



## SECURE Tenure Track-Like Models Emma Day – CRAC Vitae

**SECURE Closing Summit**  
**6<sup>th</sup> March 2025**



# Tenure Track in European Framework for Research Careers

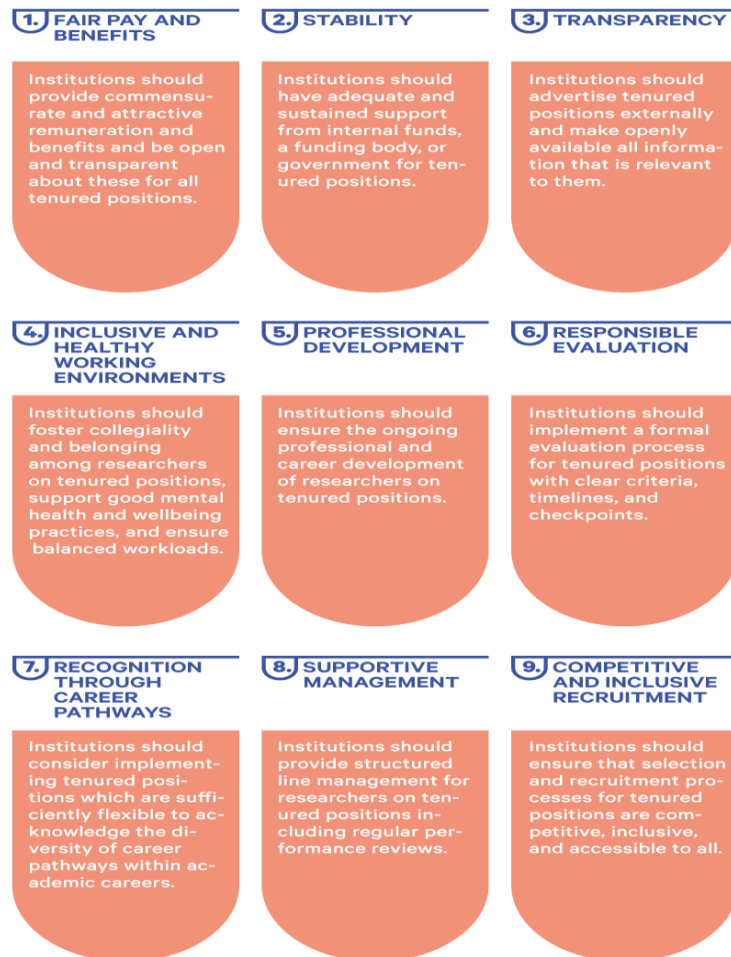
## Pillar 5 – Recommendation 30:

Member States are recommended to promote a fair, equal, inclusive, transparent, structured and gender-equal career accession and progression system for researchers in academia, up to the top positions. In this respect, Member States are recommended to consider developing tenure-track like systems, to be understood as defined frameworks where a fixed-term contract has the prospect of a progression to a permanent position, subject to positive evaluation.

## Work Package 1 – State of the Art – Key Findings

- Huge International variance
- Restrictions of legal frameworks for a country
- Schemes are obviously popular
- Lack of information – small amount of grey literature. Websites limited.
- Highlight good practice but not suggest one system is superior to another
- Limitations of tenure track – impact on mobility, not every one can be a researcher
- Need for a comprehensive range of models of different scale
- Can establish some principles for tenure track-like models

## SECURE Tenure Track-like Models (TTLMs)



# SECURE – Principles for Tenure Track-Like Models

**1 Fair Pay and Benefits** – Institutions should provide commensurate and attractive remuneration and and benefits and be open and transparent about those for all tenure positions.

**2 Stability** – Institutions should have adequate and sustained support from internal funds or a funding body or government for tenured positions.

**3 Transparency** – Institutions should advertise tenured positions externally and make openly available all information that is relevant to them.

# SECURE – Principles for Tenure Track-Like Models

**4 Inclusive and healthy working environments** – Institutions should foster collegiality and belonging among researchers on tenured positions, support good mental health and wellbeing practices and ensure balanced workloads.

**5 Professional development** – Institutions should ensure the ongoing professional and career development of researchers on tenured positions.

**6 Responsible Evaluation** – Institutions should implement a formal evaluation process for tenured positions with clear criteria, timelines and checkpoints.

# SECURE – Principles for Tenure Track-Like Models -

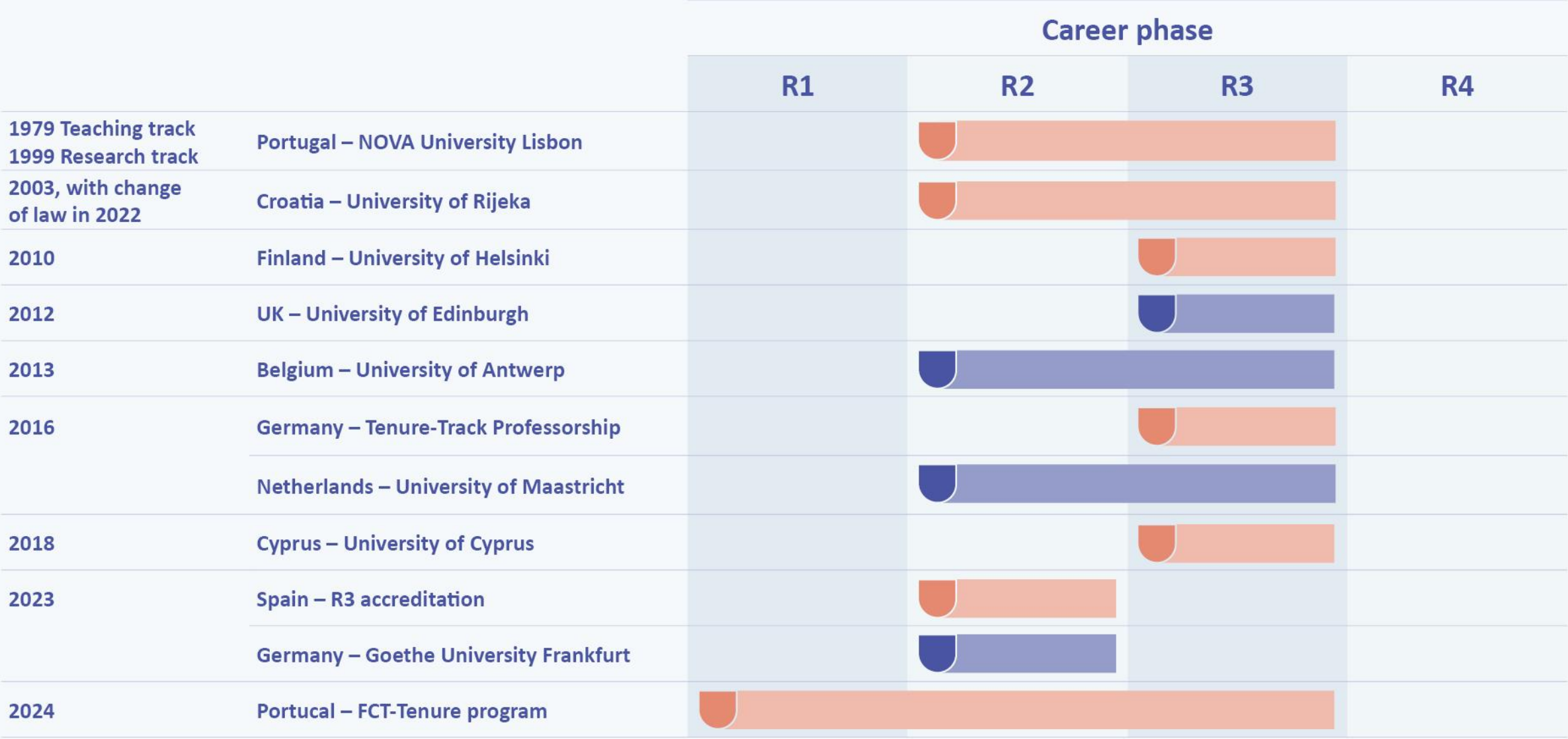
**7 Recognition through Career Pathways** – Institutions should consider implementing tenured positions which are sufficiently flexible to acknowledge the diversity of career pathways within academic careers.

**8 Supportive Management** – Institutions should provide structured line management for researchers on tenured positions in including performance reviews.

**9 Competitive and Open Recruitment** – Institutions should ensure that selection and recruitment processes for tenured positions are competitive, inclusive and accessible to all.



# Tenure-track like models by career phase, year of implementation and funding





## Mapping to Researcher Career Framework – Action Area 2 Stability

- Collect and share best practices on employment contracts for researchers and TTLMS
- Review status of TTLMs and regulations relevant for TTLMSs at national and local levels
- Define conditions and procedures for all participants in new/refined TTLMs
- Develop an action plan to structure implement of new/refined TTLMs
- Coordinate implementation of new/refined TTLMs and monitor implementation

# Conclusions on National Context

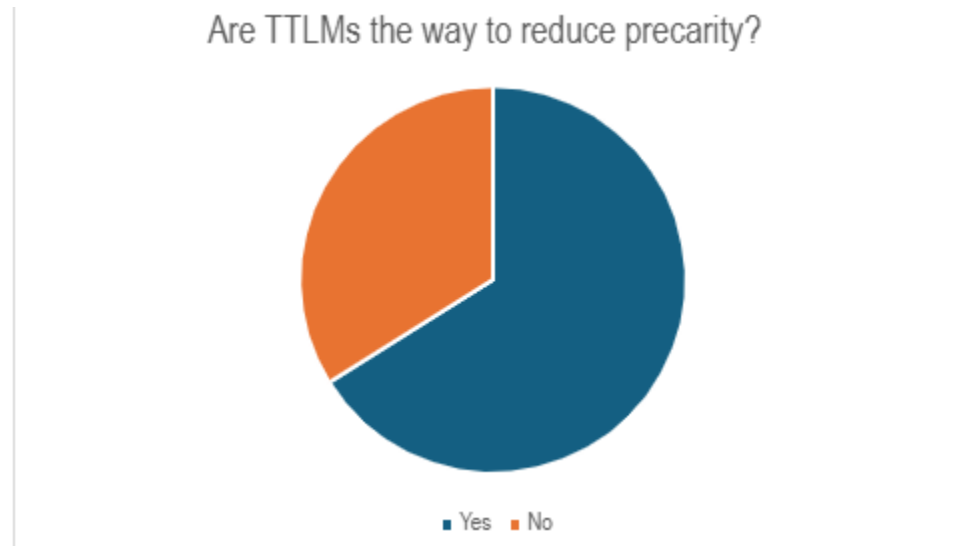
All countries examined:

- Career structures for postdocs are similar at aggregate level – national funding plans, regulations on working conditions
- Relatively high proportion of postdocs with fixed-term contracts is criticized as it leads to job insecurity and, in some
- National regulations, or guidelines supporting the application of performance- and merit-based criteria to recruitment-, promotion-, tenure-, and individual funding-decisions
- Laws governing equality and diversity

But:

- Independence of Research Institutions varies significantly
- The way in which rules are implemented by institutions or faculties varies significantly

## Are TTLMs the way to reduce precarity?



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- “Self evidently good principles”
- These nine principles cover almost all areas of action to reduce the precarity of researchers careers”
- “Providing a strategy is a good way to start but it will depend on the people will to implement it.”

## Recommendations for Institutions

- Institutions should apply the SECURE Principles on TTLMs
- Institutions should have a long-term financial plan for developing tenure-track positions from fixed-term into a permanent positions if candidates fulfill the criteria
- Institutions should consider developing TTLMs that are flexible and offer a variety of pathways with a balance of research and teaching, including professorial and non-professorial positions.
- Institutions should clearly define and communicate the criteria for positive tenure decisions; these should consider candidates' individual research goals and conditions.
- Institutions should develop a range of criteria for evaluation of researchers on TTLMs that have both compulsory and optional elements to be tailored to individuals and their departments.
- Institutions should establish criteria for success for tenure track that encompasses a range of assessment methods and links to other initiatives.

## Recommendations for Institutions continued..

- Institutions should commit to a programme of professional and career development for researchers on TTLMs that supports their leadership journey and considers their role in shaping future research culture.
- Institutions should map TTLMs and connect to wider European initiatives eg. COARA, HR Excellence in Research, EURAXESS and ReSaver.
- Institutions should ensure there is full support for researchers on TTLMs including a trained line manager and established cohort.
- Institutions should support international applicants in understanding and handling laws, regulations and practices specific to their country, region or institute through EURAXESS and other means.
- Institutions should adopt and support the goal of equal opportunities for all on tenure track positions, as well as further goals related to diversity, equity and inclusion on tenure track like career paths (i.e., in academia and at research institutions).
- Institutions should involve all relevant stakeholders when implementing TTLMs and individualized personal development of postdocs.

## Recommendations for Funders

- Funders should be aware of the principles on sustainable careers and consider whether the schemes they fund support them.
- Funders should consider and address long term funding of researchers once they achieve tenure.
- Funders should be aware of the legislation in countries in which they wish to fund a TTLM and consider additional support.
- Funders should promote professional and career development for researchers in order to support long term culture change.
- Funders should adopt and promote the goal of equal opportunities for all on tenure track like career paths, as well as further goals enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion in tenure track like models (i.e., in academia and at research institutions).
- Funders should consider evaluation of the implementation of tenure track like models, as well as continuous monitoring of individual career paths within tenure track like schemes.

## Recommendations for Researchers

- Researchers should know their countries' and institute's long-term financial plans and career paths on tenure track positions,
- Researchers should ensure that they have all information about recruitment processes, selection criteria such as expected skills and competencies, and on the working conditions on tenure track positions at the research institution of their interest,
- Researchers should be aware that selection and recruitment processes on tenure track like positions are competitive, applying merit-based selection criteria that consider a diverse range of skills, competencies, and experiences (including inter-sectoral),
- Researchers should be aware that recruitment and selection processes on tenure track positions should be inclusive and accessible to all, and that institutions have to support equal opportunities and applications from under-represented groups,
- Researchers should be aware that research institutions shall be open and transparent about their pay and benefits, considering existing employment legislation and collective bargaining agreements,



## Recommendations for Researchers continued...

- Researchers should inform themselves about the elements of their pay and endowments that are negotiable before their appointment,
- Researchers should expect research institution supports ongoing professional and career development of researchers on tenure track positions.
- Researchers should expect research institutions that foster collegiality and belonging among all researchers to support good mental health and wellbeing among their members.
- Researchers should expect line management that encourages and supports regular appraisals and performance reviews of researchers on tenure track positions.
- Researchers should expect formal evaluation processes at set checkpoints and against clear criteria, with these criteria and timelines.

*Thank You*  
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