own position, …, which is quite high level, I can see that there is different level of respect from different interlocutor. … But it's more about training on how to be gender neutral in your position and in interaction. And I think also when we talk about coaching and mentoring.... I do work a lot, with my female coworker, let's say, to help them grow at that level because... and it's coaching…because it…there is, there is… we work in a field where you have to interact with professor, people that are highly educated, … . And sometimes they aren't being able to say something in a meeting where you have only male professor. Even if you have like the, you know, you have like your position is already supporting but you have also, you know, point of view to express and so on. … That I think needs to be tackled and we need to equip in one hand woman in those position to be able to handle those situations and on the other spectrum of the spectrum, those people that are receiving the support to understand also that behaviour need to change and that's mostly my message." Interviewee, NL*

3.14. Professional development and career path

3.14.1.Survey results

The necessity for career progression is also evident among RM professionals who have completed the questionnaire.

Table 7: Expectation of respondents to advance in career according to their years in RM (n=1983)

	Going through the institutional career ladder	Aspiring for promotion towards leadership	Changing job to another institution	Getting a certification in the profession	Having a mobility experience	Getting peer support / mentoring	Accomplishing a doctorate
Less than 5 years	34%	44%	39%	35%	35%	35%	12%
5-9 years	33%	49%	39%	29%	30%	27%	9%
10-19 years	30%	43%	38%	29%	33%	26%	8%
20+ years	30%	35%	29%	26%	32%	22%	8%

The aspiration for **promotion towards leadership is the most common (46%), but approximately a third of the sample plan to change jobs to another institution (39%),** gain experience in mobility (34%), progress through the institutional career ladder (33%) or obtain certification in the profession (31%). The need for mentoring was reported by 29% of respondents, while the least planned was the completion of a doctorate (10%). As anticipated, a higher proportion of respondents with less experience plan to take steps to develop their careers, with a greater need for a change of job, obtaining a certificate and mentoring. They are also more likely to plan to complete a doctorate.

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3.14.2.Results of the co-creation exercise

A professional development framework is required to support, strengthen and guide the development of the profession. A professional development framework typically comprises three elements: activity areas, professional levels and hard and transversal skills. Therefore, the co-creation exercise addressed the topic of the adoption and adaptation of the RM Comp to national and institutional contexts.

The European Competence Framework for Research Managers (RM Comp)[7] is a competence-based framework for Research Managers in the European Research Area. It identifies key skills and competencies needed for effective Research Management and supports professional growth. The tool was initiated by CARDEA and has been adjusted with the inputs from RM Roadmap, endorsed and published by the European Commission.

RM Comp aims to facilitate professional development by offering clear learning outcomes and progression models, encouraging Research Managers to enhance their skills and competences. The framework aims to standardise RM competencies, support career planning, and promote the recognition and value of RM roles across Europe.

Given the fluid and flexible nature of the profession, with constantly emerging roles and fields, the RM Comp also underlines several key aspects: entry into the profession can occur at various levels based on educational background and expertise; professional development should be possible both vertically and across specialisations; leadership in research support services should be recognised as a specialised expertise, while leadership skills should be acknowledged across all competency areas; and RM Comp should remain a dynamic document that evolves with the profession.

Accordingly, the European Competence Framework for Research Manager defines 7 competence areas (Cognitive Abilities/Personal Attributes, Technical Proficiency, Research Project Oversight, Stakeholder Engagement, Line Management and Talent Development, Communication, Subject Matter Expertise/Specialised Knowledge), 50 competences and 800 learning outcomes along 4 proficiency levels (foundational, intermediate, advanced, expert).[8]

Based on the submitted consensus documents, the following conclusions were formulated.

The RM community acknowledged the RM Comp as a tool to facilitate professional development, standardise RM competencies, support career planning, and promote the recognition and value of RM roles across Europe.

Based on the co-creation results, a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches is required to induce adoption and adaptation of a competence framework for RMs, but all relevant stakeholders including research performing organisations (RPOs), research funding organisations (RFOs), competent ministries, policy makers, and professional RM networks/associations - play a crucial role to ensure coordinated implementation.

RPOs (including universities, research centres, etc.) can act as "early adopters" implementing the RM Comp framework and promoting its benefits, by implementing specific HR policies and internal career frameworks, introducing incentives for RM recognition and professional development, and guidelines

[7] See more at: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/jobs-research/rm-comp-european-competence-framework-research-managers_en

[8] See at: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/jobs-research/rm-comp-european-competence-framework-research-managers_en
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for hiring RMs, raising awareness and initiating pilot programmes for RMs, among other measures. The impact of RPOs as "early adopters" can extend widely beyond the institutional level.

RM associations and networks have a clear role in the awareness raising process to advocate at the institutional, national, regional, and European levels for the incorporation of the RM framework in training programmes, HR policies, funding schemes, etc., while providing multiple direct opportunities for professional development, training, knowledge exchange, networking.

RFOs have a critical role in setting standards and good practices by introducing RM Comp into their policies and funding programmes, and by evaluating its impact. Examples of measures in funding programmes could be the inclusion of a dedicated budget line for RM personnel in grants and/or requirements for applicants to explain how RMs contribute to project implementation and outcomes. Specific funding strategies could focus on creating adequate structured career frameworks for RMs.

Collectively, the action of individual RMs, RM associations and networks, RPOs and RFOs raises awareness and supports national and European policymaking institutions to incorporate RM recognition and RM Comp into national and international policy towards better RM recognition, professionalisation, career development and standardisation of practices (e.g. certification, exchange of best practices) all over Europe.

The RM community has also shared insights into existing initiatives or practices that could leverage the adaptation or adoption of the RM Comp framework. For example, some countries reported informal discussions taking place within RPOs regarding professionalization of RMs. However, no systematic efforts have yet been initiated at the national level. Others expressed that the legal recognition of RMs would require a complex and lengthy political and legislative process; others mentioned that this issue is not on the current political agenda. This input, although not extensive, provides understanding about potential challenges for the integration of the framework across diverse settings.

3.14.3. Findings of the interviews

The interviews, however, allowed for a more in-depth exploration of this issue. Apart from one interviewee, each of them **confirmed the lack of proper career path in Research Management** both in their RPO and in their country. In some cases, any types of advancements depend **on individual negotiations:**

> *"There is no grid of salary. … there is a, a minimum, but there is no maximum. And everyone is negotiating when there is a recruitment. And even after being hired, you can go back to your boss and say, oh, I want more. .... So, um, there is no career plan or career framework that makes you sure to get to this level or to go to this level." Interviewee, EE*

In other cases, RMs can advance in line with **an institutional or national career progression model** – designed for public servants or for academic institutions – which do not recognise and address the particularities of the profession.

> *"People in university administration in Austria, they complain a lot about the collective tariffs that we have, which I think isn't too bad, but there is always a difference between scientific and non-scientific staff. And as non-scientific staff, you will always have like a lower salary and less attractive career perspectives…" Interviewee, AT*

> *"Because in Germany we have the funding scheme for the public sector, and at a certain level, you get a certain pay grade and that's the same for researchers and Research Managers." Interviewee, DE*

More importantly, several interviewees noted that, in their experience, **most Research Managers do not strongly seek a real career**. They believe this may be partly the reason why these individuals left

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a scientific career: while they are passionate about science and want to contribute to doing science, they do not want to pursue an academic career.

> *"…some people are not interested in advancing their career… Yes. They're interested in knowing, in earning more, but they're happy with their jobs they're doing every day. OK. And they're in a nice environment, they have their colleagues, they're comfortable with the work they're doing. And it's very interesting when you discuss with them because they both say at the same time, they say it's nice because things are always changing, etcetera, etcetera, because they're always on new regulation [regarding research funding]. So, something new to do etcetera. But also, they have a very comfortable environment, an environment which is quite stable and they're always working with the same researchers or research labs etcetera, etcetera. So, they like this comfort. So, I think we must take into account that not all the staff is interested in really pursuing their career." Interviewee, FR*

> *"So, I think within my institution I cannot do any career, but it is fine for me. I mean, every day is different. You have so many tasks, you have got so many opportunities. … I can see that life is going on also in the Research Management I mean. So maybe I can make a PhD, but no one cares about it. It is my private matter as I can say." Interviewee, PL*

The diversity of the job, the possibility to continuously learn, or the **stability of the position** are among those advantages, which were listed by interviewees.

> *"…we do get applications from people who have completed their PhD … and they arrive at a certain point in their lives where they think about either following a scientific career which brings them reputation and money and so on, but which is usually also related with a few more years of job insecurity, of fixed term contracts, of the pressure that is related to, you know, evaluations and so on. So, they know that if they follow a scientific track after their PhD, yeah, they have to apply here [to the RSO], they have to make sure they have third party funding and so on. Yeah. And there are people – and definitely quite a few from my team – at this point consciously decided not to follow a scientific career and to move into something more administrative. Not because they find it terribly attractive, but because they want a more secure job, something where they are not continuously evaluated and under pressure." Interviewee, AT*

> *"I refuse saying this is an institutional problem. Because sure, you will never earn that much money in research field that you would earn in a private sector. So, this is, is not correct to, to put on this argument in my opinion. Yeah, you have to make your personal decision. So, what do you want? Do you want to be a consultant in the project? Right. Go for it. And earn 2000-5000 a project. It's OK for me. But you don't have the security of the fixed position." Interviewee, IT*

Another crucial issue which was highlighted by the interviewees is **the lack of leadership positions** in Research Management, claiming that vertical progression in Research Management is significantly limited.

> *"…the junior members in pre-award, they will start with us. Then they will go to other public organisations which pay more than we do. And then they will go to private companies, which pay even more. If they're interested in earning more. Or they can stay with us because they have a certain level which allows them to earn a sufficient amount of money. For the junior members if they want to advance, they need to change. It's very difficult for us to pay them more where it takes really a lot of time. So, climbing the steps to be paid more takes a lot of time." Interviewee, FR*

> *"But the leadership positions, I think, are less. Well, I think the proportion is different. There are more leadership positions in research than in Research Management, so the amount is different. So, the percentage of people accessing to those very high pay grades even beyond*

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> *the scheme for the public sector – it is a very small number. But I think it's not special to my organisation. I think in Germany in general. Within the system of academia, it's difficult to describe high profile positions in Research Management. … But once you progress in your career, at some point we will not know to what to do with you. So, it is unclear what is the kind of endpoint for a career in Research Management." Interviewee, DE*

> *"So, there are, developments are possible, but it's rather in a horizontal way and not in a hierarchical, vertical way. … I can't develop my career here. And I would need to apply for another position and they are extremely rare and also, I'm already at the ceiling of my salary class. So even though I can't get more salary. So, for me it's the same, it's not very attractive so I have to check by myself how can I make my job attractive?" Interviewee, CH*

Certain interviewees reported ongoing professional growth within their research-performing organisations (RPOs). Some have held their positions for over one or even two decades, during which they have consistently expanded their professional roles, or they got subsequent promotions to do so.

> *"And I came from the other unit. So I came also from inside. I have been very lucky because I've been growing with the organisation. And I train within the organisation. I had those opportunity and now I am at the position (where) I am now. But, but a similar opportunity is not available for everyone because of the the size of the organisation." Interviewee, NL*

> *"So, after I was appointed for this Head of Services position, I heard from somebody - it was a joke but - they said now the door is closed for the next 20 years. We have nowhere to go. It's like you don't have in my field and in this strategic support team they are not different levels of senior advisors or junior advisors. Everybody is the same and that's very flat so how do you develop?" Interviewee, FI*

> *"I entered the… the centralised Research Office as a support officer that did general kind of work and there was no clear path because all the positions above me were occupied. So my movement in that space has totally been dependent on other people moving, or you know or leaving." Interviewee, IE*

RM Roadmap Ambassadors were invited to reflect on the steps required to facilitate the adoption or adaptation of the proposed framework and career path for Research Managers (RMs) within their respective communities - whether national or thematic. They were also encouraged to share insights into current initiatives, programmes, or policies already in place in their countries or thematic areas that could support or align with the implementation of this framework. This input aimed to provide a clearer understanding of the contextual needs, opportunities, and potential challenges that might influence the successful integration of the framework across diverse settings.

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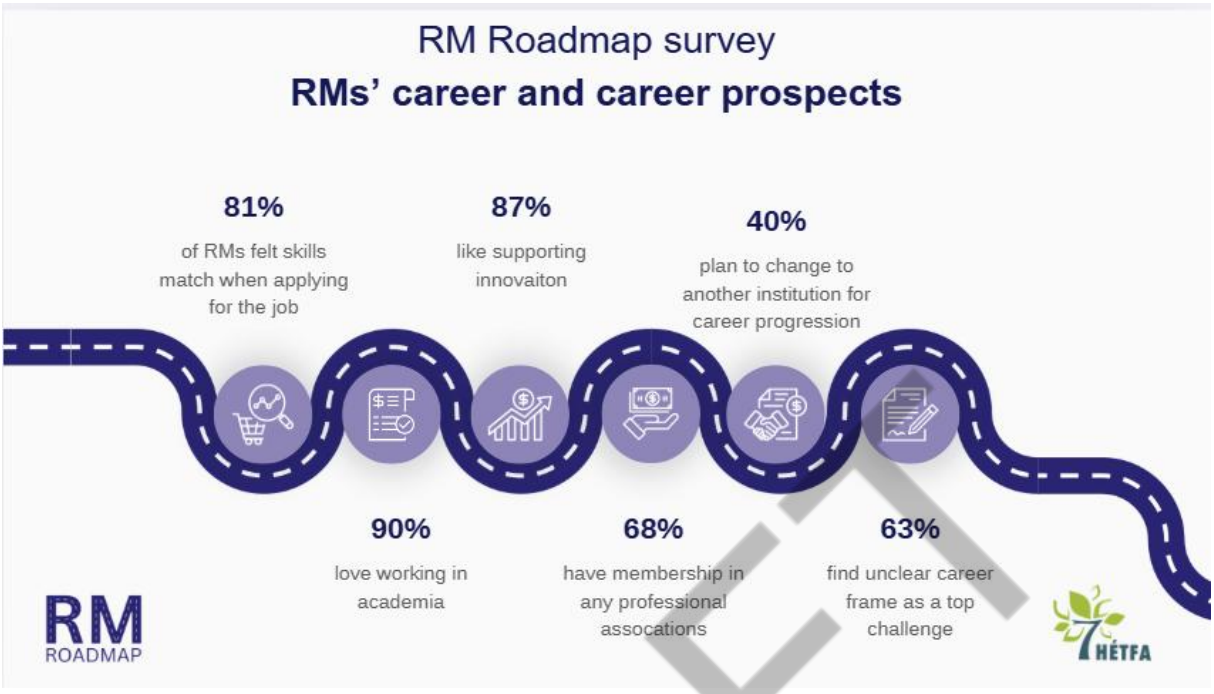


Figure 35: RMs' career and career prospects

3.15. Recognition

The interviewees also aimed at getting a clearer understanding of how Research Support Services are perceived and recognised by stakeholders within Research Performing Organisations. Regarding **researchers**, nearly all interviewees confirmed that their services are indeed recognised by researchers, particularly by those who frequently engage with grants. These researchers are used to relying on Research Support Offices and tend to value their assistance. In contrast, researchers with limited involvement in national or EU funding are often unfamiliar with the RSS, thus they may not understand the rationale for having dedicated support structures in place.

> *"Uh, so, and the recognition of the work is also a second point. Uh, as I said, uh, we could have, uh, researchers who absolutely don't care, uh, about administrative tasks. They do not consider these people as high-level skilled people. This job is currently under recognized, uh, and we try to make it, uh, that's why we are talking about certification. Uh, we are trying to make it more visible, more appreciated and more seen as very useful for the projects, for the research projects… So, they have to understand that, uh, this position is crucial for the good quality of the project." Interviewee, EE*

> *Yeah, there are people who are enthusiastic and grateful, and they think the support they get is great that they have in very good communication with our case managers. They report that too. There are others who are not satisfied because sometimes you know, if somebody doesn't pick up the phone or just not refer them to a funding programme they like – sometimes there's just not a funding programme available… So, opinions are always a bit split, but I would say we do have a basically good backing by the Directorate and the Vice Rector, I think." Interviewee, AT*

> *"… I think, research-active researchers understand our roles very well. And very quickly kind of understand … our working spaces and because it's value to them. So, they're … interested in that. But there are a large number of people that are less research-active that have no idea, don't understand what we do or why, why we exist and some of them are even… I was honest to say, well, we shouldn't be funding you. We have more important things to do. ….*

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> *The management of the university right now, we have a real push to climb in our rankings. And they understand our they understand our space, they understand that we're necessary to help, you know, drive that upward." Interviewee, IE*

One interviewee reported that, although they provide strategic support to researchers, the researchers would require significantly more assistance, especially in the field of administration. Others also agreed that researchers do not and should not spend their time with administration, that is why it is important to reinforce RSS.

> *"I think we enjoy very appreciated position as I explained earlier. I think that the researchers and also the academic leaders, they really, really value our very professional and tailored services that are of high quality and on time. What they do need more is these like administrative, like basic administrative support that they seem to miss. And, well, Research Services is more a special advising service." Interviewee, FI*

In addition, another interviewee mentioned the importance of maintaining good **relations with other central services**, including HR, financial department, etc. While they do not have to be experts in research funding, it is important to acknowledge their expertise within the RSO and how it contributes to the success, through teamwork.

> *"So, I think this is important because it's a teamwork. … To work also with the other service departments or with the accountancy or with the Legal office and with human resources especially. And they also had to understand what this means: a project or what is the needs or why we ask for specific administrative documentation and so on." Interviewee, IT*

As far as the **institutional leadership** is concerned, more than half of the interviewees confirmed that they enjoy recognition from this side as well. Based on their explanation, this recognition stems from the fact that a key priority for RPO leaders is to enhance the scientific performance of their institutions and to increase the volume of research funding secured at both national and EU levels. Key performance indicators provide evidence that Research Support Services can make a meaningful contribution toward achieving these objectives.

> *"And I would say that, uh, from the top level, at the central, from the Rectorate and the Rector for instance, and the Vice-Rectors, um, they see the impact of the service through the money they can get from the government." Interviewee, EE*

While there is a general support, some mentioned financial constraints which limit the further expansion of RSOs.

> *"The management of the university right now, we have a real push to climb in our rankings. And they understand our they understand our space, they understand that we're necessary to help, you know, drive that upward. So, I think I think for the most part, the university management and management structures understand us very well and understand our importance and they support us very well." So, … I think the biggest thing there is you know. They're battling with finances and balance and the demands of others. They would have more of us. If they could afford it…" Interviewee, EE*

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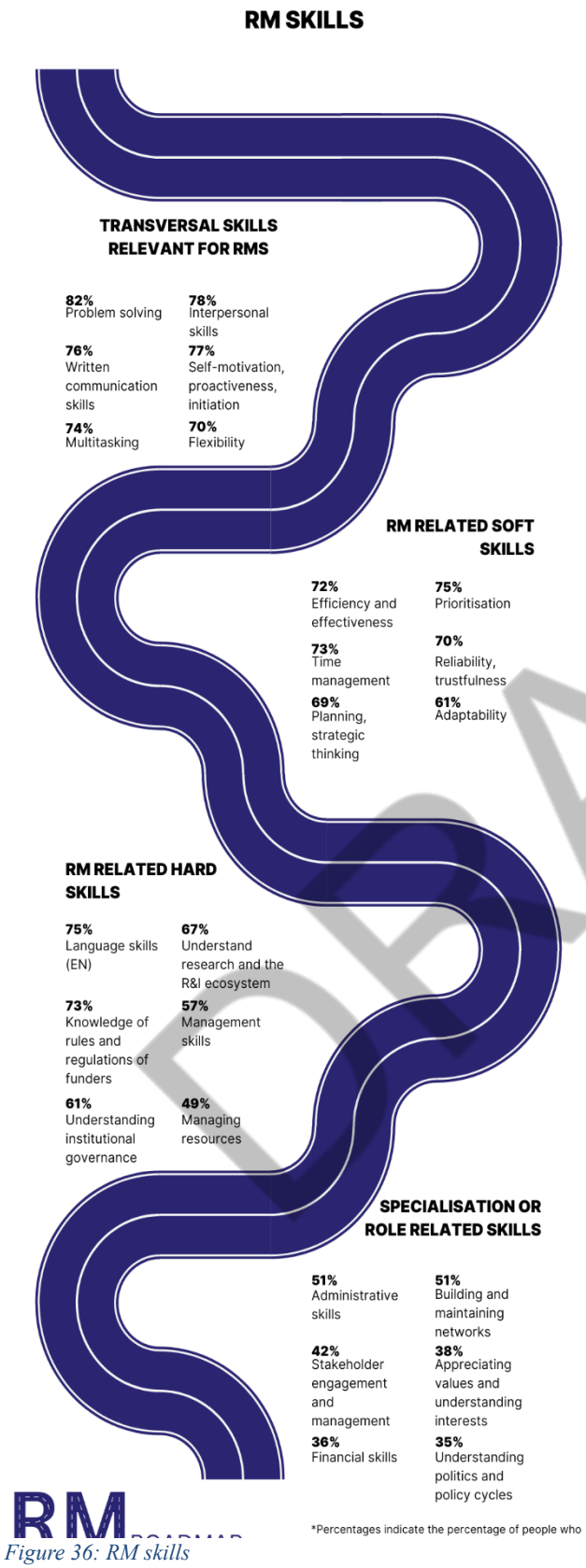


Figure 36: RM skills

4. Skills and Competences

4.1. Survey results

Research Managers responding to the RM Roadmap survey agree that the skills and competencies in the area of **transversal skills are considered to be the most important skills group**. Among transversal skills, problem solving, written communication, interpersonal skills and multitasking were considered to be the most important.

The order of the skills required for career progression in RM differs slightly from that typically observed: the three most important transversal skills for advancement are problem solving, self-motivation and interpersonal skills. These are more closely aligned with the skills typically expected of managers in higher position.

The **most important soft skills** required for a career in RM are prioritisation, time management, efficiency and effectiveness, reliability and trustworthiness, as well as planning and strategic thinking.

The order of skills required for career advancement showed a significant difference, with the most important being planning, strategic thinking, leadership and decision-making, and diplomatic skills. These skills strongly overlap with the skills required for any managerial position.

In the domain of **hard skills**, language proficiency is of paramount importance, particularly in the case of English. In addition, knowledge of the rules and regulations of funders, an understanding of research and the research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem, and an appreciation of institutional governance are also essential skills.

Among the skills deemed essential for promotion, an understanding of research and the R&I ecosystem, an understanding of institutional governance, and management skills were identified as the most crucial.

The importance of specialisation and role-

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related skills are more dependent on the specific role or area in which Research Managers work. In general, the most importance skills are administrative skills, the ability to build and maintain networks, stakeholder engagement and management, and the capacity to appreciate values and understand interests.

When considering the skill set of Research Managers, it is essential to address their language proficiency as a distinct and significant component.

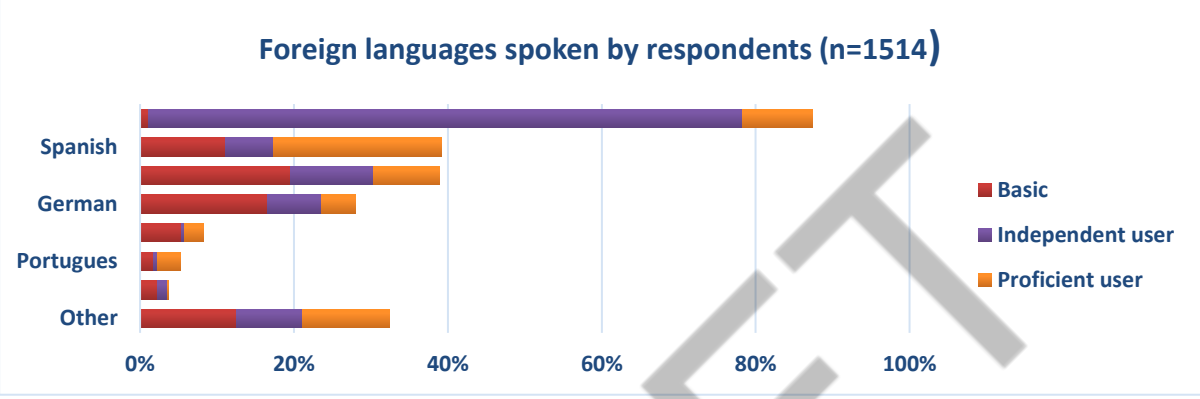


Figure 37: Foreign languages spoken by respondents

Research Managers primarily speak English as foreign language, at least as independent users, but some as proficient users indicating the dominance of the English language in the field of RM. English is the mother tongue of 13% of respondents, 9% are proficient users, 77% are independent users, and a further 1% are basic users. English is also considered by the majority of respondents (63%) as important for their job. The next most prevalent languages were Spanish, with 49% of respondents demonstrating some level of proficiency, and French, with 47% of respondents demonstrating some level of proficiency. The percentage of respondents who are basic users of these languages is considerably higher than for English. German is spoken by 38% of respondents, while Italian is spoken by 15% and Portuguese by 12%. However, none of these languages are considered important for the job itself. The respondents have 57 different mother tongues, which is why the proportion of other languages as mother tongue (53%) not classified as major languages is significant. A further third (34%) speak at least one minor language, which demonstrates a high degree of linguistic diversity.

The survey also aimed to look at the skills and competences required in the different RM areas. While in most cases respondents did not work exclusively in the given area, differences regarding specialised knowledge, skills and competences were identified for the different RM areas. The tables presented in Annex 6 present the top 5 skills and competences for the 13 areas included in the survey, along the four skill areas, namely 1) transversal skills, 2) soft skills, 3) hard skills, and 4) specialisation- and role-related skills. The validity of survey findings was sought for through the co-creation exercise described in detail below. The results gathered from national and thematic communities were added to the tables and highlighted in red.

4.2. Results of the co-creation exercise

During the 2nd co-creation exercise a table was presented to the national communities which was based on the preliminary results of the RM Roadmap survey intending to highlight the top 5 different skills and competences for the different RM areas. To launch a first discussion about the topic, no explanation of the methodology or detailed figures of the different skills and competences were provided. National communities were asked to add any skills or competences that they miss from the 5 most important.

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When analysing the necessary skills and competences for Research Managers, it is important to take into consideration that there are **several 'horizontal' skills and competences that are needed by most RMs**. These skills and competences are related to their core role, namely supporting – and not conducting – research. Several national communities argued that it is important to specify these denominators which have an important role: they can support the recognition of the profession and the understanding of its complex and multifaceted nature, but also the development of training needs and professional development opportunities to contribute to the creation of a standard career path. **Once these denominators are defined, it is important to identify the specific skills and competences for the specialised fields in RM.**

These horizontal skills and competences listed by several national communities are mainly in line with the findings of previous surveys, including RAAAP and CARDEA. However, it must also be noted that several skills belonging to transversal and/or soft skills are not only specific to Research Management, but they are also important in most 21st century jobs. Without making an exclusive list, the most frequently mentioned ones are the following:

Transversal skills	
critical thinking	AT, LU, BE, IE, RO, SRB,
communication	SE, HU, EE, SRB, SI, HR, PT,
interpersonal skills	CZ, FR, ES, IE, TR, LV, NL, ES, TR
proactivity	SI, ES, TR, HU, PT,
cultural and diversity skills	TR, SRB, HU, ES, IS, NL, RO, PT
problem solving	BE, IE, LV, NL, RO, TR, PT
RM related soft skills	
soft skills (in general)	SE, BE, FR, EL, SI, TR
leadership skills	TR, AT, MT, BE, SRB, ES
creative thinking, creativity	IE, DK, RO, ES, TR, PT
analytical thinking	LV, IE, TR, NL, CY
facilitation	IE, BE, FR, TR
the desire and the openness towards continuous learning (curiosity)	SRB, SI, LU, NL, TR
resilience	SRB, IE, TR, NL, PT, IT
conflict management and resolution	NL, IE, LV, SRB, ES, TR, PT
strategic thinking	NL, LU, BE, DK, EE
RM related hard skills	
IT skills, digital literacy, AI skills	HR, EE, SRB, DK, MT, RO, DK,

The second message emphasises the **multifaceted role of Research Managers (RMs) in staying abreast of evolving dynamics in their field.** RMs must also stay informed about technology trends, as the digital landscape is rapidly transforming the way how research and Research Management are conducted. As a result, **digital skills are increasingly crucial**; this includes proficiency in data management, digital communication tools, and software relevant to research administration.

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Furthermore, with the growing integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in various aspects of research and administration, RMs need to develop competences in **using AI responsibly**. This means not only understanding how to leverage AI for efficiency and insight, but also being aware of ethical considerations, such as data privacy and bias, ensuring that these technologies are used in a fair and transparent manner.

Thirdly, the debate over whether **a background in research** is crucial for Research Management professionals did also appear in some of the consensus documents. Proponents of having a researcher background explicitly indicated the importance of having knowledge about research methodology, having doctoral skills or having a research background, highlighting that it might provide a deeper understanding of the research process, can enhance communication with researchers, and might lend credibility when navigating the complexities of academic and scientific environments. However, an overemphasis on research experience might perpetuate a hierarchical view within academia, potentially marginalising the other diverse competencies needed.

4.3. Findings of the interviews

The interviews explored this question from two main angles. First, interviewees were asked whether it is more advantageous to be a **generalist or a specialist** in RM. Second, they were asked what they look for in case of recruitment. Whereas the importance of having a background in research was not explicitly addressed in the questions, several interviewees raised this point independently.

As for the first question, some argued for the importance of being generalist, some underlined the importance of specialisation. Nevertheless, the core idea was that new colleagues mainly need transversal and soft skills, as well as certain hard skills.

> *"it's better to be generalist. First because evaluators are not specialists. And we always say to people that the project has to be understandable by people who don't know, especially, well, not specialists. They have to understand, uh, even evaluators hold a really short time to review the application. So, it means that if they have to read twice something to understand it, it's not good. So, having a generalist approach will also ease evaluator's life." Interviewee, EE*

As far as technology transfer offices are concerned, the interviewee from Slovenia elaborated that there are two main pools they happen to recruit new colleagues from: first, researchers, second, professionals from creative industries.

> *"So, basically have two pools, one pool of the researchers, … they're not really research orientated they don't want to be a Nobel prize winner. But I think that they have this impact driven research in their mind and they can have the research that could be and a lot of tech transfer office using this option. .... Yeah, but the others are coming from the business world as well.... How it's called? A lot of not really artists but designers or different kind of profiles. They … really can produce good ideas. A lot of the tech transfer offices that just hire those yeah, kind of designers. A colleague of mine. She was working in a small gallery and now she's in the tech transfer office. So, basically, they have this state of mind that really."* Interviewee, SI

According to the interviewee from Austria, however, it also depends on the area covered by RMs, to what extent they need to be generalists and specialists.

> *"I think for the tech transfer people they need a certain degree of specialised knowledge when it comes to patenting and licencing and they have gone through special trainings to acquire this type of knowledge. For the grants people, I think it depends. It has changed over the years because we started hiring people who came out of research because we think if*

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> *you work in pre award – for example, consulting researchers who write grant applications – we have this requirement that people should have a doctorate as well in order to speak to researchers and in order to understand research applications. … But they need a certain basic understanding of how a lab works and how research works in the life sciences. Moving to post award, I think the level of specialised knowledge that you need decreases a bit because then you get into things like contract management, budgeting, reporting, things like that. And that is something that I think you learned very much on the job. …" Interviewee, AT*

The interviewee from Germany had a position in-between, underlying the importance of soft and transversal skills and then the necessity to become specialised in the given RM area.

> *"I think it's 50-50% [to be generalist and specialist] actually, and I think the second 50% may change also. So, you have to have a basic set of transferable skills, maybe also a range of personality traits maybe. That is basic. You have to be good in communicating with others. You have to have a certain flexibility in your thinking also and in your acting. But as soon as you have a particular job, you will acquire specific skills linked to that job. You have to deal with different judicial schemes and different regulations that are always specific for the job. And I think they make up about 40% to 50% in my case, or in the case of my colleagues working here. And well, yeah, as you go along, you specialise in one field or another within Research Management, but I think it's very important to keep the conversation going between those subfields in Research Management. Because you have a common skill set that you use to get on. And all those specialised skills you may change when you change jobs." Interviewee, DE*

Interestingly, interviewees were divided on the **topic of recruitment, and no clear pattern emerged**. Some working in larger or more well-known organisations expressed challenges with recruitment, while others did not. Similarly, certain interviewees based in more expensive regions or districts reported difficulties, whereas others in similar locations did not experience the same issues. Thus, this suggests that having adequate applicants for a position depends on multiple variables, including the geographical position of the RPO and the RSO within, the maturity of the profession in the given country, as well as the capacity to attract highly educated and skilled labour force.

Interviewees however unequivocally confirmed that for the different fields, RSO leaders look for a certain set of soft and transversal skills. The rest depends on the job at hand.

> *"So, they, they need to know how to interact with people and to be polite, even if you explain the same thing 50 times." Interviewee, IT*

> *"What's important, the qualification, of course, for the position - depending on the position - the experience. But also, the fitness to work with the team. You know how you as a researcher supporting organisation… I think there are elements of supporting so being there for others." Interviewee, NL*

> *"I think in a pre-award counsellor we would look for a certain level of experience in research and in life science research simply because otherwise they are not able to have a an eye level communication with researchers and they would not be able to really get a grasp of what is written in proposals. I think that is very important. For post-award people we would probably look for project management skills and experiences. And we really like to tailor vacancy notes to the positions that we seek to fill, so that may be somebody with research experience and communicative skills, negotiation skills, and I think writing and texting skills. … Well, English of course, but this is, you know, matters. … It's of course always welcome if people come with a certain level of experience or knowledge about funding programmes like, you know, Horizon Europe and national funding and so on, but these are things that you can learn on the job." Interviewee, AT*

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> *"… the main characteristics will be for example, good communication skills also in English and this kind of engagement." Interviewee, PL*

A majority of the interviewees underlined that **the relevance of having a background in research** is important for a position in RM. While a PhD is not necessarily a formal requirement, many interviewees with research backgrounds tend to prioritise candidates who hold one, provided these applicants also possess those transversal and soft skills which are essential for RM and which differ from those typically required in research.

> *"I have a PhD and I come from science, so I think in my position it's very important because it helps me understand the content of what we are working with. And also, the background and the field we are operating in. But eventually it's important to be able to detach yourself from the matter expert you are, to engage at multi-levels. So, both are important, but I do believe coming from a very specific field and then growing into a more generalistic approach is better than the other way. The other way around is not possible." Interviewee, NL*

Moreover, one highlighted that the importance of having a PhD is the fact that these RMs are more recognised by researchers and institutional leaders.

Reflecting on the continuous development of the R&I ecosystem which shapes the RM profession as well, four interviewees mentioned the importance of AI and related skills.

> *"And I think what has turned up in the past two years is things like applying AI skills. You know, how do you use AI skills to make funding more efficient or something like that. And this is something which I think we need to catch up with. I wouldn't call it like a new field or a field that hasn't been covered. It's more like a skill that everybody has to build up." Interviewee, AT*

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5. Good practices in RM

Good practices in RM with regards to the organisation and operation of Research Support Offices were aimed to be discovered through the interviews. As the preliminary report consisted only the results of the first round of the interviews, it gave a glimpse on existing practices which could be potentially taken over by RMs working across Europe. This second round aims to bring a richer and more in-depth assessment.

The identified good practices are divided into four groups, in line with their main goals and focus points, which are the following:

- The researchers as partners,
- The RSO and RSS itself, as a team,
- The individuals within the team, and last but not least,
- The profession and the community of RM professionals at large.



Figure 38: Groups of good practices identified

In addition to distinction listed above, it is important to note that all these practices are strongly interrelated and can reinforce each other.

5.1. Offering high quality research support services

This section focuses on those practices which are focused on the way how research support services can be best provided to the researchers. Interviewees shared several examples through which they are building high quality research support services.

5.1.1. Advertising about opportunities and services

According to the interviewees, researchers generally do not have a good understanding of the funding ecosystem and related requirements, therefore Research Managers play a crucial role in making them aware and motivated to get engaged. Several examples were mentioned, such as workshops, training,

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newsletters; however, individual engagement and personal contacts were identified as the most important.

> *"They even don't come to the opportunity to basically check it out. So at the end of the day, I mean, the researcher can always say, OK, I want to be an entrepreneur or not or, or, whatever something in between. But if they don't have the possibility to even taste this path, [which] it could be their amazing career path or whatever. They will never do it. They will always stay on the safe side of the research." Interviewee, SI*

Nevertheless, according to the interviewees researchers are struggling with several commitments, and it is therefore also important to find a way to motivate them. More interviews revealed that this challenge also falls within the responsibilities of Research Managers.

> *"…the biggest challenge is, you know, convincing people that it's worth their time. I mean, they're already teaching a massive amount. They've already got a lot of administrative burden and that kind of stuff. … … It really is like advertising the 4th time they hear something, they kind of go. OK, maybe I should pursue this." Interviewee, IE*

5.1.2. Providing individual support to researchers

An overwhelming majority of interviewees highlighted that establishing individual relations with researchers is a key to successful research support. In the long run, this is also seen as essential for successful performance in achieving and managing research funds, as well as for initiating the valorisation of research results.

> *"for us the personal contact is important. So, we still offer meetings, personal meetings or webinars or one-to-one meetings over teams and this works well. And this is something that our researchers appreciate. And this is a win-win situation because they can ask us questions, we can in a personal way, we can advise them." Interviewee, CH*

> *"The good practise is basically only one and it's talk, talk, talk, talk, talk a lot about it. So, regarding the workshops one-to-one offering different, offering a Coke and pizza to the researchers or a coffee. So, basically you have to really change the culture. … So, basically ideal one to one with them. I have now for the last 3-4 months I'm working with one researcher. He wants to have the idea for spin out and then he's really enthusiastic and we basically also meet on weekly date and so on." Interviewee, SI*

> *"So, we know that if you want to get the academic units to do something, you need to bring the support there. … Well, they don't listen to the documentations that's provided by the central policy level unit, they listen to somebody who understand their context and can translate what it means for us, and we are multidisciplinary universities." Interviewee, FI*

Research support offices can also operate as one-stop-shops for researchers. While they may not be able to address every inquiry directly, they are always available, responsive and help to identify the relevant units where researchers can obtain the necessary information.

> *"They've taken on board and the great thing is they can contact myself or my team for an immediate answer and they don't have to wait in line with the rest of the university. So, we are really fast about getting back to them and. And directing them. If we don't have answers for them, we know where to take them. Then we know you know how to find what they need." Interviewee, IE*

Specific emphasis is placed on welcoming and training newcomer researchers. Such meetings include not only an overview of funding opportunities, but also an introduction to services provided by research support offices. Access to such services helps researchers to be more confident and dedicated in pursuing funding opportunities.

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> *"We are, for example, visiting each new professor. We are trying to meet them in person." Interviewee, CH*

> *"… we have recently seen a large pool of newcomers we didn't support before. And some of them are even applying for the first time. So, I have this impression, this feeling that, uh, because of the service available, some of them feel probably more secure and there to apply for grant. …. So, I mean, for their career, for themself, it's a real change." Interviewee, EE*

Such individual support facilitates trust-building with researchers which has been mentioned by several interviewees. Such trust-based relations make understood the importance of research support services, thus increases recognition of the profession.

> *"So, you need to have the trust of the researchers that this is my opinion, then you're recognised also as a position." Interviewee, IT*

> *"…for example researchers and people from other departments and units within my institution, they trust us and also they appreciate our work." Interviewee, PL*

5.1.3. Strong continuum of departmental and central services

The interviewees shared different practices on how research support is organised at the different research performing organisations, including the existence of faculty- or department-based research support, its linkage with the central office, the division of work, etc. Two cases highlighted the importance of ensuring that there is a strong linkage between departmental and central services that can enhance the strategic aspect of the support provided at local level. Most cases revealed that, at the faculty level, project managers are hired on a project basis, miss the overall picture on research funding and the institutional set-up, and once they leave, the organisation loses valuable knowledge and professional capital.

Two interviewees described the way in which their centrally-based units were composed of colleagues working at the faculties in the first case, and at the laboratories in the other. Their role is mainly coordinating, ensuring continuous flow of information and ensuring the challenges are addressed.

> *"Our strength is the very strong continuum of the local and the central services. … Well, it all comes from the idea of local strategic support. … They [RMs from her unit] know how the units [faculties] work, what is the administrative system and they provide the system there and then they take care of the university level policy implementation process when it comes, for example research assessment that's now taking place in our university. It is centrally organised process because it covers all the units, ... So, this is very typical what my people do that there is an effort that encompasses everyone and then the faculties need to do something in a certain time frame. And then my people to make sure that it happens." Interviewee, FI*

While this first case illustrates a more strategic and policy-oriented approach to research support, the second shows how the daily support of laboratories is managed according to the same logic.

> *"So, we started as lab managers, but then our management said that it would be better if we will be in one unit just to standardise for example, the way the tasks are done for example. And yes, it is easier to manage projects and to support researchers in one way. That was the point to do with due to the best practises. So, we still are lab managers, we are managing somehow laboratories, … we are closer to research project investigators. So, we are for example in many laboratories or something like this we don't have open space and one office. …" Interviewee, PL*

5.1.4. Standardisation of Research Support Services

As discussed beforehand, lacking a clear description of the services can generate conflicts and

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misunderstanding from the side of the researchers, leadership and other administrative services. Therefore, despite the diversity in scope, depth, and organisational structure of Research Support Services, there is evidence of continuous efforts towards standardisation. An example of such an effort is the development of a service catalogue outlining the services provided by Research Support. A similar effort was revealed earlier by the preliminary report.

"… that's actually something that we're right now discussing in our team and we're preparing a sort of service catalogue in order to better define service standards and in order to be better able to explain services and to explain where services end …" Interviewee, AT

Another important aspect is the standardisation of processes for applying to and using research support services. This contributes to setting clear criteria and boundaries, clarifies responsibilities and the division of work, prevents the service from becoming overstretched, and reduces the risk of being overwhelmed by low-potential or last-minute proposals. One interviewee provided a detailed explanation of the criteria they set for pre-award, which are dependent on the grant (Horizon Europe is prioritised), the role of the researcher and the RPO (coordinator role prioritised over partner role) and the extent to which the idea aligns with the selected call.

> *"So, for the pre-award we have a support service. Which is kind of standardized. We meet with them [researchers] and we explain what the support will cover, what will be our tasks, the way we will do it, the way we will work with them… , one of the criteria would be, um, if they are coordinator or just partner. So we'll go, uh, if we have too many requests, we'll go for coordinators. Uh, we also, uh, try, we have a short form that they have to fill when they request for support, and then they will elaborate a bit on their ideas and the potential impact of their project. And, uh, this helps us also to select based on the topic. Uh, if we look at the call and we see that the idea is not fitting well. It'll be a criterion, for us to say, maybe it's not a good call. … we try to also, uh, avoid too many applications on the same call from the university, even if we do not limit them. This is important because, uh, what is important is that the idea is not the same. Uh, but we consider that if they have different approaches or IDs on the same call, it increases the chances for getting the funds in a way because the evaluator might find the good thing. Um, and also, uh, yes, also it, we have to select, it's also the grant that could be a criterion. … But if we have too many requests, we will, uh, we agreed with colleagues, uh, that the main priority will be Horizon Europe." Interviewee, EE*

5.1.5. Joint ownership of projects and celebrating the successes

The importance of partnership was emphasized in the first round of interviews and reaffirmed in this round too, alongside the need to build trust. The Italian interviewee highlighted a particularly noteworthy initiative in this context: strengthening the joint ownership of projects between researchers and Research Managers, and recognising shared achievements.

> *"Yeah, maybe you have to celebrate with more the… the successes. So, this is my team. My team did generate. Yeah, this is something. Maybe we… we have to introduce even more to… to create this team of common joint ownership of the project. They [researchers and Research Managers], after the submission, they did their after submission, aperitive. So, this was really nice." Interviewee, IT*

5.2. Solidifying Research Support Offices and Services

This section is focused on the RSOs and the RSSs themselves, as interviewees described various efforts and initiatives aiming at strengthening their offices and services. These practices primarily focus on enhancing team motivation, clarifying or standardizing service offerings, while securing additional resources.

5.2.1. Providing proper onboarding for newcomer RMs

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Given the general difficulty in recruiting Research Managers with appropriate knowledge and experience, some interviewees highlighted the special need to provide training for newly appointed colleagues.

> *"I think as a superior, it's my duty to onboard them and to follow up with them." Interviewee, CH*

> *"If you have a new collaborate are coming. I mean, they're just sitting with us and understanding how to talk to researchers, how to develop a project idea,* how to read the proposal, what is the, let's say, the mechanism behind the… just to have this basic under*standing of why this project is being financed so, so this is maybe something you could externalise." Interviewee, IT*

This onboarding generally means personal support and training, and is considered a significant investment, as it is carried out by the head of the RSO or by more experienced colleagues.

> *"… there's a lot of investment since we are still doing this learning on the job, training on the job." Interviewee, IT*

5.2.2. Regular meetings within the Support Office and team building

Based on the interviews, having regular meetings within the Support Office does not solely serve operative purposes, but also contributes to long-term goals, such as team building and motivation, knowledge exchange, setting future directions, discussions of the possibility of improving the services and the procedures, as well as fostering personal relations.

> *"So, I think meetings are important even if they have a negative reputation. Normal people, often people complain that there are too many meetings. So, I try to keep the number of meetings to a minimum, but as I'm supposed to follow up so we have a team meeting twice… every second week. And I have bilateral meeting with every collaborator once a month and then they are new it's every two weeks. So, to follow up, to have a discussion basis, to be open to needs to each other, to have familiar setting. So, I think that's important. I think a structured way to work is very important." Interviewee, CH*

> *"We do have monthly meetings all together. So, all of the 13 people come together and then we discuss the current matters. And that kind of things that are, you know, where the peer support is valuable. So, my team wants to use these monthly meetings - two hours per month - for interaction. So, it's my job to make sure that the the time is used in a wise way. I will make sure that there is an agenda, but it's actually bottom-up agenda so everyone can write their own topics. … I meet all these campus teams once a month for like morning or afternoon, so I spent time with them and I discussed with them in this local environment. And I have 30 minutes personal time with each of them every month, and that's my priority." Interviewee, FI*

> *"We meet regularly but they are also asking me sometimes for advice or something, … We are sharing very often our experience within meetings." Interviewee, PL*

Maintaining motivation and ensuring that colleagues find their work engaging may at times require additional initiatives, such as dedicated team-building activities.

> *"…we try to have to be attractive team. We try to go away for our retreat to an attractive mountain region to do a nice excursion, to have fun as a team." Interviewee, CH*

> *"So, we usually give them for example, we have this Friday colloquium, which means that every Friday or maybe twice a month we have a presentation by a colleague from somewhere in strategic support services who's gonna tell about an interesting seminar she or he took part. Or maybe she or he has done research on something because so many of us are actually PhD's, we kind of keep this research-oriented way in developing our work as*

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well." Interviewee, FI

5.2.3. Launching a research manager network within the RPO

Only one interviewee mentioned that their RSO based on the central level had launched a network of Research Managers from the faculties. Such effort was crucial for sharing information and exchanging experience.

> *"Because we have specially created a project coordinator network within the university. So, it's a central level initiative. We invite project coordinators to gather in a kind of club in the network. And then they share experience, but also, they ask for more information on specific topics. ... we have 25 people attending the network. ... Their salary is mainly covered by the projects because most of them are just hired for one project." Interviewee, EE*

Moreover, creating such a pool is also important to reach out and retain those professionals who are employed only on project basis and would otherwise leave as the project ends.

> *"we discovered is that these people in average stay two years at university. So, it's an average, uh, data. So, it means some of them leave earlier, some of them a bit later, but in average two years. So at least it's less than the predicted duration. And it's a real issue. … we would like more to keep these people and to create a kind of pool of people who will be dedicated to one or two projects, depending on the workload." Interviewee, EE*

> *"We for the most part, we do a lot of trading staff. So, a lot of staff in one department when the contract is up where they're looking for something new and they're moving around, so." Interviewee, IE*

5.2.4. Generating revenues for the Research Support Office and Research Managers

Similarly to the previous round of investigation, the interviews aimed to grasp upon any business models through which Research Support Offices can generate their own income, at least partially. However, out of the 11 interviews conducted, only 3 mentioned related schemes. One example is the Austrian university that can provide extra support for project management if they receive the personnel costs dedicated to project management.

> *"What we're also trying to do is to offer project management services to researchers. That is limited. But if a researcher has a, let's say, a big project like a coordinated EU project with specific funds dedicated to project management also, we offer to do the project management for them if they refund us from their project management money. Because we would not be able to provide real project management for a specific individual project." Interviewee, AT*

In the case of the Estonian university, a certain amount of the budget of granted projects is transferred to the central level. The collected funding is then distributed to fund internal research projects but also, to provide bonus for the Research Manager providing the support during the proposal phase. This latter can be an important motivation factor for colleagues, which appears also in the Polish institute.

> *"The support is for free, unless they get funded. Then they have a lump sum, uh, to send back to the central level … which is used to fund internal research projects. So, in a way it goes out from the schools to go the central level and the central level later give back this money to schools for, uh, to researchers to make internally funded research projects. … What we can have is that if the project gets funded, we have a small bonus. … [For the calculation of the lump sum] we have a criteria approach, a grant approach depending on what grant it is. It might be more or less. And it's also based on their role, if they are a partner or if they're coordinator. Uh, so the maximum lump sum is 7,000 EUR. And the lower is 3,000 EUR." Interviewee, EE*

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> *"As for our salaries for example, if you are asking about it, we get some money, regular money like regular payments from the Institute. But we have also extra money. I mean, as we are lab managers and we are supporting projects and within the projects there are direct costs for example some orders for chemicals and materials because in our area in our field mostly there are cost of materials and chemicals. 6% of total purchase within three months, 6% is paid for us. So sometimes it is some extra, one salary. Sometimes it is hard but I think that's good. That's good money, actually. Good additional money to our salaries." Interviewee, PL*

5.3. Facilitating professional development and career advancement

This section is focused on what can be offered to individuals in the RSOs in terms of professional development and career progression. Over the years, significant development can be observed regarding the availability of training programmes for Research Managers and their possibilities to enrol in these trainings. Nevertheless, all interviewees reported that professional development of their colleagues in RM is rather a bottom-up process driven by the individual's openness and preferences and lacking strategic planning. None of the interviewees mentioned financial constraints as a barrier to accessing training. However, a major obstacle in several cases remains the lack of time of colleagues due to the fact that they are generally overloaded, and they prioritise work over their professional development.

5.3.1. Specialisation within the RSO

Several interviewees shared examples of how they encourage their colleagues' professional development while they are directing them towards more specialised roles. Such specialisation requires additional training and, in several cases, on-the-job learning.

> *"… when you're working, you're going to, you can go to some specialities because you don't learn how to negotiate the lessons. It's contract with the company. You cannot learn it I mean in the school, university. Basically, you don't even learn too much about IP protection. And you don't learn how to make a business plan, even how to teach to make. It's not how to make a business how to teach to make a business plan. It happens to me when I think I know everything I came with my first contact to do researches was that I came with the Canvas model." Interviewee, SI*

5.3.2. Providing internal training

Almost half of the interviewees reported that internal training opportunities are available within their respective Research Performing Organisation. According to their explanations, these training offers are not necessarily targeted to RMs, but useful for them as well. RSO leaders either cooperate with the Human Resource Department (HR) and/or Education Department to identify individual training needs, or the whole process is handled automatically by the HR Department.

> *"It's a mixture really. We do have a set of internal trainings. That cover things like data protection, good scientific practise or good clinical practise, project management and that sort of things. So, this would also be the basic set that's obligatory for all colleagues. … There are some trainings that are offered within the university, for example for the International Office, it could be a refresher in English or something. For others, it could be a specific IT tool that needs to be used." Interviewee, AT*

> *"And what we also have: we have an internal education department, … they offer … a training programme each year in connection with the researchers and… and the service departments. Yeah, investigating a bit. What is …What are the needs which… which fields would be nice and they have, so we have internal training programme too and my staff can also participate in this. It's about, I don't know, working with citizen science, stakeholders or*

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> *I don't know talking a proper English, or now we have some colleagues having… doing a course on AI issues in the research field." Interviewee, IT*

The interviewee from the Estonian university, however, reported the possibility of having tailor-made internal training for Research Managers.

> *"So, there is a yearly survey made by the Human Resources Department. And based on the results, they try to organize the training or to find external trainers, things like that. So, this is the first option, and after that we can also, uh, it's quite easy." Interviewee, EE*

However, it is not only the Research Managers who require training, but also the leaders of the Research Support Offices. An outstanding example mentioned by the German interviewee was a Leadership Academy, which is offered to any colleagues in leadership positions within the given research performing organisation. During the training sessions, participants from various professional backgrounds are brought together, which helps to better understand the different needs and viewpoints, from the perspective of researchers, Research Managers, administrative staff, etc.

> *"… we do have leadership Academy. And yeah, I think it's been running for more than 15 years. And, well, I had the opportunity to participate in two courses there. And that's, well, for questions relating to leadership. It's very good, I think. And there's also more demand than we can handle of course, but it's very important to have such a scheme. … to address leadership as a topic that you have to take seriously, that evolves. … it [the Leadership Academy] brings together researchers and people from the technical occupations and Research Managers. So, you learn together. You know you have connections to other people who have other experience, well, daily work experience then you have. And I think that is immensely valuable because it's exactly at this point, I think where sometimes there's no understanding of the job of the other person, and if she goes through a leadership course together, you will learn to switch perspectives and to, well, maybe even to appreciate the other person's work more." Interviewee, DE*

Another important scheme, explained by the Slovenian interviewee, is a government-provided programme aimed at developing the capacities of Technology Transfer Offices. This scheme does not finance travel abroad for training opportunities, but rather enables inviting trainers to deliver training at the institutional or national levels.

> *"…[this scheme] is a little bit strange because they cover us the cost of any education you want, but they don't cover the travel cost. … On a certain point, they said that they don't want us separately to go out and to do trainings, but they want the trainees, I mean the mentors, the coaches to come to Slovenia and then organise the training for the large cohort of their trainees. ... We have a lot of trainings on the IP commercialization all the time." Interviewee, SI*

5.3.3. Securing funding for the participation at externally organised trainings

Supporting the participation in training beyond their own RPO context was reported by all interviewees. This serves not only the professional development of the individuals and the improvement of service quality, but also plays an important role in motivating colleagues.

> *"… people are motivated, everybody wants to travel to international conferences depending on their field of career or field of expertise." Interviewee, NL*

Several positive trends can be observed compared to previous years. First, institutions tend to have the necessary funds to cover participants' attendance. Second, the number of available opportunities has been steadily increasing.

> *"I think that that's big thanks to our [position of the colleague], the biggest boss, the leader of Research Services. He's very open about giving opportunities to develop your own*

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> *profession in different kind of international conferences. We do have for example, my team has a nice amount of money each year to be used to send people to professional seminars or conferences and we as heads of services, we make sure that it is divided in a good way so that everyone who shows interest or the ones who didn't go last time will go to EARMA and so on. And every year we have like National Research Service Day [in Finland] and we always try and go there." Interviewee, FI*

> *"…we have a good budget we have quite nice budget to pay events that are organising continued in education trips to go abroad to conferences. So, as this budget allows us to do certain things, for example, to attend EARMA conference, so I motivate my collaborators to attend this EARMA conferences, … I offer them nice education courses, I am open if they want to do a certified education, things like that." Interviewee, CH*

Third, RSO leaders are proactively promoting these opportunities to their RM colleagues, while it still happens that colleagues are unable to find the time to attend.

> *"… currently we have, uh, a kind of issue because we are supporting too many researchers. So, we honestly, we have no time currently to go for training or things like that." Interviewee, EE*

> *"So, my [position] person, I would send her to anything she wants to go to. The problem is she can't find the time." Interviewee, IE*

The Polish interviewee, however, pointed out that training and self-development should fit within regular working hours, as they are considered an integral part of the job. Given the constantly changing and developing nature of the profession, colleagues must continuously learn and stay up to date.

> *"… I'm also telling it to my people; you can do it within your working hours. You don't have to spend extra time at home to, for example, to extend your knowledge or something like this. Your work is for it because it is very important. I know it from myself that here it's my work, but I have this kind of balance." Interviewee, PL*

One interviewee also outlined the importance of active participation in such training or conferences. While this often requires additional preparation, it offers increased visibility and the possibility to engage with peers and discuss common issues.

> *"And also, EARMA is very important conference and we are always encouraged to send abstracts and provide insight into how do we work and how can we build our profession. … you always come back with something." Interviewee, FI*

However, RSOs and their institutions still lack a strategic approach in enrolling colleagues in such training. This represents an area for further development.

> *"There are no constraints on that to go in events or to go in seminars, or things like that, to get more knowledge of things like that also. So, on this aspect it's really open, uh, but there are no plans again. There is no long-term vision. It's a bottom-up approach…" Interviewee, EE*

> *"So, all so we we do support those, but it's kind of the thing is, is it usually it's a case where the individual officer or administrator decides. … So, its very piece meal, very a la cart people decide to do things here and there." Interviewee, IE*

5.3.4. Taking part in peer-to-peer exchanges, coaching and mentoring

Beyond training and conferences, most interviewees referred to the importance of peer-to-peer

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exchanges as well. Given the complex and fluid nature of the profession, backed by the fact that an outstanding majority of Research Managers lack any certification or degree programmes, job shadowing represents a unique opportunity to learn from others and share operational practices. Most interviewees reported that they encourage their Research Managers to take part in such exchanges, either by relying on the institution's own resources or by applying for funded opportunities. Despite the differences among RPOs, the challenges faced by Research Managers are often quite similar.

> *"The most efficient way of having a train is going to be to to just meet the colleagues and to see that they're struggling with the same problems. This was especially Nice for us to see also. Because we are a small institution, a private institution, and we maybe have less projects than universities have, but at the end we have the same problems in small in a small scale, so we have exactly the same issues. … We are not falling under the Erasmus exchange scheme because we're not a higher education institution. But I foresee also budget for this. And this year we've been contacted by two organisations, whether they could do a kind of staff exchange, so which is nice, I want to do this a little bit." Interviewee, IT*

The duration of such exchanges can vary from 2-3 days to longer periods, depending on the possibilities.

> *"And they go and they work in other institutions for a while. You know, they they might, you know be seconded or they might spend the time, you know, they're working with colleagues, you know, in a similar area and that kind of stuff. And I think I think a lot of people are very attracted to that." Interviewee, IE*

Coaching and mentoring do not necessarily require travel; instead, they represent a longer-term learning process, either within the same research performing organization (RPO) or externally, guided by more senior Research Managers.

Some interviewees mentioned that they offer such opportunities to their colleagues. These individuals often have experience on both sides of the process: having started as mentees and now serving as mentors themselves.

> *"But I think the next step is really to work with or enable mentoring and coaching of team members. And I did benefit from coaching as well, at some point before, and it helped me a lot understanding what I want to do, my strengths and where to look at. I think it's very valuable to be able to discuss openly with professional people. With their own experience, they can give some feedback on where you're at. Help you thinking." Interviewee, NL*

5.3.5. Benefiting from professional associations and sector related networks

While all the above-mentioned opportunities can be offered by professional associations and sector-related networks, almost all interviewees underlined the importance of associations and networks as such, from both a professional and a personal perspective.

> *"So, this Euresearch association, ... This works very well. We are kind of big family. [also] how the advisors for the SNSF Swiss National Science Foundation work. This is also a kind of family. This National Science Foundation invites once a year, in spring, to their headquarters in Bern and informs about new novelties. And there we can exchange among each other. We can discuss, we can ask critical questions, we see and know the responsible persons of Swiss National Science Foundation. And, additionally to that, there is … e-mail lists with questions, there are meetings among all advisors, again these meetings three times a year, twice a year." Interviewee, CH*

This means that personal relations are also established beyond the professional ones, and such close communities provide a safe place to share real problems and concerns. All these can represent an important motivational factor for RMs and contribute to greater confidence and satisfaction in their

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work.

> *"You know you meet people, you have a nice time, your girlfriend to see you. And this is this is something I want to have my team to be happy and and this is really nice." Interviewee, IT*

> *"…actually I'm rather active in the Netzwerk wissenschaftsmanagement. So, the network for Research Managers that has been active since 2011-2012. … So, for me, it's a very safe space because I've been there from the beginning. I've known a lot of colleagues from there, which I absolutely trust, which I call when there is job openings, who I talk to when I have problems in my job and don't want to discuss it within the organisation. So, it's really a circle of trust also." Interviewee, DE*

Moreover, the Swiss interviewee explained in detail the professional added value of the Swiss network and how her colleague benefited from being involved.

> *"These persons are part of the Swiss wide network called Euresearch. So, they are paid by this network, they have access to all the information to the all the in-house knowledge from the NCPs. This research network hosts all the NCPs in Bern, so they have access to all this knowledge, they have access to the NCPs, they have access to internal knowledge, to expertise, to documents, to movies that they are producing, everything that they are producing they have direct access." Interviewee, CH*

Besides professional associations, the importance of European University Alliances – and university alliances in general – was mentioned by certain interviewees.

> *"I was yesterday in a training by EUA [European University Association] and it's really very, very interesting to discuss with colleagues from other countries. And Europe is an important part of our lives, it must stay so. And having all this, we can make connections to understand what other people are going through." Interviewee, FR*

> *"And ENLIGHT RISE [European University Alliance] was of course all about research, and a lot of our research support staff went and they worked remotely or, and they also invited people in. And I think that was a major drive to have people kind of, you know, say, oh, this is… this is actually a more important working space than I thought it was." Interviewee, IE*

Despite the fact that certain institutions have introduced travel restrictions, RSO leaders consider networking an important mean to motivate colleagues and support their professional growth.

> *"But also, we try to limit travelling. For various reasons… environmental reasons. We still know and recommend that there are face to face events to take place during the year because they are the moment also to network and meet people, get exposed to science in a more intensive way than, you know, behind the computer. Yes. Yeah, we recommend people to still travel to conferences, yes." Interviewee, NL*

5.3.6. Introducing a career frame for Research Managers

While most interviewees confirmed the lack of any career framework or path for Research Managers, the Austrian interviewee reported that they have recently introduced an institutional framework for Research Managers based on RM Comp, the European Competence Framework for Research Managers. They have not adopted it word by word, but followed its methodology to identify the relevant RM profiles in their institutional setting, define the relevant competences for three levels and match these with available training opportunities. As the framework has only recently been launched, she was not yet able to share experiences. Nevertheless, the fact that they have adapted it and the way how it was adapted may serve as a good practice for other RPOs.

> *"… we sort of introduced it two weeks ago. We haven't had it so far. And I cannot tell you*

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any experiences now because we really just started it. … We introduced three levels of Research Managers and the way you reach the levels is… one aspect is the duration of your employment in the Research Management unit. And the other is a mixture of like trainings you have done, activities that you've taken over a task that you've taken over within the Research Management unit. … So I had to adapt it a bit. They have four levels there. We only used three of them. And, of course, we had to like rephrase the criteria and adapted to our university and to our tasks and to the job profiles that we have within our unit. … So what we did is to define a list of trainings that all of them have to go through. … And then we have further trainings that differentiate between the different profiles because like a research data manager needs other things than a person working in the International Office. So, with the division heads, we have tried to define these profiles and define what they need and still have it in a way that they are comparable." Interviewee, AT

5.4. Increasing the recognition of the Research Management profession

The focus of this section is on measures which can induce changes in terms of recognition in favour of RSS, but, at large, in favour of the profession and the RM communities by grasping their added value.

5.4.1. Initiating changes at institutional and national levels

Almost all the interviewees are proactive leaders who have initiated changes either at institutional or national level in order to improve the quality of research support services, to solidify the Research Support Office as well as to facilitate professional development and career advancement. They provided a range of examples to illustrate these efforts.

Certain interviewees elaborated how they initiated changes to the institutional set-up of research support services either through reorganising or expanding these services.

"… we could also organise larger meetings, not one-to-one, but with many people to have some kind of a meeting where everyone will try to explain what he or she is doing and how to improve certain procedure, etcetera, etcetera. So, I think this also gives more meaning to the work." Interviewee, FR

"At university, the system has changed because we also proposed this to our hierarchy. ... I have seen the changes. I'm not working at the university for a long time, uh, as I said, but I already see the changes, uh, especially because we developed all these trainings that were not existing before." Interviewee, EE

"We are changing our salary, guidelines, the policy." Interviewee, IT

By contributing to institutional initiatives in a proactive manner, Research Managers can also bring added value to various initiatives. For instance, the German interviewee explained their involvement in internal organisational development projects.

"We do have official university services projects that are development projects and you may take that type of, like a project manager position alongside of your, you know, daily work. So, you might be like a 50% project developer for uh building a digital system for ethics evaluation. We have lots of internal like service development projects going on and also strategic development projects that include the academics. So, for example, … the senior leadership of the university, they decided we need a roadmap for interdisciplinarity. ... How do we do that? OK, we need a roadmap. Let's see. Let's get this strategic support team from Research Services to look into that. So we formed a small project team and then we facilitated a year-long process with the academics and in the end, there was so like facilitating strategic change is in the key of our expertise. So yeah, taking these types of projects alongside of your daily work is the way to develop yourself and also to develop the university." Interviewee, FI

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It is interesting to note, however, that while the workload is increasing for everyone due to the growing number of publicly funded research grants, not all leaders of Research Support Offices aim to expand their team. Nonetheless, some interviewees expressed their related hopes for the future. According to the Estonian example, as far as they are in line with the institution's strategic plan, the leadership gives their consent to such expansion.

> *"And for the future, we, the colleague and I, uh, would like to be less overloaded. Uh, so it means that, uh, the future should be, uh, continuing to develop, uh, the support and also the, the staff. … we have a development plan at university, uh, and one of the objectives is to, uh, increase the number of applications and their success rate to get a high level or excellence in research…. And as they see that it works, there is no, uh, political issue in a way to increase or to develop the units. … On the contrary, they are, uh, pushing in a way to add more." Interviewee, EE*

The Slovenian interviewee described a government-supported national project aimed at assessing the technology transfer landscape in the country.

> *"…we're asking ourselves the question [what kind of profile you want for the TTO?] and the colleagues working in details, what kind of profile you want to have for your co-workers…. we're investigating this tech transfer offices landscape in Slovenia, so we will do it on 13 institutes and university and then we have to find out how they're doing." Interviewee, SI*

According to this interviewee, there has been a shift in the dialogue between professionals and the government. They now have more direct contact with policymakers and tend to rely more on their experience in order to achieve policy goals.

> *"I mean now we talk, you know government and me, I can talk to the government people they even ask for the meeting with me. So, before it was like two different worlds. So, there is absolute, there's a will to change it and they know if they want to change, they have to understand our world and we have to understand there." Interviewee, SI*

5.4.2. Evaluating the Research Support Services

An additional goal of the interviews was to identify methodologies to evaluate the operations and outcomes of Research Support Services. While interviewees cited various institutional practices for evaluation, few were able to refer to methodologies specifically aimed at assessing the efficiency and impact of Research Support Offices. It is important to note, however, that the recognition of Research Management largely depends on the articulation of a clear Unique Value Proposition, supported by evidence; ideally, by quantitative data.

> *"We're looking at the budget now and the people … say, oh, wow, … you increased 40% the number and … the number of persons that are paid between over five years ago. ... So, when they get to see those numbers, they understand the quality of the job that has been done." Interviewee, FR*

Evaluation is conducted through a variety of methods. Some interviewees described internal practices that they carry out both collaboratively with the RSO team and individually with each colleague.

> *"I organise a retreat, a team retreat every end of the year to look back on the past year, so we evaluate ourselves, we evaluate everything. So, we evaluate our services, but also how we work as a team, what went well, what went less well, and then we plan the year to come. And we check how can we do it differently if something was evaluated negatively or if somebody was not happy with something. We look for solutions and how to implement the solutions and then we plan the next year. So, this is kind of auto-evaluation. And then, of course, I have the yearly evaluation with every collaborator which is compulsory from the HR. So, we have structured forms and I do that in the beginning of the year to evaluate with*

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the evaluator, her or his work, her or his performance, and we set goals for the next year." Interviewee, CH

Two interviewees mentioned that they ask researchers to complete satisfaction surveys following the provision of support, i.e. the submission of a proposal or the delivery of a workshop. The results generally bring positive feedback, while also helping to identify issues which necessitates further support.

> *"So, when we support someone after the support, we send a Google form. A satisfactory survey. Uh, so we have, let's say, uh, around 60% of people answering, and we can see clearly that they appreciate the service. In this survey, we also ask them with what they struggled the most. Uh, so most of the time we see clearly, uh, we have one currently open and we can clearly see that the impact section is something they struggle with, but also the time management, for instance. And so, we have different kind of input. For us, it is also the way to see, we have to develop training. …. So, when we see that, uh, people say they're struggling with something special, then we can also develop something if it's not yet available." Interviewee, EE*

> *"And what we did last year, for example, is a survey among our researchers just to ask them how satisfied they were with services provided by the various divisions. So that's basically, I would say, it's qualitative information about what researchers think about the services. But I'm still thinking about a really good evaluation method because what we've been discussing a lot about also in the context of discussions about how to divide the work and so on, yeah." Interviewee, AT*

> *"So short term it's always anecdotical. So, you have different people who give you feedback or you may ask them for feedback. For us it's above all the researchers. For example, we asked in the reports that they have to fill out every year, if they were content with the cooperation with the head office or if they have some point they would like to bring up with what the process is we have or with the funding schemes we have." Interviewee, DE*

Others prefer to use institutional Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to assess the results and potential impacts of their services, though these indicators provide a rather macro level picture.

> *"What we do is we have certain figures from our research documentation systems, so we know how many projects we provide services to and so on. But it's basically it's more figures than a real evaluation." Interviewee, AT*

> *"… so on the on the organisation level across the University, of course, we got our key performance indicators for research, right. So those are the things that they're basically looking at in terms of we added, you know, X number of of of hours or full time. For instance. Deployment, you know, contracts. And then how did that shift our KPIs? So that's number one they're looking at, you know, hard numbers and and that kind of thing." Interviewee, IE*

5.4.3. Demonstrating the value of the RSO

Interviewees reported several ways through which they demonstrate the value of the Research Support Office to gain recognition and support from institutional leadership. Presenting research support services and potential added value of research support is important both towards the academic community and also to the RPO leadership.

> *"… we could also organise larger meetings, not one-to-one, but with many people to have some kind of a meeting where everyone will try to explain what he or she is doing…" Interviewee, FR*

This can be done proactively, either by RSO leaders or by researchers who have benefited from the services. Demonstrating the effectiveness in terms of outcomes, such as securing contracts or

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maintaining staffing levels, strengthens the case for long-term investment in research support services.

> *"I write proposal for the Rectorate to show them what we are doing and that we should have permanent contracts. I now got the agreement just one month ago that we can keep the number of FTE for the next three years." Interviewee, CH*

When researchers publicly acknowledge the role of RSOs in their success, it can be particularly persuasive for institutional leaders. However, as the German example illustrates, such recognition is not always forthcoming, due to the competitive and individualistic nature of research funding.

> *"I think we need researchers who go about and say, well, I would have not had the opportunity to get this grant without the work of research vendors. But this, of course, is very difficult to achieve since most researchers are also, well, they're dependent on what they get from 3rd party funding and to recognise that someone else has something to do with it." Interviewee, DE*

This once again highlights the importance of shared success and mutual acknowledgment between RMs and researchers.

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6. Conclusions and recommendations

The profession of Research Managers is still emerging, diverse, and evolving. This is evident from several key factors:

1) Diversity of the Profession

- **Diverse workplaces:** Research Managers are employed across public, private, and non-profit sectors. While most are found in universities and research institutions, they also work in companies, research funding organisations, and NGOs.
- **Broad scope of work:** They are involved in all stages of research, typically covering 2–4 areas of Research Management. This requires a wide range of knowledge and skills in their daily roles.
- **Varied job titles and roles:** There is significant variation in official job titles, hierarchical positions, and responsibilities among Research Managers.
- **Wide range of responsibilities:** Research Managers operate across numerous fields, most commonly in proposal development (pre-award) and project management (post-award). Other areas include research strategy and policy development, research support delivery, training and researcher development, innovation management and technology transfer.

2) Terminology and definition

- **Terminology and professional identity:** The terms "Research Manager," "Research Manager and Administrator," and "Research Management and Support Professional" are most preferred terminology. "Research Manager" is increasingly accepted as an umbrella term in policy discussions, but translation into national languages must be sensitive to local specialities, avoiding terms that could carry negative connotations or diminish professional standing. However, a universally accepted term that resonates with all professionals in the field has yet to be established.
- **The proposed definition of RM:** We initiate an inclusive and flexible approach enabling the reflection on constantly emerging fields and job profiles when defining Research Management. Accordingly, Research Managers enable, facilitate and support the performance of research in all its applications. Research Managers hold generalist or specialised roles within the research and innovation ecosystem. Research Managers are based in all types of research performing organisations, including public and private universities, research institutes, research funding organizations, medical institutions, NGOs, companies, public authorities, and so on.

3) Background and entry into the profession

- **Diverse backgrounds:** There is no consensus on whether Research Managers need a research background. This often depends on the scientific field they support, the level of their support and their specific job role. However, familiarity with research plans and methodologies is highly valuable.
- **Lack of formal qualifications:** The majority of Research Managers do not hold a specific certification or degree related to Research Management.

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- **Entry into the profession:** Many Research Managers "fall into" the role, often due to a skills match or an interest to stay in academia.

4) Skills, competences & professional development

- **Essential skills:** Research Managers require a broad and evolving skill set, reflecting the diversity and complexity of their roles. There are several core skills and competencies required in Research Management. It is also essential to emphasize the importance of soft skills, transversal skills as well as good knowledge of English. On top of these, specific roles and areas of RM require specific knowledge, skills and competencies.
- **Professional development:** Opportunities for professional development are often unstructured and rely on the initiative of individual Research Managers.

5) Career in research management

- **Multidimensional career paths:** The lack of a clear career framework and job architecture hinders the attractiveness of the profession. However, it is important to bear in mind that professional development in Research Management is possible not only vertically - from foundational to intermediate and advanced levels - but horizontally and in a multidimensional manner across different specialisation areas.
- **Limited leadership opportunities:** Leadership roles within Research Management are scarce, restricting internal career progression. In parallel, many senior professionals perform leadership duties without formal appointments.
- **Improving employment conditions:** Positive trends are emerging, with most Research Managers now holding permanent contracts and identifying as full-time professionals, rather than being employed on a project basis.
- **Salary and remuneration:** While in some countries Research Managers can achieve salary levels comparable to those of researchers, in general their financial remuneration is more closely aligned with administrative positions. This often fails to reflect their educational background and expertise.
- **Incentives and motivation:** Further incentivisation and motivation of Research Managers currently lack a strategic approach and are handled on a case-by-case basis.

6) Recognition and Visibility

- **Evaluation of research support:** Systematic evaluation of research support services is not yet widespread and often occurs informally, while it can make more visible the added value and the impact of RSS.
- **The "Administration Paradox":** Research Managers often face the challenge of visibility; their work is only noticed when issues arise, while smooth operations tend to go unnoticed.
- **Building partnerships:** Research Managers and Research Support Offices can perform better if their relation to researchers and institution leaders is based on partnership and mutual trust.

To sum up, Research Managers play a vital role in enhancing the quality, efficiency, and compliance of

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research, while also amplifying its social and economic impact. Therefore, making Research Management (RM) roles more visible and valued within the research ecosystem is essential. With the recognition of the profession now on the EU political agenda, the development of Research Management is accelerating. However, the profession has not yet reached its optimal stage, and continued efforts are necessary to further its advancement and recognition. Therefore, the following recommendations were formulated:

Strengthening the identity and recognition of the RM profession

- ➔ **Reinforce the umbrella term of Research Manager** as an inclusive concept that incorporates a huge diversity of areas, roles and contexts in RM at the European level. In the future, however, it might be necessary to revisit the common terminology to ensure that professionals from diverse areas can identify themselves with this terminology.
- ➔ **Promoting formal recognition of RM as a profession across ERA countries:** RM is an emerging, multi-faceted profession with diverse responsibilities. Greater institutional and policy-level recognition is needed to acknowledge RMs as integral actors of the research ecosystem.

Enabling multidimensional career path and professional development

- ➔ **Position Research Management as a real alternative to an academic career and enable interoperability within the sector. Launch communication campaigns** to raise awareness about the profession, its value added, and showcase success stories in order to shift institutional cultures and mitigate the visibility gap.

- ➔ **Establish clear and multidimensional career pathways for Research Managers** by adapting the European Competence Framework for Research Managers. These pathways should be supported by appropriate financial recognition and aligned with strategic professional development opportunities.

- ➔ **Improve employment conditions and promote fair employment**: While positive trends are emerging as permanent employment is becoming widespread, remuneration often does not reflect the educational level or expertise of RMs. Aligning salary structures and offering appropriate incentives are crucial for retention and motivation. Human Resources management should play a more proactive and strategic role in this process.

- ➔ **Improve training offer and enable strategic professional development:** It is essential to develop structured and strategically planned opportunities for professional development that are formally recognised by Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) as employers. Professional development should move beyond ad-hoc initiatives and become an integral part of institutional strategies and more trainings should be addressed to RMs internally.

- ➔ Acknowledge **more leadership roles in Research Management:** While leadership roles in RM are limited and inherent without proper recognition, institutional career paths should provide more opportunities for senior professionals, in order to reduce fluctuation and support the retention of experienced professionals.

More strategic approach to build, solidify and promote Research Support Services.

- ➔ **Build partnerships between researchers and RMs:** This involves building trust, partner relations and promoting collaboration throughout the research lifecycle.

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- ➔ Develop **micro (institutional) and macro (national & European) level methodologies to measure and assess the impact** of Research Managers in the R&I ecosystems: To move from a support role to a strategic partnership, Research Managers' expertise must be made more visible to researchers and leadership by collecting user feedback, performance indicators and developing more robust methodologies to demonstrate the added value and measure the impact of RSS.

- ➔ **Securing the funding of RSOs** and **rewarding the work** of RMs: While there is a positive trend regarding institutional investments in RM, RSOs could develop such activities that can secure stable income for the RSOs. Moreover, European and national funding mechanisms should incentivize the development and professionalisation of RSOs. Sustainable, long-term investment in human resources and career structures is essential to retain talent and reduce turnover.

Securing the future capacity in RM

- ➔ **Strategic use of AI in RM:** Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) should initiate a strategic assessment of the implications of AI tools on Research Management (RM) tasks and workflows. This includes developing targeted strategies for responsible AI integration, investing in the upskilling of RM professionals, and fostering institutional reflection on how AI may reshape the profession's role within the broader research ecosystem. Such a proactive approach will ensure that RM functions remain future-proof, efficient, and aligned with evolving scientific and technological landscapes.

- ➔ **Ensuring stable and long-term funding for professional networks and associations**: European and national policy-makers should provide sustained financial support to RM networks and associations. These entities are essential for knowledge sharing, peer learning, and long-term capacity building.

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8. Annexes

8.1. Annex 1: Research Data Management

HETFA collects data upon the expression of consent of the participants. One can choose to voluntarily provide personal data in the context of the following project activities:

a) responding to the RM Roadmap survey;
b) participating as interviewee;
c) participating in focus group interview.

This data enables HETFA to deliver the project activities for which it is responsible. The data provided is only used for the purposes of the RM Roadmap project. Voluntarily provided personal data may also be used by HETFA for the purpose of contacting the respondent for possible future consultation related to the theme of the respective project activity.

HETFA will treat personal information with the strictest confidentiality and in accordance with the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), effective as of 25 May 2018.

After anonymization, results of the research activities carried out by HETFA will be published open access in research reports (D1.1, D1.2) and possibly in peer reviewed scientific publications.

As project coordinator, the European Association of Research Managers and Administrators (EARMA) will ensure all project partner guarantees the treatment of personal data generated during the RM Roadmap project.

Access and storage

Data will be either collected in an anonym way (survey) or will be anonymized (interview and focus group. Collected data will be shared through online open access repositories.[9] Any information that could lead to an individual being identified will be completely and irreversibly removed. Access to personal data one directly provides is limited to the appropriate staff within HETFA who are involved in the respective project activity. This data is kept for maximum of 5 years after the end date of the RM Roadmap project.

Re-use of existing data

For the sake of comparison or reference, results of previous or parallel research projects will be utilised e.g. RAAAP, RAAAP-2, RAAAP-3, the preliminary study of foRMAtion, CARDEA, etc. All results from these projects and initiatives were via volunteers and are open access.

More information

You can find more information on HETFA's GDPR policy here.

Contact

Hétfa Kutatóintézet Kft. (HETFA Research Institute Ltd.)

Registered seat: 1051 Budapest, Október 6. utca 19.

[9] FigShare/Zenodo

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Survey

In the frame of WP1 – Intelligence and WP2 – Training and Development a joint online survey will be carried out. The main aim of the survey is to get a comprehensive picture of the current situation of European Research Manager and Support Professionals (RMs). The survey will be conducted through the Knowledge and Community Platform (KCP) developed in the frame of the project. The survey will open with an introduction – providing information about the RM Roadmap project, the objective of the research, the details of participation and data management – and a consent statement. The data collected will be concerning RMs, their career paths, training, funding and networking opportunities available to them, etc.

Answering to the survey will be voluntary and all data collected will be anonym. Email addresses will be only gathered from those who wish to provide additional information, e.g. about training courses, or who are interested in learning about the results and/or voluntarily apply for interviews. These data will be handled in line with GDPR.

It is expected that 2,600-2,800 responses will be received. Results of the survey will be retrieved in CSV format and retained on an external hard drive of HETFA for maximum of 5 years after the end date of the RM Roadmap project.

Interview

At least 18 online interviews will be carried out in the frame of WP1 – Intelligence. The aim of conducting interviews is to identify at least 16 case studies of institutional RMS best practice and capacity adoption. Interviewees will be selected based on social and professional characteristics (occupation, expertise and competencies).

Participation in the interview is completely voluntary. Participants also have the right to stop the interview, refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the research at any time without any consequences. Content of the interviews will support the analysis, quotes and excerpts will be extracted to support the findings.

Prior to the interview, participants receive detailed information about the purpose and procedure of the research, and they must sign a consent form. The consent form is necessary to ensure that participants understand the purpose of their involvement and that they agree to the conditions of their participation.

Participants' will remain anonymous throughout data reported. It will be ensured that information in the interview that could identify the interviewee will not be revealed. None of the personal data will ever be passed to third parties.

The interviews will be recorded through Zoom in mp4 format and then summarised in MSWord document. To ensure complete confidentiality, interviewees will have the right to request a copy of the transcript given the opportunity to correct any factual errors. Access to the interview transcript will be limited to the researchers who officially take part in the research process.

Signed consent forms, original audio recordings and transcripts of the interviews will be retained on an external hard drive of HETFA for maximum of 5 years after the end date of the RM Roadmap project.

Focus group interview

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Six focus group interviews (each with 6-8 interviewees) will be carried out in the frame of WP1 – Intelligence. Prior to the interview, participants receive detailed information about: 1) the purpose and method of the research, 2) the topics to be discussed in the focus group, 3) the potential benefits and risks of participation and 4) confidentiality. They must also sign a consent form.

The interviews will be audio-recorded and then transcripts will be elaborated in MSWord document. Signed consent forms, original audio recordings and transcripts of the interviews will be retained on an external hard drive of HETFA for maximum of 5 years after the end date of the RM Roadmap project.

Participants' responses will remain confidential, and no names will be included in any project reports. Participants will also have the right to refuse to answer any question or to leave the focus group at any point without any consequences. Participants will be asked to respect the privacy of other focus group members and keep all information disclosed during the group confidential.

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8.2. Annex 2: RM Roadmap Online survey

Part 1: Introduction and consent

The main aim of the survey developed by the RM Roadmap project is to get a comprehensive picture of the current situation of Research Managers (RMs) across Europe. In our understanding, **the term RMs covers a wide range of experts** at different professional levels bearing specific knowledge:

1. to streamline/facilitate the planning, the development, management, administration, communication and valorisation of research and innovation,
2. to ensure compliance with policy objectives, funding programme requirements, financial rules and legal regulations,
3. to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of R&I projects/system, and/or
4. to enhance the impact of R&I on the society.

Whether they are generalists or specialised in a particular field, RMs are involved in different phases of the research and innovation projects/system.

This survey builds on previous surveys, primarily on the RAAAP (Research Administration As A Profession) series, an international, longitudinal set that has identified the key skills, attitudes and behaviours of successful Research Management and administration leaders, their involvement in support for impact, and their routes into the profession. This approach makes the answers comparable and provides an opportunity for a deeper analysis. However, its inclusiveness and European focus make the present survey unique, which predicts the setting of further goals, namely, the formulation of recommendations:

- on an inclusive definition and terminology including RM professional categories;
- on an RM career development framework;
- on an RM skill and competence matrix; as well as
- on a future RM training scheme.

Participation

The completion of the survey approximately takes ca. 25 minutes. Using a laptop or a similar device is recommended as several questions have multiple parts. You can save your answers by clicking on "Save and continue later" on the top of the page; thus filling in the survey can be paused any time and you can resume later. When navigating through the survey, however, please do it through the 'back' and 'forward' buttons, otherwise you will loose your data.

Participation in the research is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw from the research at any time, without any consequence, by simply closing the survey.

Data management

All data will be collected anonymously and then cleansed. If you are interested in being informed about the results of the research and/or would like to volunteer for interviews, you will have the opportunity to give us your email address at the end of the survey.

Collected data will be shared on online open access repositories (Figshare and Zenodo) after thorough anonymization. Any information that could lead to an individual being identified will be completely and irreversibly redacted. Results of the research will be also published open access in research reports and possibly in peer-reviewed scientific publications.

Contact

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If you have any questions or complaints about the survey or your participation, please contact the research team at rm-roadmap@hetfa.hu and rm-roadmap@novaims.unl.pt

1. Consent Statement

If you have read and understood the information above, and are committed to take part in the research, please tick the boxes below.

- ☐ I have read and understand the information provided above.
- ☐ I am 18 or older.
- ☐ I consent to take part in this research.

Page 2: About you

2. Please select your gender identification *
    - Female
    - Male
    - other
    - Prefer not to provide

3. Please indicate your age *

4. In which country do you currently work? *
    - Selection
    - Prefer not to provide

Page 3: Your job profile

5. How would you define your current employment? *
    - Full-time Research Manager
    - Part-time Research Manager
    - Full-time, combining Research Manager and research/academic role
    - Full-time, combining Research Manager and another (not research/academic) role
    - Part-time, combining Research Manager and research/academic role
    - Part-time, combining Research Manager and another (not research/academic) role
    - Self-employed
    - Retired
    - currently not active in this role
    - Not sure – none of these options seem to fit my role – please specify

6. How would you characterize your current employment contract? *
    - Permanent (an open-ended contract of employment with no fixed end date other than retirement)

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- Fixed-term (there is a date where if nothing changes you will no longer be employed in your current position)
- Secondment (after a fixed term "secondment"/project you will return to your previous position)
- Other [Please give details]

7. How many hours a week do you typically work on RMS activities?

	Total hours worked	Hours worked in the office/ laboratory/etc.	Hours worked from home	Hours spent by travelling and attending meeting abroad
Weekly working hours – in practice				

8. If there is a difference between the total weekly working hours according to your contract and the total hours worked in practice, does your employer recognize and value this in some way? Please elaborate briefly.
    - No, generally there is no difference
    - Yes, but it is not recognised or valued
    - Yes, the extra time is paid
    - Yes, this extra time can be converted to days off
    - other, please explain

9. Defining the areas you work in (you are asked to tick the main categories, even if you do not work in all the listed fields) *

    - **Research, strategy and policy development** including but not limited to the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of research policy and strategy, the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of knowledge valorisation policy and strategy as well as research assessment.
    - **Proposal development (pre-award)** including but not limited to the identification and dissemination of funding opportunities, general support for the application, research project planning, internal negotiations for project formulation, framing the writing process, formulation of the content to be written, external negotiations and consortium building, costing, pricing and enforcing internal budget rules, legals aspects and providing organisational legal documents.
    - **Project support (post-award)** including but not limited to negotiating contracts and sub-awards, managing amendments, internal setup of the project, managing the consortium and communication within, liaising with funders, administrative

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support, progress management, accounting, project evaluation, funder reporting, legal advice.

- **Translation of results: science communication** including but not limited to communication and dissemination of research results, research impact, public engagement, public relations' management, stakeholder event organisation.
- **Translation of results: uptake and utilization** including but not limited to market research, mapping of business finance opportunities, business development, identification of business model, elaboration of business plan, technology transfer, intellectual property management, legal advise on business models, IP and licensing, spin-out management, negotiation of valorisation deals with university partners.
- **Management information and related functions** including but not restricted to information systems, electronic research administration, CRISs (Current Research Information System), audit processes, statutory returns.
- **Research support service delivery** including but not limited to management, organisation, structuring of research support services as well as mapping, monitoring and reviewing research support service functions.
- **Training, researcher development, Postgraduate Researchers (PGR)** including but not limited to postgraduate (doctoral) research student administration, postdoctoral affairs, training researchers, managing and effectively communicating training activities to research/academic staff, collaboration with educational programmes, delivering training for Research Managers.
- **Research ethics and integrity** including but not limited to ethics and integrity management, managing compliance, and dealing with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI).
- **International collaboration, institution branding** including but not limited to mapping institutional portfolio and institution branding, promotion of the institution at national/international events, and public relations management.
- **Collaboration with industry** including but not limited to consultancy, securing access to infrastructure, coordinating R&I collaboration, coordinating internship programmes.
- **Research infrastructure management** including but not limited to security and risk management, planning research infrastructure & developing sustainable funding model, infrastructure and resource management, as well as business development and innovation in research infrastructure.
- **Research data, research information, intellectual property management** including but not limited to open access and open data, intellectual property and asset management, portfolio mapping, exploitation planning.
- **Research Funding** including but not limited to the preparation, management, and assessment of Research and Innovation grants.

10. What is your job title, according to your contract of employment? Please add the translation of your job title in English.

11. If we should have an umbrella term to define the group of professions you fit in which of the following options do you identify with? * Select the 3 most suitable.

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- Professional on the Interface of Science
- Research Administrator
- Research Advisor
- Research Consultant
- Research Management Expert
- Research Management and Support Professional
- Research Developer
- Research Enabler
- Research Facilitator
- Research Manager
- Research and Innovation Manager
- Research Manager and Administrator
- Research and Innovation Support Professional
- Research Support Professional
- Knowledge/Technology Management Professional
- Other, please specify

Page 4: You career path as a Research Manager

12. Your current educational background: Please indicate the level of the academic qualification gained
    - Left school with no formal qualifications / No additional qualifications
    - Left school/college with pre-degree qualifications (high school diploma/A level/…)
    - Associates Degree / Foundation Degree
    - Bachelor's degree (for example: BA, BSc, BS)
    - Master's degree (for example: MA, MS, MEng, MEd, MBA)
    - Doctorate degree (for example: PhD, EdD, DBA, DProf)

13. Your current educational background: Please indicate the subject area of the academic qualification gained*
    - Natural and life sciences such as physics, chemistry, biology, and math
    - Medicine & Health Sciences
    - Engineering (including computing)
    - Business
    - Social Science
    - Humanities
    - Arts
    - General/All
    - Other, please specify

14. Is your education background aligned to the subject area(s) that you support in? *
    - Yes - I support research in a subject area that I know about (by education or experience)
    - Partially – my education / experience is in a related area(s)
    - No - my education / experience is in an unrelated area(s)

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- Not Applicable – I cover the whole institution, not specific subject areas
- Other, please specify

15. How important were the following factors to move into Research Management (either by choice or because you applied for the job) *

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements (1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: agree, 4: strongly agree, 5: neutral)

- It was a profession I was interested in while studying
- It was a profession I felt my skills would be a good match for
- It was a temporary role… but I'm still in Research Management
- A colleague/friend encouraged me to get into the field
- A position was available, so I applied and got the job, even though I did not have any experience
- I was previously an academic/researcher and moved into Research Management
- I was previously an PhD Student and moved into Research Management
- I was previously an industry professional and moved into Research Management was previously an administrator and moved into Research Management
- I was looking for a job without having to move house
- I wanted to work at this particular University/College/etc
- Other – Reason [Please describe how/why you became a Research Management]

16. Why have you stayed in Research Management? *

Please indicate to what extent the following statements are important for you (1: not important at all, 2: unimportant, 3: important, 4: very important, 5: neutral)

- It pays well
- The work is never boring or monotonous
- I see the opportunity for personal advancement
- I haven't found better job opportunity yet
- Job security (long-term/permanent contract)
- I enjoy the profession, it's fun
- I like working in the science / academic sector
- I like the challenges of this job
- It's a new profession and I like to help shape it
- Too late to change career now
- I like being part of a team
- I like supporting innovation, and the creation of new knowledge
- I like networking and support others to find new connections
- I have flexible work arrangements
- I can reconciliate this job with my personal life (work life balance)
- I have the opportunity to earn extras
- Other – Reason – Please explain

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17. Approximately how many years in total have you been employed in Research Management? Please insert the number *

18. What are the top challenges and problems you face in your current RM job?*

Please indicate to what extent the following statements are important for you (1: not important at all, 2: unimportant, 3: important, 4: very important, 5: neutral)

- lack of professional network for support
- lack of knowledge, expertise
- lack of training
- lack of understanding of culture in research
- new profession in the institution
- low professional recognition
- not a permanent position
- unclear career framework / job architecture at the institution
- lack of institutional policies
- demanding/stressful environment
- lack of peers, peer support
- monotone tasks
- Lack of opportunities for professional development
- low salary
- often asked to do things beyond your job description
- expectation to work outside normal hours
- Less respected by researchers
- Seen as a gatekeeper not an enabler
- Lack of professional identity
- Low job security
- other, please specify

19. How do you see yourself progressing in the Research Management career? * (Multiple choice)
    - Going through the institutional career ladder
    - Aspiring for promotion towards leadership
    - Changing job to another institution
    - Getting a certification in the profession
    - Having a mobility experience
    - Getting peer support / mentoring
    - Accomplishing a doctorate
    - Other, please specify

Page 5: Skills and competencies

20. Which skills do you need for your current position and job role? *

	Not needed at	Not needed	Needed	Very much	important for career	I don't know

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	all			needed	progression	
Transversal skills						
Oral communication skills						
Written communication skills						
Interpersonal skills						
Intrapersonal skills						
Problem solving						
Multitasking						
Cultural and diversity skills						
Flexibility						
Assertiveness						
Openness						
Critical thinking						
Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation						
RM related soft skills						
Analytical skills						
Mediation						
Negotiation						
Information management						
Working in teams						
Teamwork						
Teambuilding, motivation building						

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Leadership, decision-making						
Planning, strategic thinking						
Creativity						
Efficiency and effectiveness						
Reliability, trustfulness						
Stress management						
Time management						
Priorisation						
Diplomatic skills						
Conflict management						
Curiosity						
Adaptability						
Resilience						
RM related hard skills						
Understand research and the R&I ecosystem						
Understanding institutional governance						
Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders						
Ethics, integrity						
IT skills						
Language skills (EN)						
Managing resources						
Management skills						

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Specialisation or Role related skills						
Building and maintaining networks						
Administrative skills						
Financial skills						
Legal and regulatory skills						
Understanding politics and policy cycles						
Appreciating values and understanding interests						
Nurturing innovation						
Lobbying						
Stakeholder engagement and management						
Intellectual asset recognition, IP strategy						
Cross-cutting issues in HEU						

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21. What is (are) your mother tongue(s)?

22. Please add other languages and your fluency

	Language	Basic user	Independent user	Proficient user	Important for my job

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Page 6: Your Organization

23. Please indicate the status of your employer organisation: *
    - Public
    - Non-profit private
    - Private
    - Not sure

24. Please indicate the type of your employer organisation: *
    - University - Predominantly Undergraduate Institution / Primarily Teaching Institution
    - University - Research Active
    - University - Research Intensive (a “top tier” research university in my country)
    - College
    - Research Institute
    - Research Funder (governmental or non-governmental)
    - Private Company
    - Hospital
    - Charity / NGO
    - Other Government Department
    - Other, please specify
    - Not sure

25. Which part of your organization do you work? *
    - Central office/service or department (e.g. Sponsored Projects Administration)
    - Non-central office/service department (e.g. Grants Office within an academic department/school/college)
    - Academic/research department (e.g. Department of Medicine / School of Social Work / Faculty of Humanities / servicing a number of PIs) possibly on your own
    - None of the above seem to fit my situation – please specify

26. What is the approximate number of staff employed at your organization?
    - 1-50
    - 51-250
    - 251-1000
    - 1001-2000
    - 2001-5000
    - 5001-10000
    - more than 10000

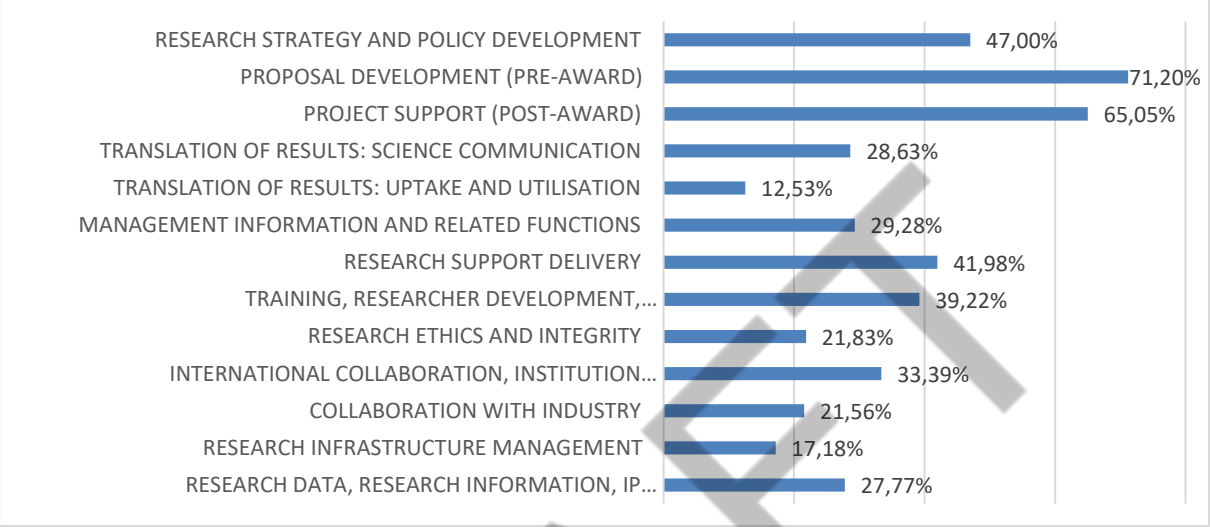
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8.3. Annex 3: 2nd co-creation questions

8.3.1. Co-Creation Questions for National RM communities

Q1: Respondents of the RM Roadmap survey indicated the following areas in which they work (multiple selection was possible). (data from 28 January 2023, n=1851)



Q1.1: Do you miss any particular and/or emerging areas which should be also included in the definition of Research Management at the European level? If yes, please share!

Q1.2: Are there any national specificities, e.g. certain areas being underdeveloped / non-existent, that influence the areas covered by Research Management? If yes, please elaborate on these factors and how they might affect the definition of Research Management at the national level.

Q2: Respondents of the RM Roadmap survey were asked to select the 3 most suitable professional titles with which they identify and could be used as umbrella/collective term at European level for RMs. The 5 most popular choices are as follows (data from 28 January 2023, n=1846):

- Research Manager and Administrator: 32.88%
- Research Manager: 31.96%
- Research Management and Support Professional: 28.60%
- Research Support Professional: 22.70%
- Research Advisor: 19.50%

Q2.1: Given the broad range of fields covered by Research Managers, what would be the most proper umbrella/collective term to be used at European level? Please pick one! The term should be embraced by professionals working in RM and understood by stakeholders of the R&I ecosystem including institution leaders, decision-makers and policymakers.

Q2.2: Please elaborate any specific circumstances that might be important from the view of the professionals working in your field.

Q3: The table includes the most important skills and competences revealed by the RM Roadmap survey for each of the identified areas of Research Management. Identification of these skills and competences for the different areas can help employers in recruitment, provide career paths and professional development opportunities for RMs, and articulate better the training needs. Are there additional skills or competences that are essential for your field and should be included among the

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top 5? Please share your suggestions!

8.3.2. Co-Creation Questions for Thematic RM communities

Q1: Please provide a detailed description of your RM area/field!

Q1.1: What are the main areas/job roles undertaken by RM professionals in your field?

Q1.2: Are there any emerging trends or noticeable gaps within your field that are overlooked at the moment?

Q2: Respondents of the RM Roadmap survey were asked to select the 3 most suitable professional titles with which they identify and could be used as umbrella/collective term at European level for RMs. The 5 most popular choices are as follows (data from 28 January 2023, n=1846):

- Research Manager and Administrator: 32.88%
- Research Manager: 31.96%
- Research Management and Support Professional: 28.60%
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Q2.1: Given the broad range of fields covered by Research Managers, what would be the most proper umbrella/collective term to be used at European level? Please pick one! The term should be embraced by professionals working in RM and understood by stakeholders of the R&I ecosystem including institution leaders, decision-makers and policymakers.

Q2.2: Please elaborate any specific circumstances that might be important from the view of the professionals working in your field.

Q3: The table includes the most important skills and competences revealed by the RM Roadmap survey for each of the identified areas of Research Management. Identification of these skills and competences for the different areas can help employers in recruitment, provide career paths and professional development opportunities for RMs, and articulate better the training needs. Are there additional skills or competences that are essential for your field and should be included among the top 5? Please share your suggestions!

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8.4. Annex 4: 3rd co-creation questions

RM-ROADMAP 3rd co-creation session

14th of November until 19th of December 2024

Career Development Framework Co-Creation Questions for National and Thematic Communities

Recommended funded schemes at the EU level:

One of the key objectives of the RM-Roadmap project is to recommend an **EU-wide training scheme** designed to enhance the professional development of Research Managers. To ensure that the recommendations are relevant and grounded in the needs of the RM community, we are presenting two potential training schemes for consideration. They have been adapted from well established researcher-focused programmes, thus ensuring familiarity and ease of adoption by the RM community and policymakers.

The proposed schemes for EU-level funding are as follows:

Scheme A - This initiative focuses on supporting the entrance and development of individual RM careers across Europe by providing long-term financial support for individual grants for upskilling through training and mobility. Like the MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships and ERA fellowships, Scheme A would offer individual grants, providing flexibility for personal career development without requiring institutional commitments.

Scheme B - This initiative aims at strengthening Research Management through institutional collaboration. Institutions would apply for funding to support staff exchanges and training opportunities across organisations, following the model of MSCA Staff Exchanges and ERA Talents. Unlike Scheme A, Scheme B requires a strong institutional commitment, fostering the exchange of knowledge and best practices between organisations and sectors. The focus here is on building institutional capacity while also advancing the professional development of RMs involved in these exchanges.

1. Which features need to be introduced so that each one of these scheme formats are feasible and attractive to Research Managers in your national/ thematic community?

These features **can** include:

- Career stage of RM candidates
- Type of institution
- Type of training (mentoring, courses, job shadowing,…)
- For scheme A: a guarantee to return to the initial job
- For scheme B: institutional commitment
- Others that you rate as crucial

2. What are the expected impacts of each one of these initiatives on the professional development of the RM community? And how do you rate both initiatives in terms of priority?

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Professional Development and Career Path

The Competence Framework for Research Managers initiated by CARDEA has been adjusted with the inputs from RM Roadmap. The current version of the possible European Competence Framework for Research Managers (RM Comp) is being finalised and validated with stakeholders, including policy-makers, RPO leaders and Research Managers under the coordination of Action 17, the Research Management Initiative.

RM Comp aims to facilitate professional development by offering clear learning outcomes and progression models, encouraging Research Managers to enhance their skills and competences. The framework aims to standardise RM competencies, support career planning, and promote the recognition and value of RM roles across Europe.

Given the fluid and flexible nature of the profession, with constantly emerging roles and fields, the RM Comp also underlines several key aspects: entry into the profession can occur at various levels based on educational background and expertise; professional development should be possible both vertically and across specialisations; leadership in research support services should be recognized as a specialised expertise, while leadership skills should be acknowledged across all competency areas; and RM Comp should remain a dynamic document that evolves with the profession.

Accordingly, the European Competence Framework for Research Manager defines 9 competence areas, 53 competences and 843 learning outcomes along 4 proficiency levels (foundational, intermediate, advanced, expert).



The inputs from RM Roadmap includes the elaboration of the definition of Research Management, adding one additional competence area (soft skills/personal attributes) and the inclusion of several subject matter expertise, including Research Infrastructure Management; Research Ethics and Integrity; Research, Strategy and Policy Development; and Research Support Service Delivery, as well, as the separation of Pre-award and Post-award, and the related learning outcomes.

Disclaimer: The co-creation 3 exercise was initiated prior to the publication of the RM Comp: The

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European Competence Framework for Research Managers by the European Commission. The Recommendation was officially published on 27 January 2025. For more information, please visit the European Commission's website.

Q3.1: Once a Europe-wide professional development framework and career path is formulated, what actions would be necessary for the adoption or adaptation of this framework and career path for Research Managers to your national/ thematic community?

NATIONAL: What is needed to make the professional development framework recognised by law or by relevant regulations at country level so that it provides clear career path to research performing organisations when employing RMs overcoming the current situation when RMs are employed under some sub-categories of administrative staff, for instance?

THEMATIC: What is needed to make the professional development framework recognised by research performing organisations so that RMs working in your thematic field have clear and specific career path within the RPOs overcoming the current situation when RMs are employed under some sub-categories of administrative staff, for instance?

Q3.2: Are there any existing initiatives in your country/thematic community that could support the adoption and adaptation? For instance, are there any plans to change legislation related to the recognition of RMs?

NATIONAL: Or are there any discussions at national level to address the currently missing career framework for RMs? Please elaborate if you are aware of any initiatives.

THEMATIC: Or are there any discussions at national or institutional level to address the currently missing career framework for RMs in your specific field? Please elaborate if you are aware of any initiatives.

ADOPTION: the decision to start using something – in our case the professional development framework is being recognised and used either at national or institutional level

ADAPTATION: the action or process of changing something, or of being changed, to suit a new purpose or situation – in our case the professional development framework is being tailor-made to the specific needs and assets at national or institutional level

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8.5. Annex 5: RM Roadmap Online interview guide

1. **Introduction (information on the RM Roadmap project and specifically on the interview) and consent**
2. **Please introduce yourself briefly with a special regard to**
    a. Your current job
    b. Your institution (status, type)
    c. Years of experience in Research Management and support
    d. How long are you employed in the current institution? At which level?
3. **Job profile**
    a. In which [Research Management and Support (RMS)-related] areas do you work currently?
    b. What is your level of responsibility?
    c. How would you call yourself / your job? How can you describe it briefly for an "outsider"?
    d. Are these areas that you currently work in reflected in your official job description (on file with your employer)? Do you see any trends with that regard in your institution?
    e. How do you see, to what extent needs your work specialization and specific knowledge? Do you and your colleagues need to be generalists or specialists?
4. **Organization**
    a. Could you briefly summarize how Research Management and support is operating in your institution? At which units do Research Managers (RMs) work? At which levels?
    b. Could you give an approximate no. of RMs?
    c. Which job roles are covered by these colleagues? Do you miss any specific roles?
    d. Is there any business model for the operation of Research Support Offices?
    e. How do you evaluate the operation of Research Support Services? In terms of e.g. the excellence of proposals and projects, institutional performance in the absorption of funds, marketization of results, etc.
    f. Are there any good practices that you consider worth to share regarding the delivery of professional Research Support Services in your institution?
    g. What are the main challenges that professionals working in Research Management and support face in your institution? What are the drivers and what hinders your work at your Research Support Office/as an RM?
    h. How do you see the recruitment of colleagues? How can you find the relevant people with relevant expertise?

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i. What kind of skills do you look for when recruiting your colleagues?

j. What can your office/organisation offer to colleagues to retain them?

k. What are the factors that influence your daily work/your recognition as a RM at your institution?

5. Career path

a. Is there any career frame for RMs at your institution? If yes,

i. What are the main positions/proficiency levels? What are the requirements of advancement?

ii. How do you evaluate the existing frame?

1. What are the advantages?

2. Do you see any barriers/limitations of career development?

3. Is there anything that you miss from the existing frame?

b. If not, what can be the reason behind? What is needed for the creation of a career frame?

6. Professional development

a. Are there any opportunities for professional development within your institution, unit? If yes, could you summarize them? (e.g. training, mentoring, certificate programme, post-graduate studies, mobility, etc.)

i. If not, what do you miss particularly?

b. What kind of support/resources are needed for these opportunities? How can you secure that support and the resources? e.g. financial resources, dedicating time, approval of supervisor/lean manager, etc.

c. Are there any challenges that should be addressed in the field of professional development?

7. Recognition of the profession

a. Is your job and role, as part of research support at large, a defined job title and role in your organization?

b. Is your job and role, as part of research support at large understood / recognized by other colleagues, e.g. by researchers, administration, leadership, management?

c. Is your job and role, as part of research support at large, a defined job title and role in your country?

d. What about other professions in Research Management and support?

e. Do you see any changes during your career? Do you still see any remaining challenges?

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f. How do you see the future? What is needed?

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8.6. Annex 6: Skills and competences per RM areas

	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
RESEARCH STRATEGY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT	• Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • Interpersonal skills • Written communication skills • Oral communication skills • Problem solving • **Influencing skills (HR)** • **Cultural and diversity skills (HR, PT)** • **Flexibility (IT)** • **Interpersonal skills (IT)**	• Prioritisation • Time management • Planning, strategic thinking • Efficiency and effectiveness • Reliability, trustfulness • **Negotiation skills (HR, IT)** • **Leadership skills (HR, CY)** • **Teamwork (HR, CY)** • **Team building and management (CY, IT, HR)** • **Empathy (IT, PT)** • **Mediation (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Resilience (IT)** • **Organisational skills (PT)** • **Active listening (PT)** • **Information management (PT)** • **Analytical skills (CY)**	• Language skills • Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Management skills • Understanding institutional governance • **Agile management (CY)**	• Building and maintaining networks • Administrative skills • Stakeholder engagement and management • Financial skills • Understanding politics and policy cycles • **Data analysis and interpretation (MT, CY)** • **Financial skills (CY)** • **Strategy development (CY)** • **Management of strategic projects (CY)** • **Setting and monitoring KPIs (CY)** • **Open science (CY)** • **Lobbying (IT)** • **Strategic foresight (IT)**

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT (PRE-AWARD)	• Problem solving • Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • Interpersonal skills • Written communication skills • Oral communication • **Interpersonal skills (IT)** • **Assertiveness (PT)** • **Cultural and diversity skills (PT, pre-award)** • **Multitasking (Pre-Award)** • **Critical thinking (pre-award)** • **Interpersonal skills (pre-award)**	• Time management • Prioritisation • Reliability • Planning, strategic thinking • Diplomatic skills • **Active listening (PT)** • **Empathy (PT, IT)** • **Creativity (PT, MT)** • **Analytical skills (HR)** • **Resilience (HR, IT, PT, pre-award)** • **Leadership skills (HR, CY, pre-award)** • **Meticulousness (HR)** • **Negotiation (CY, pre-award)** • **Attention to detail (CY, pre-award)** • **Team building and management (IT, PT)** • **Teamwork (PT, pre-award)** • **Conflict management (IT, pre-award)** • **Mediation (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Organisational skills (PT, pre-award)** • **Curiosity (pre-award)**	• Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Language skills • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Understanding institutional governance • Management skills	• Stakeholder engagement and management • Building and maintaining networks • Administrative skills • Appreciating values and understanding interests • Financial skills • **Basic business and commercial knowledge (HR, pre-award)** • **Understanding broader strategic value of proposals for the EU community (HR)** • **Understanding relevant field of science (HR, IT)** • **Understand the research process and guarantees quality assurance (MT)** • **Overview of the main elements of a good proposal (IT)** • **Understand the impact evaluation of projects (PT, CY)** • **Communication, dissemination, and exploitation of data visualization (HR)** • **Legal skills (PT, pre-award)**

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		• **Decision-making (pre-award)**		

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
PROJECT SUPPORT (POST-AWARD)	• Problem solving • Interpersonal skills • Multitasking • Written communication • Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • **Cultural and diversity skills (IT, PT)**	• Prioritisation • Time management • Efficiency and effectiveness • Adaptability • Planning, strategic thinking • **Anticipate situations/problems (PT)** • **(Self-)organisation (MT, PT)** • **Working in teams (HR)** • **Team building and management (CY, IT)** • **Teamwork (PT, HR)** • **Active listening (HR)** • **Empathy (HR, IT)** • **Meticulousness (HR)** • **Mediation (HR, IT)** • **Decision-making (CY, IT)** • **Attention to detail (CY, IT)** • **Negotiation (IT)** • **Leadership (IT)** • **Critical thinking (IT)** • **Conflict management (IT, PT)** • **Patience (IT)**	• Language skills • Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Management skills • Understanding institutional governance • **Event organisation and management (HR)** • **Project management skills (CY)**	• Administrative skills • Building and maintaining networks • Stakeholder engagement and management • Appreciating values and understanding interests • Financial skills • **Understand the research process and guarantees quality assurance (MT)** • **Understand project management frameworks and practices (MT, CY)** • **Understanding of dissemination and exploitation of project results (HR)** • **Knowledge of impact mechanisms (PT)**

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
TRANSLATION OF RESULTS: SCIENCE COMMUNICATION	• Problem solving • Interpersonal skills • Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • Multitasking • Written communication • **Cultural and diversity skills (CY, PT, impact)** • **Assertiveness (PT)**	• Time management • Reliability, trustfulness • Prioritisation • Efficiency and effectiveness • Adaptability • **Creativity (PT, CY, impact)** • **Leadership skills (HR)** • **Effective engagement (HR)** • **Precision (HR)** • **Analytical skills (CY, impact)** • **Agility (CY)** • **Attention to detail (CY)** • **Resilience (IT)** • **Empathy (IT, PT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Information management (PT)**	• Language skills • Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Management skills • Understanding institutional governance • **Visual communication (MT)** • **Presentation skills (HR, CY)** • **Event organisation and management (HR, CZ)**	• Administrative skills • Building and maintaining networks • Stakeholder engagement and management • Appreciating values and understanding interests • Understanding politics and policy cycles • **Understanding citizens & science (PT)** • **Strategic and business insight (HR, impact)** • **Publishing and open access skills (HR)** • **Communication of the project results to relevant stakeholders and the public (HR)** • **Specific knowledge related to the project (HR)** • **Legal and technical know-how (HR)** • **Interdisciplinary approach (CY)** • **Creating synergies (among projects) (IT)**

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
TRANSLATION OF RESULTS: UPTAKE AND UTILISATION & COLLABORATION WITH INDUSTRY	• Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • Problem solving • Interpersonal skills • Critical thinking • Written communication • **Cultural and diversity skills (PT, impact)** • **Multitasking (IT)**	• Efficiency and effectiveness • Prioritisation • Diplomatic skills • Time management • Stress management • **Leadership skills (HR)** • **Creativity (HR, impact)** • **Confidentiality (CY)** • **Resilience (IT)** • **Empathy (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Organisational skills (PT)** • **Analytical skills (HR, CY)** • **Resilience (IT)** • **Empathy (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Conflict management (IT)** • **Negotiation (PT)** • **Result-oriented thinking (PT)**	• Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Language skills • Management skills • Understanding institutional governance • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • **Intersectoral knowledge (PT)** • **Managing resources (PT)** • **Change management (MT)** • **Being a good promoter (MT)** • **Business acumen (CY, CZ)**	• Building and maintaining networks • Administrative skills • Cross-cutting issues in Horizon • Stakeholder engagement and management • Nurturing innovation • **Entrepreneurship (PT)** • **Patents (PT)** • **Translate science to business and business to academics, knowledge valorisation (PT, CY, impact)** • **Understand TT models and channels (PT, impact) – market knowledge (HR)** • **Evaluating the economic value of research results and impact assessment (PT, CY, impact)** • **Marketing (PT)** • **Specific knowledge related to the project (HR)** • **Understanding open science principles (HR)** • **Innovation management, knowledge valorisation, commercialisation (CY)** • **Data management (CY)** • **Public policy analysis and advocacy (CY)** • **Fundraising (CZ)** • **Liaising (IT)** • **Knowledge about industry (IT)** • **Understand TT models and channels (PT, HR)**

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				• Evaluating the economic value of research results (PT) • Legal and regulatory skills (MT, HR, CZ) • IPR knowledge (MT, HR, CY) • Technical proficiency (CY)

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION AND RELATED FUNCTIONS	• Problem solving • Interpersonal skills • Written communication • Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • Flexibility • **Attention to detail (PT)** • **Critical thinking (CY)** • **Oral communication (PT)**	• Time management • Planning, strategic thinking • Prioritisation • Reliability • Diplomatic skills • **Leadership skills (HR)** • **Conciseness (HR)** • **Confidentiality (CY)** • **Creativity (CZ)** • **Empathy (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Organisational skills (PT)** • **Information management (PT)** • **Analytical skills (CY)**	• Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Language skills • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Understanding institutional governance • Management skills • **Public speaking (CY)**	• Building and maintaining networks • Stakeholder engagement and management • Administrative skills • Financial skills • Understanding politics and policy cycles • **Data science, big data management, data privacy (PT, HR, CY)** • **Reports management (PT)** • **Performance management and evaluation (MT)** • **Responsible research and innovation (CY)** • **Evaluation and impact assessment (CY)** • **Liaising (IT)**

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
RESEARCH SUPPORT DELIVERY	• Problem solving • Intrapersonal skills • Critical thinking • Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • Written communication skills • **Flexibility (HR, IT)** • **Multitasking (IT, PT)** • **Problem solving (IT, PT)**	• Planning, strategic thinking • Reliability, trustfulness • Prioritisation • Efficiency and effectiveness • Time management • **Conflict management (PT)** • **Leadership (CY, IT)** • **Managerial agility (CY)** • **Resilience (IT)** • **Empathy (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Decision-making (IT)** • **Negotiation (IT, PT)** • **Mediation (IT)** • **Organisational skills (PT)** • **Team management (PT)** • **Working in teams (PT)** • **Information management (PT)** • **Analytical skills (CY)**	• Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Language skills • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Understanding institutional governance • Management skills	• Building and maintaining networks • Administrative skills • Stakeholder engagement and management • Appreciating values and understanding interests • Financial skills • **Exploitation of AI tools as part of managing resources (HR)** • **Specific knowledge related to the project (HR)** • **Scientific and technical know-how (HR)** • **Quality assurance (CY)** • **Knowledge of research methodologies (CY)** • **Technical proficiency (CY)** • **Creating synergies (IT)** • **Cross-cutting issues (IT)** • **Stakeholder engagement (PT)** • **Focus on value creation and impact (HR)**

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
TRAINING, RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT, POSTGRADUATE RESEARCHERS (PGR)	• Written communication • Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • Problem solving • Interpersonal skills • Oral communication • **Intrapersonal skills (PT)** • **Cultural and diversity skills (CY, PT)** • **Multitasking (IT)**	• Prioritisation • Time management • Planning, strategic thinking • Reliability, trustfulness • Efficiency and effectiveness • **Conflict management (IT)** • **Negotiation (IT)** • **Resilience (IT)** • **Empathy (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Strategic thinking (IT)** • **Organisational skills (PT)** • **Analytical skills (CY)**	• Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Language skills • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Managing resources • **HR skills (CY)** • **Public speaking (CY)**	• Building and maintaining networks • Administrative skills • Stakeholder engagement and management • Appreciating values and understanding interests • Financial skills • **Teaching skills and learning techniques (PT, IT),** • **Mentoring and coaching skills (MT, CY, CZ, IT)** • **Understanding the academic environment (CY)** • **Evaluation and assessment (CY)** • **Knowledge of institutional governance (CZ)** • **Survey methods (IT)** • **Liaising (IT)** • **Engagement and empowerment of researchers (IT)** • **Stakeholder engagement (PT)** • **Strategic foresight (IT)**

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY	• Problem solving • Interpersonal skills • Multitasking • Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • Critical thinking	• Prioritisation • Time management • Efficiency and effectiveness • Planning, strategic thinking • Reliability, trustfulness • **Conflict management (CY, HR)** • **Diplomacy (HR, PT)** • **Confidentiality (CY)** • **Resilience (IT)** • **Empathy (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Organisational skills (PT)** • **Analytical skills (CY)**	• Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Language skills • Ethics, integrity • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Understanding institutional governance • **Equity (PT)**	• Building and maintaining networks • Administrative skills • Stakeholder engagement and management • Appreciating values and understanding interests • Understanding politics and policy cycles • **Understanding GDPR and data management (HR, CY)** • **Knowledge of advisors' network (HR)** • **Understanding open science principles (HR)** • **IPR management (CY)** • **Awareness of Anti-bribery/corruption & conflict of interest, data protection policies (PT)** • **Training skills (PT)**

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION, INSTITUTION BRANDING	• Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • Interpersonal skills • Written communication skills • Problem solving • Intrapersonal skills • **Cultural and diversity skills (MT, HR, CY, CZ, PT)** • **Oral Communication (CY, CZ, PT)** • **Multitasking (IT)**	• Reliability, trustfulness • Prioritisation • Efficiency and effectiveness • Diplomatic skills • Planning, strategic thinking • **Creativity (HR)** • **Confidentiality (CY)** • **Negotiation (CY)** • **Resilience (IT)** • **Empathy (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Conflict management (IT)** • **Organisational skills (PT)** • **Teamwork (PT)** • **Analytical skills (CY)**	• Language skills • Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Understanding institutional governance • Management skills • **Public speaking (CY)**	• Building and maintaining networks • Administrative skills • Stakeholder engagement and management • Appreciating values and understanding interests • Lobbying • Financial skills • **Legal and regulatory skills (MT)** • **Compliance (MT)** • **Marketing skills (HR, CY, CZ)** • **Understanding GDPR and data management (HR)** • **Strategy and business insight (HR)** • **Understanding relations with relevant audience (HR)** • **IPR management (CY)**

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT	• Flexibility • Problem solving • Written communication skills • Multitasking • Critical thinking	• Efficiency and effectiveness • Planning, strategic thinking • Prioritisation • Reliability, trustfulness • Time management • **Leadership skills (HR, CY)** • **Confidentiality (CY)** • **Negotiation (CY)** • **Resilience (IT)** • **Empathy (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Team management (PT)** • **Analytical skills (CY)**	• Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Language skills • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Understanding institutional governance • Management skills • **Performance monitoring (CY)** • **Information management (PT)** • **Resource management (CZ)**	• Building and maintaining networks • Administrative skills • Stakeholder engagement and management • Appreciating values and understanding interests • Financial skills • **Facility management (MT)** • **Communication and dissemination (CY)** • **Research infrastructure management (CY)** • **Development of policies and procedures (CY)** • **Logistics and procurement management (CY)** • **Health and safety, quality assurance (CY)** • **Data and resources management (PT, CY)**

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	Transversal skills relevant for RMs	RM related soft skills	RM related hard skills	Specialisation or role related skills
RESEARCH DATA, RESEARCH INFORMATION, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT	• Multitasking • Problem solving • Interpersonal skills • Oral communication • Self-motivation, proactiveness, initiation • **Critical thinking (PT)**	• Prioritisation • Reliability, trustfulness • Planning, strategic thinking • Efficiency and effectiveness • Time management • **Confidentiality (CY)** • **Resilience (IT)** • **Empathy (IT)** • **Patience (IT)** • **Creativity (PT)** • **Analytical skills (PT)**	• Knowledge of rules and regulations of funders • Language skills • Understanding institutional governance • Understand research and the R&I ecosystem • Management skills • **IT skills (CZ, IT)**	• Building and maintaining networks • Administrative skills • Stakeholder engagement and management • Legal and regulatory skills • Appreciating values and understanding interests • Financial skills • **IPR knowledge and management (PT, CY)** • **Reports management (PT)** • **Awareness of Anti-bribery /corruption, conflict of interest, data protection policies & ethics (PT, CY)** • **Data management (CY)** • **Open science framework (CY)** • **Outreach and communication (CY)** • **Liaising (IT)**

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