



# Researchers at Risk: Mapping Europe's Response



## Researchers at Risk: Mapping Europe's Response

Report of the Inspireurope Project

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Special thanks to the Inspireurope project coordinators, Sinead O’Gorman and Orla Duke, from Scholars at Risk Europe hosted at Maynooth University, Ireland, for providing invaluable input and advice and support to this publication.

Furthermore, we would like to acknowledge the important role of all the partners of the project consortium, and thank them for their support and feedback with respect to this report.

# List of abbreviations

<b>Academic Refuge project</b>	Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership to Promote Core Academic Values and Welcome Refugees and Threatened Academics to European Campuses
<b>AMIF</b>	Asylum Migration and Integration Fund
<b>AvH</b>	Alexander von Humboldt Foundation
<b>BRiDGE project</b>	Bridge for Researchers in Danger Going to Europe
<b>Cara</b>	Council for At-Risk Academics
<b>CARe project</b>	Career Advancement for Refugee Researchers in Europe
<b>DG</b>	Directorate General of the European Commission
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EDUFI</b>	Finnish National Agency for Education
<b>EEA</b>	European Education Area
<b>EHEA</b>	European Higher Education Area
<b>EP</b>	European Parliament
<b>ERA</b>	European Research Area
<b>ERC</b>	European Research Council
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUA</b>	European University Association
<b>GREET project</b>	Guiding Refugees via European Exchange and Training
<b>MSCA</b>	Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
<b>Net4Mobility+</b>	Network of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions National Contact Points for the mobile scientific and innovation community
<b>PAUSE</b>	Programme national d'Accueil en Urgence des Scientifiques en Exil
<b>PSI</b>	Philipp Schwartz Initiative of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH)
<b>IIE-SRF</b>	Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund
<b>R&amp;I</b>	Research and Innovation
<b>SAR</b>	Scholars at Risk Network
<b>S.U.C.RE project</b>	Supporting University Community Pathway for Refugee-Migrants
<b>UAF</b>	Stichting voor Vluchteling-Studenten (Foundation for Refugee Students)

# Preface



**Prof Michael Murphy,**  
President of the European  
University Association

This new report of the Inspireurope project supports the European University Association's (EUA) renewed commitment to "defend our common university values, institutional autonomy and academic freedom at all times" (EUA Strategic Plan 2020).<sup>1</sup> Resisting the temptation to add "and in all places" is just a matter of limited capacities, and certainly not of lack of conviction or belief in the necessity: EUA has long advocated for university values as essential pre-conditions for scholarship and science, in Europe, and also in dialogue and collaboration with our international partners; we appreciate this further opportunity.

Our global world not only enables but also requires collaborative research and sharing of the resulting knowledge and data. This requires trust, built on academic integrity and truthfulness, and the freedom to engage and exchange openly, irrespective of environment changes, be they natural, social, scientific, technical, political, economic or cultural.

Growth of the research and higher education sector, and of its strategic and economic importance in our knowledge-based world, have resulted in increased as well as new forms of infringement and violation of research and university values. In a democratic society, where the rule of law guarantees civil and human rights, these can be resisted and defended by the sector, with support from the authorities, and society. But this is not the situation everywhere in the world.

Throughout history, universities have granted refuge to academics and researchers who have had to leave their institutions and their countries as a consequence of their scholarly work.

Unfortunately, the numbers of researchers at risk have been growing steadily in recent years.

The present report contributes not only to raising awareness, but also points to some key challenges that researchers at risk, their hosting institutions and support organisations face, and provides some pointers to how we, in Europe, can provide more and better support.

The report arrives at a very timely moment: Despite and because of the uncertainties of the global political landscape, the European Union has restated and affirmed its commitment to global research and education cooperation in two recent major Communications on the European Research Area and the European Education Area, which subscribe to the defence, protection and promotion of academic and democratic values in Europe, and internationally. As policy is to be followed by funding, we await the new European Commission programmes for research and education (2021-2027) to underpin these important statements. Beyond the EU, these values also feature highly on the agenda of the European Higher Education Area, and European education ministers will reaffirm their countries' commitment to the issue in the forthcoming Bologna Process Rome Communiqué (November 2020).

Together with members and Inspireurope partners, EUA will share the report and its outcomes in the different policy contexts. In particular, we will promote the establishment of a European fellowship programme for researchers at risk. Beyond the benefits it will bring to the individual researchers, and Europe's international talent pool, the new programme will be a timely and tangible measure to demonstrate Europe's support for and defence of the global research and university community, and the values it is based on.

I take the opportunity to thank Scholars at Risk and the many partners who contributed to this project. EUA looks forward to our continued cooperation under the Inspireurope project, and beyond.

**Prof. Michael Murphy, President of the European University Association (EUA)**

<sup>1</sup> <https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/eua%20strategic%20plan%20final.pdf>

# Preface



**Sinead O'Gorman**, Director,  
Scholars at Risk Europe,  
hosted at Maynooth  
University, Ireland

As this report goes to press, Europe is grappling with rising numbers of Covid-19 cases and bracing for a tough winter ahead. Researchers from a wide range of disciplines, across the globe, are at the forefront of the response to the pandemic and its epidemiological, political, economic, social and cultural dimensions. A simultaneous 'infodemic' of Covid-19 misinformation presents another critical threat that requires an urgent and robust response from experts across a similarly broad range of disciplines. The demand for reliable and trustworthy data, its wide dissemination, and freedom for researchers to pursue their work without intimidation or interference, has never been more pressing. In a crisis such as this, free and independent research can save lives.

The Inspireurope project<sup>2</sup> begins from the view that excellence in research depends upon open scientific debate and a multiplicity of ideas, people and perspectives. When researchers are at risk, blocked from the global research circuit, and confronted by threats to their lives, liberty or research careers, it is not only lives and careers that are at risk: the quality, the very future of research is also at stake.

The skills and attributes of researchers at risk represent enormous potential for European research and innovation.

However, the realisation of that potential on a Europe-wide scale requires better coordination. Defined by a commitment to the principle that freedom of research and academic freedom are essential pre-conditions to world-class research, the Inspireurope project seeks to meet that need by facilitating cooperation across Europe in support of researchers at risk.

As this report shows, Europe is a leader when it comes to global support for researchers at risk. European institutions and organisations are at the forefront of a global movement in support of researchers at risk, and there is much good work underway. Existing support programmes in Europe provide successful models for those willing to set up additional programmes for researchers at risk in Europe and around the world. New initiatives are building on these existing models to make the best use of precious experience, time and funds. The Inspireurope project is driving these efforts by working with partners to promote information-sharing, mutual learning, and the development of best practices that are scalable and can generate new programmes and initiatives.

This mapping report identifies the excellent work already underway in Europe for researchers at risk, as well as gaps and opportunities for future support. The data in this report includes publicly available information on existing support measures in Europe along with new quantitative and qualitative data compiled by the Inspireurope project from September 2019 to September 2020. The report is the result of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including: researchers at risk; higher education institutions and research organisations with experience in hosting or employing researchers at risk; and NGOs, networks and other projects dedicated to supporting researchers at risk.

<sup>2</sup> Inspireurope project partners include: Scholars at Risk Europe at Maynooth University (Ireland) (Project Coordinator), Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung (Germany), European University Association, Jagiellonian University (Poland), University of Oslo (Norway), University of Gothenburg (Sweden), French national PAUSE programme, hosted by the Collège de France, Stichting voor Vluchteling-Studenten UAF (Netherlands), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece), Scholz CTC GmbH (Germany).



The stakeholder consultation processes undertaken included feedback obtained from questionnaires to three target groups as well as focus group discussions, meetings, workshops, webinars, and trainings undertaken under the project. Reports by organisations involved with researchers at risk complemented the results of Inspireurope questionnaires and other consultation channels to provide a more comprehensive picture of the existing resources in Europe that provide support to researchers at risk.

As the report shows, the findings of Inspireurope's <sup>3</sup>consultation processes align closely with the experience of organisations that have directly supported researchers at risk over many decades. The top two obstacles currently facing researchers at risk who seek to continue their work safely in Europe are the shortage of funding for fellowships or positions specifically for researchers at risk, and the overall competitiveness of the research labour market in Europe.

Existing support initiatives only partially address these needs. At the European level, the report documents a number of EU-funded projects under Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 that provide support for collaboration between institutions and organisations providing career development opportunities to researchers at risk (mentoring, information and advice, webinars, skills training, speaking engagements, guidance materials, networking opportunities). However, there is no dedicated European-level fellowship mechanism for researchers at risk. At the national level, three state-funded programmes in Europe provide fellowships and other direct support for researchers at risk (Finland, France and Germany); at the sub-national level there are a growing number of dedicated initiatives. However, data collected for the report shows that when it comes to direct support in Europe for researchers at risk, this is provided mainly by a small number of NGOs and other support organisations whose mission is to assist at-risk scholars/researchers, and individual higher education institutions themselves.

In addition to documenting the existing support measures across Europe directed specifically at researchers at risk, Inspireurope also aims to assess the extent to which researchers at risk can access European and national fellowships that are open

to all researchers. Such fellowship programmes do not track whether applicants are 'at risk', which complicates any assessment of the numbers of researchers at risk currently receiving national or EU research funding. However, the Inspireurope questionnaires, combined with expert input from organisations providing direct support, indicate that these funding sources are under-utilised by researchers at risk for a number of reasons. While awareness of available funding opportunities is one issue, the more significant obstacle is the challenge of meeting specific eligibility and evaluation criteria. This report includes the results of a preliminary assessment relating to the accessibility of EU-funded Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships for researchers at risk, which provides insights into the types of obstacles that preclude potential researcher at risk candidates from being able to secure programme opportunities, placements or other resources. Review and assessment of existing mechanisms will continue throughout the lifetime of the project with a view to increasing awareness and improving access for researchers at risk.

The findings of the mapping report set the groundwork for the next stage of the project's work, which will continue until August 2022. Further consultations with a wide range of stakeholders will help to arrive at detailed policy recommendations and a roadmap on future support in Europe for researchers at risk.

In short, there is good work underway, but Europe must do more. The Covid-19 pandemic has posed additional challenges for researchers at risk, ranging from increased travel and immigration restrictions in both home and host countries, to crackdowns on researchers for questioning state responses that may contravene human rights obligations or that engage in the deliberate distortion or suppression of information and data. Europe must do more not only because the worsening conditions in many countries pose challenges, but also because these events offer opportunities to combine our forces across Europe to win greater support for researchers, and greater respect for the importance of research to society.

**Sinead O'Gorman, Director,  
Scholars at Risk Europe**

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sar-europe/inspireurope>



# 1. Introduction



## 1.1 Background and scope of the mapping

While in many countries citizens are suffering from restrictions on freedom of speech and persecution due to their opinions and convictions, researchers are among those professions that are particularly effected and concerned. As they are professionally committed to critical thinking, questioning of established ideas and conditions, and the enhancement of the borders of knowledge, they become a frequent target.



**Dr Mubashar Hasan** of Bangladesh at an Inspireurope focus group held at Jagiellonian University, Poland, 9 January 2020. Dr Hasan was previously detained in Bangladesh in retaliation for his research work

When researchers are at risk, and excluded from participating in the global research circuit, not only their individual lives and careers are at risk, but also the quality and the very future of research. Excellence in research depends upon open scientific debate, and is driven by a multiplicity of ideas, people and perspectives.

Granting refuge and academic freedom to scholars and students, who had to flee persecution and wars in their home countries and regions, has been an eminent function of universities from the Middle Ages, up to modern times. In more recent history, many dissidents who fled or were expelled from totalitarian countries were academics. Some of today's support organisations have been established in response to the difficult situation academics faced before and during WWII.

In addition, over the past decades, the absolute numbers of academics suffering from persecution has grown, also because the number of higher education and research institutions around the globe has increased massively. Therefore, applications for assistance for at-risk scholars and researchers always exceed positions and funding available. The skills and attributes of researchers at risk represent significant economic and human capital potential for the receiving countries in Europe and, at the same time, support the global

research community and their values. However, for such potential to be fully realised on a Europe-wide scale, well-coordinated efforts by a diverse set of experienced actors is required.

In order to reach this goal, and in recognition of a shared commitment to excellence in research and to the principles of freedom of inquiry and academic freedom - that are essential pre-conditions for world-class research - the Inspireurope project facilitates trans-national cooperation between European and national initiatives and programmes in support of researchers at risk.

The Initiative to Support, Promote and Integrate Researchers at Risk in Europe (Inspireurope<sup>4</sup>) forges a coordinated, cross-sectoral, Europe-wide alliance for researchers at risk. Funded under the European Commission's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, it brings together ten European partners, coordinated by Scholars at Risk Europe at Maynooth University, Ireland. The project anchors the excellent support work for researchers at risk already underway across Europe and seeks to lay the groundwork for durable support in Europe.

As part of the project, the present report is based on a mapping conducted to identify the support structures and measures available to researchers at risk in Europe. To this purpose, the experiences of researchers themselves, of their hosts - usually higher education and research institutions - and of support organisations have been taken into consideration, including the challenges they face, as well as the approaches taken by national and European level support measures. The findings are to foster a discussion on how to improve the situation for researchers at risk, and to generally encourage more exchange of information among all actors across Europe. But they will also continue to inform the activities of Inspireurope towards the project's goal, which is to provide recommendations for enhanced support of researchers at risk in Europe (see section 3).

<sup>4</sup> Further information: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sar-europe/inspireurope>

## 1.2 Definitions

**Researcher:** The report uses the definition of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA). A Researcher is “a person active in research, including at a training level, of at least post-graduate or equivalent level,” and includes “all stages of researchers’ careers – be they doctoral candidates or highly experienced researchers”.

**Researchers at risk:** Researchers at risk include researchers, scholars, and scientists who are experiencing threats to their life, liberty, or research career, and those who are or have been forced to flee because of such threats. Some researchers at risk have recognised refugee status, asylum status, or similar protection status. But a higher proportion of researchers seeking the assistance of NGOs specialising in the field of scholar protection are outside the refugee process. These researchers are seeking or holding temporary visas/work permits through visiting research/scholar positions at host universities in Europe or elsewhere, outside their home countries.

The global Scholars at Risk Network (SAR)<sup>5</sup> identifies **three broad categories of risk:**

- a. Risk due to the content of a scholar’s work, research, or teaching being perceived as threatening by authorities or other groups. When the development of ideas, exchange of information, and expression of new opinions are considered threatening, individual scholars/researchers are particularly vulnerable.
- b. Risk because of the individual’s status as an academic or researcher. Because researchers undertake frequent international travel, and have international contacts, this gives them a certain professional standing or prominence. This can mean that attacks on one such high-profile scholar are an efficient means of sending a message to others, quickly creating a chilling effect.

- c. Risk as a result of their peaceful exercise of basic human rights, in particular, the right to freedom of expression or freedom of association.<sup>6</sup>

**Europe:** Unless indicated otherwise, the defined geographical coverage of Europe used in the mapping report is that of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA),<sup>7</sup> that is to say the 48 signatory countries<sup>8</sup> of the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/>. SAR reports that although each individual researcher’s situation is unique, clear patterns have emerged over 20 years’ experience and within the 5,000+ applications for assistance the Network has received since its founding.

<sup>6</sup> Excerpts from Scholars at Risk Network (2019.II)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ehea.info/page-members>

<sup>8</sup> From 20 November 2020: 49 countries

## 1.3 Methodology

In order to map existing support in Europe for researchers at risk, to identify gaps and opportunities for future support, quantitative and qualitative data on existing support measures in Europe was collected through the project's own data collection, based on questionnaires and interviews, and through desk research.

Between March and July 2020, information has been gathered at Inspireurope workshops,



**Dr. N. Ekrem Duzen**, Clinical Psychologist and Philipp Schwartz Initiative fellow at Bielefeld University shared his views on mentoring and supporting researchers at risk during the Inspireurope Stakeholder Forum, 8 June 2020

trainings and discussions on existing support in Europe.<sup>9</sup> The study team conducted semi-structured interviews and gathered information on existing support for researchers at risk in Europe and, based on these, developed three survey questionnaires: for researchers at risks; for higher education institutions and research organisations with experience in hosting or employing researchers at risk; and for NGOs, support organisations and other projects dedicated to supporting researchers at risk.

Calls for participation were disseminated through the vast networks of the Inspireurope consortium partners, with bases in Ireland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, Poland, Sweden and Norway, with associate partners in Italy and Switzerland and an international partner based in

the United States. The questionnaires were also circulated via EUA's network of over 800 higher education institutions in 48 countries.

The Inspireurope surveys were completed by 113 researchers at risk, 127 host institutions and organisations, and 20 NGOs/support organisations inside and outside the consortium (see in detail section 1.4). Findings from questionnaires and other stakeholder consultations are shared in this report only in aggregated and anonymised form. For the evaluation, the sample was not weighted by country or by the size of the education and research sector per country, as the majority of questions addressed personal experiences and opinions of the researchers at risk, the situation at a specific institution, rather than the national (or regional) higher education, research and integration policy landscape.

The mapping report also takes into consideration the findings and reports on related topics engaged in by organisations supporting researchers at risk as well as those of recent EU-funded projects. These include primarily annual reports and data published by the larger organisations working on an international or national level to support researchers at risk, including data and reports of SAR,<sup>10</sup> the Council for At-Risk Academics (Cara)<sup>11</sup> the Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF),<sup>12</sup> the French national PAUSE programme<sup>13</sup> and the Philipp Schwartz Initiative (PSI) of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH).<sup>14</sup> Publications and data produced under initiatives founded by and for researchers at risk from Turkey were also consulted, including in particular data and reports<sup>15</sup> of the Academy in Exile<sup>16</sup> and OFF University.<sup>17</sup> Reports and publications of EU projects supporting

<sup>9</sup> Including: How to apply for an EU-funded research fellowship (January 2020), Welcoming researchers at risk: considerations for new employers and host organisations in Europe (January 2020), Mobility within Europe for researchers at risk (March 2020), Funding researchers at risk to join the host organisation (May 2020), Workshop on Mentoring & Supporting Researchers at Risk (June 2020), Workshop on non-academic research careers (June 2020)

<sup>10</sup> In particular see (Scholars at Risk Network 2019.I) and (Scholars at Risk Network 2019.II)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.cara.ngo>, e.g. (Council for At-Risk Academics 2018)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.scholarrescuefund.org/>, e.g. (IIE-SRF accessed online 2020)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.college-de-france.fr/site/programme-pause/index.htm>, e.g. (PAUSE accessed online 2020.I&II&III)

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.humboldt-foundation.de/en/apply/sponsorship-programmes/philipp-schwartz-initiative>, e.g. (Philipp Schwartz Initiative accessed online 2020)

<sup>15</sup> In particular, <http://mappingfunds.com/>, e.g. (Mapping funds 2018)

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.academy-in-exile.eu>, e.g. (Academy in Exile accessed online 2020) and (Kader Konuk 2020)

<sup>17</sup> <https://off-university.com/>



similar target groups were also consulted including, in particular those of the CARE project,<sup>18</sup> GREET,<sup>19</sup> BRIDGE I and II,<sup>20</sup> S.U.C.R.E.,<sup>21</sup> and the Academic Refuge<sup>22</sup> project.

The above-mentioned reports and findings complement the findings of Inspireurope questionnaires and other consultation channels to provide a comprehensive picture of existing support in Europe for researchers at risk.

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<sup>18</sup> e.g. CARE (2020.I&II&III)

<sup>19</sup> e.g. GREET (accessed online 2020)

<sup>20</sup> e.g. BRIDGE (accessed online 2020.I&II)

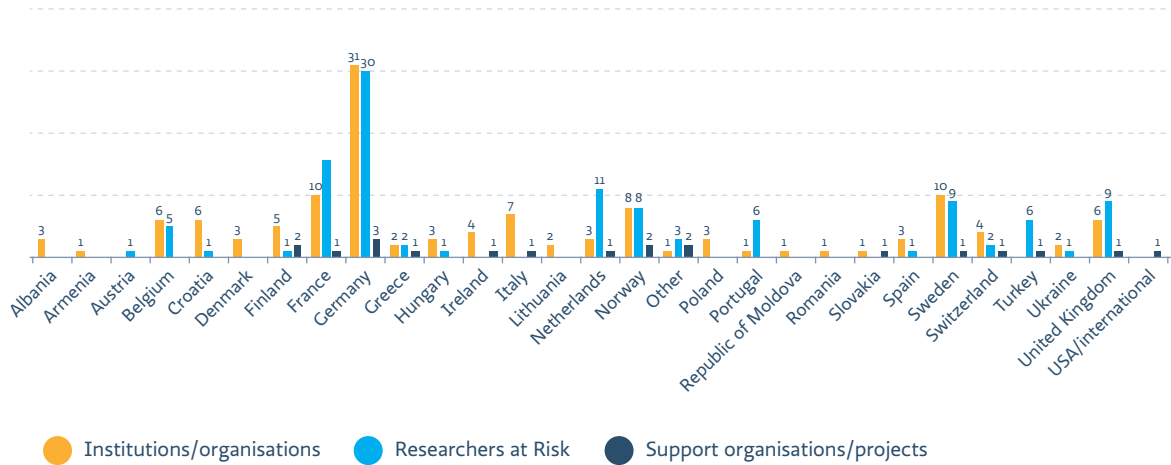
<sup>21</sup> e.g. S.U.C.R.E. (2018)

<sup>22</sup> e.g. Academic Refuge (2017) & Academic Refuge (2019)

## 1.4 A note on survey respondents

In total, 260 individuals contributed to the Inspireurope mapping through three online surveys.<sup>23</sup>

**Figure 1: Survey respondents' geographical distribution (RQ<sup>24</sup>: In which country do you currently live? N=113; HQ<sup>25</sup>: Please indicate the following: Country, Institution. N=127; SQ<sup>26</sup> N=20)**



The geographically uneven distribution (Figure 1) is partially due to the size of the higher education and research system, but it also reflects to some extent the level of availability of measures, national funding and networks that can support hosting researchers at risk. In addition, the language of the survey questionnaires (English) may have been a barrier for some, and general survey fatigue on the issue would certainly also play a role.

### Researchers at risk – 113 responses

For the researchers' survey, responses from Germany (30), France (16), the Netherlands (11), Sweden and the United Kingdom (9 each) and Norway (8) make up a large share of the sample. The majority of respondents (73%) were male.

While this does not perfectly reflect the gender breakdown of applicants seeking assistance of NGOs and other organisations supporting researchers at risk, it is reflective of the lower rate of applications from female scholars that is frequently reported by support organisations despite their efforts to increase these applications. Of the candidates the French national PAUSE programme assisted in 2017 and 2018 combined, 45% were women. 60 (38%) of the 159 researchers and scholars supported through the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's Philipp Schwartz Initiative over the last three years, were female while women scholars represent approximately 30% of the candidates the Scholars at Risk (SAR) network supported in 2019.

SAR attributes the lower rate of female scholars seeking assistance to a range of factors, including importantly the gender gap in higher education access at the postgraduate level, in particular in the regions from which SAR has historically received the highest numbers of applications from at-risk scholars (MENA, South Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa).

<sup>23</sup> Please note that only a small share of the data that was collected through the Inspireurope surveys is featured in the report in full detail. The full dataset for the Inspireurope surveys for researchers at risk (RQ) and for host institutions and organisations (HQ) is published in an anonymised format on EUA's Slideshare account: <https://www.slideshare.net/EurUniversityAssociation/presentations>.

<sup>24</sup> RQ – survey questionnaire for researchers at risk

<sup>25</sup> HQ – survey questionnaire for hosting organisations and institutions

<sup>26</sup> SQ – survey questionnaire for support organisations and projects





**Dr. Nil Mutluer**, Diversity and Social Conflict Department, Humboldt University of Berlin discussed career trajectories in Europe for researchers at risk at the Inspireurope Stakeholder Forum, 8 June 2020. Dr. Mutluer is one of the many researchers affected by the continued widespread pressures on Turkey's higher education sector, including dismissals and prosecutions

Support organisations such as SAR and PAUSE<sup>27</sup> have seen a rise in the proportion of female scholars applying for assistance in recent years from Turkey, in part given the relatively high number of female scholars in that country, many of whom have been affected by the continued widespread pressures on Turkey's higher education sector, including dismissals and prosecutions.

Most of the researchers at risk who participated in the survey have arrived directly from their home country to their current location (74%). Only a few have spent longer periods of time in other countries (12% in two countries, 9% in more than five countries). Half of the respondents brought their spouses with them; 41% brought children and 8% some of their other dependants / relatives.

Respondents were more likely to have a background in social sciences and humanities than in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). For example, 31% indicated their disciplinary area as social sciences, journalism and information, 24% as arts and humanities, while 15% stated it to be natural sciences. This trend is confirmed by other projects that have conducted similar research<sup>28</sup> and by several of the support organisations.<sup>29</sup>

Survey data seems to suggest that most researchers at risk have been mobile internationally before seeking placement in Europe. Thirty-nine per cent of participants have spent at least some time at an institution abroad during their PhD, 17% during their post-doc and 14% during their MA programme. Only 15% had no previous international study or research experience.

74% of respondents hold a PhD, including 40% with a post-doc. Their levels of career attainment<sup>30</sup> are rather varied: a third would describe themselves as established researchers (R3), and about a quarter each as recognised researchers (R2), or as leading researchers (R4).

When asked about their professional background, the majority worked for most or for substantial parts of their professional life in higher education institutions, combining research and teaching as lecturers or professors (58%). 27% indicated that they only did research, and 20% that they only teach. The remainder are working in the public sector (6%), are self-employed (4%), or are conducting research for the private sector (industry 3%).

The majority of respondents (44%) hold a temporary residence permit in their host country, for work, research, or studies, and an additional 19% hold a permanent permit. In addition, 27% have a recognised refugee status or similar, 11% are on subsidiary protection or other international protection statuses, while 13% are currently seeking asylum. This aligns to a large extent with the responses provided by support organisations vis-à-vis the immigration background of candidates they support (see section 2).

<sup>27</sup> For instance, figures are available for PAUSE laureates (not applicants): In 2018, nine out of 21 Turkish laureates were female (43%), in 2019, ten out of 14 Turkish laureates (71%) were female.

<sup>28</sup> For instance, CARE (2020.III), S.U.C.RE (2018)

<sup>29</sup> Of the 150 scholars supported by IIE-SRF in 2019, 36% are in social sciences, 34% in natural sciences, 18% in applied sciences and 12% in humanities & the arts. Of the 124 researchers at risk assisted in 2019 by the PAUSE programme at the College de France and at PSI at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany, 48% have a background in humanities and social sciences, 32% in STEM and 20% in earth and life sciences. Of the 113 researchers who participated in a recent survey conducted by the Inspireurope project, 31% are in social sciences, journalism, and information, 24% in arts and humanities, while 15% are in natural sciences.

<sup>30</sup> As defined by the EURAXESS research profiles descriptors:

<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/europe/career-development/training-researchers/research-profiles-descriptors>

## Host institutions – 127 responses

Institutions and organisations from Germany have contributed in large numbers (31) to the Inspireurope survey, as have hosts from France and Sweden (10 each), Norway (8), Italy (7), Belgium,<sup>31</sup> Croatia and the United Kingdom (6 each) and Finland (5).

The vast majority in the sample represents higher education institutions (89%), with only 11% of responses from research (5%) or other institutions (6%). 65% currently host researchers at risk or have done so in the past. Another 18% plan to act as hosts in the future and 17%, while generally interested in the topic, were uncertain on whether they would host or not. Subsequently, these two groups were only invited to reflect on a small subset of relevant survey questions.

The survey also inquired about the inclusion of students with a refugee or at-risk background to probe for potential synergies in initiatives, strategies and services offered to both target groups by higher education institutions and host organisations. Indeed, 85% of institutions that currently host researchers at risk (53% of the overall sample), and 60% of those that have done so in the past (12% of the overall sample), also actively welcome students with a refugee background. There seems to be evidence for stronger support available for both target groups at institutions with specific strategies for inclusion and diversity.

## Support organisations – 20 responses

The third survey for support organisations and EU co-funded projects on the theme of researchers at risk has gathered 20 responses: 16 NGOs/ organisations providing assistance and support to researchers at risk and their placement in Europe, three EU-(co-)funded projects with a focus on supporting researchers at risk, and a training/ coaching consultancy which is a partner in the Inspireurope project.

The 16 organisations providing direct support to researchers at risk are primarily assisting those seeking or holding work permits, with a smaller proportion of their clients holding refugee status or seeking asylum. The type of support offered by the various organisations and projects ranges from the provision of information and advice (90%) to funding support for hosts (30%) and fellowships for researchers at risk (20%) (see in further detail section 2 below).

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<sup>31</sup> Three each from Flanders and Wallonia.

# 2. Mapping Results:

Support for Researchers at Risk in Europe







**Ms Anne-Sophie Barthez**,  
Director General for Higher  
Education and Employability  
at the French Ministry of  
Higher Education opens the  
Inspireurope Stakeholder  
Forum, 8 June 2020

Photo credit: Ministère de  
l'Enseignement Supérieur, de  
la Recherche et de l'Innovation

***“For if researchers are more particularly exposed to persecution and forced into exile, it is because they belong to the world of science, the world of reason, the world of fact.”<sup>32</sup>***

Not all European countries have proactive approaches for welcoming researchers at risk, but research for this report shows that a significant number of efforts have been developed at the institutional, national, regional and European level to support researchers at risk. Several of these provide models that could be expanded or replicated by other actors to increase the overall level of support.

The EU (co-)funds a number of research and collaboration projects on the theme of welcoming and integrating researchers or students with an at-risk background. There are also various Union programmes open to all international scholars (see Section 2.4). Whilst the EU policy level might support the plight of researchers at risk in principle, there is currently no dedicated EU fellowship programme in place directly supporting researchers at risk.

Some noteworthy recent policy initiatives<sup>33</sup> frame the issue as a matter of defending academic values and freedom – and host institutions would agree (as discussed in section 2.1). Academic freedom and, more generally, protection of academic values were also put on the agenda of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 2018,<sup>34</sup> and are likely to figure prominently in the upcoming Ministerial Communiqué (Rome, November 2020). Hence, there are good chances for enhanced awareness of the issue on the policy levels of the EHEA countries, including the perils for academic freedom in relatively democratic countries, from economic pressures, third party funding and certain governance models (as further discussed in Section 3 – Policy Level Support).

Against this background, the following section outlines existing support for fellowships, career development and integration measures for researchers at risk in Europe, with a particular focus on the challenges they and their European hosts face. It is found that, despite their different backgrounds and different standpoints on details, the responses from researchers at risk, hosts and support organisations align on major questions and themes.

<sup>32</sup> Anne-Sophie Barthez, Director General for Higher Education and Employability at the French Ministry of Higher Education, speaking at the Inspireurope Virtual Stakeholder Forum, 8 June 2020, see: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sar-europe/events/inspireurope-2020-virtual-stakeholder-forum>

<sup>33</sup> For instance: European Parliament (2018)

<sup>34</sup> “Academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education form the backbone of the EHEA. Having seen these fundamental values challenged in recent years in some of our countries, we strongly commit to promoting and protecting them in the entire EHEA through intensified political dialogue and cooperation.” (EHEA (2018), p. 1)

## 2.1 Rationales and expectations towards hosting researchers at risk

Professor Kader Konuk, the Founder of the Academy in Exile, points to “unresolved tension between utilitarian and humanitarian arguments for supporting refugee scholars”. “At the heart of this dilemma was the question of whether scholars were to be rescued ‘merely’ because they were in danger or on the grounds that they provided potential benefit to the host country and were thus to be considered particularly ‘worthy’”.<sup>35</sup>



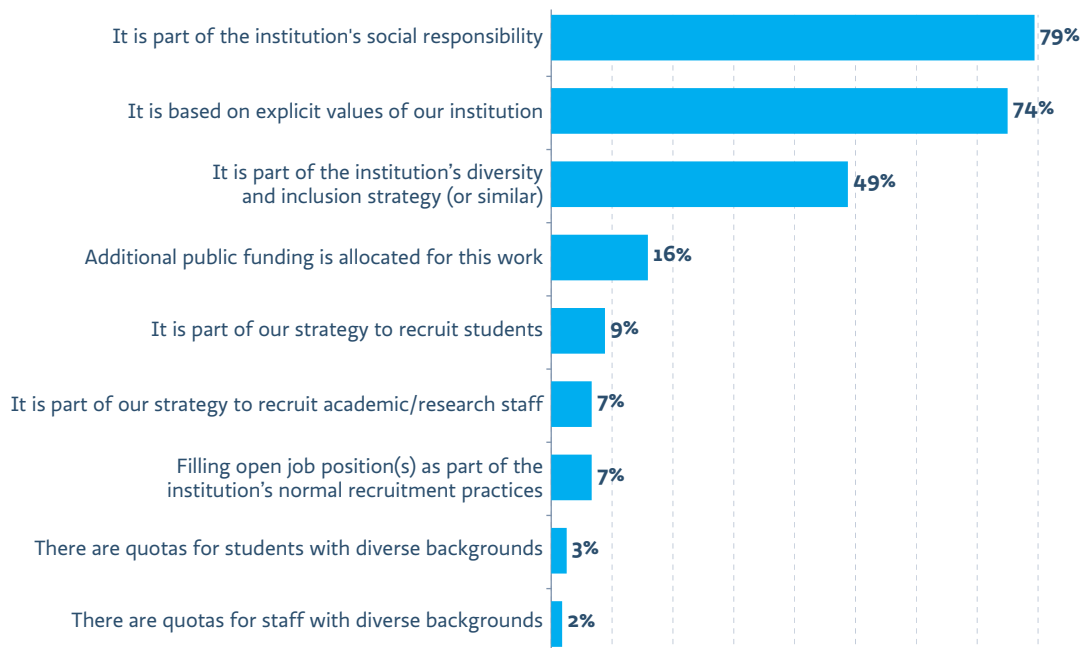
**Professor Kader Konuk**, Director of Academy in Exile (AiE), Germany. AiE was founded in 2017 in response to the pressures facing scholars in and outside Turkey

Photo credit: Jobst von Kunowski

Thus, what is the motivation for a higher education or research institution to host a researcher at risk, and what are the resulting benefits?

Most host institutions participating in the Inspireurope survey constitute their support to researchers at risk as a matter of values and responsibility (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Rationales for hosting researchers at risk** (HQ6: Why does your institution support researchers at risk and/or students with a refugee background? N= 127)



The majority state that hosting researchers at risk is part of their social responsibility (79%), and that they see it as an activity in line with and responding to their institutional values (74%).

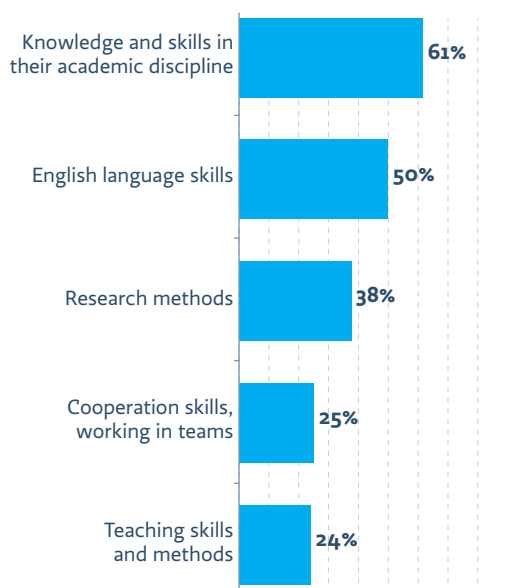
About half of respondents link this commitment to the institutions' overarching diversity and inclusion strategies. By contrast, and only in the case of a few hosts, additional funding (16%), general recruitment strategies (7%) and the fulfilment of diversity quotas (3% or less) are motivating factors.

<sup>35</sup> Konuk, K. (2020), p. 276.

This trend is also confirmed by other EU co-funded projects. For instance, for the institutions participating in the S.U.C.RE project, social and human responsibilities, societal commitment and solidarity were amongst the main reasons.<sup>36</sup>

Asked about the benefits from hosting researchers at risk, institutions point to overall internationalisation. The researchers' contributions to the international dimension of research and teaching (55%) and the so-called "internationalisation at home"<sup>37</sup> (25%) is highly appreciated.

**Figure 3: Top five skills and competencies expected by hosts** (HQ14: What skills and competencies do you expect from the researchers at risk? Please select up to five options. N= 120)



The S.U.C.RE project<sup>38</sup> and Academic Refuge project<sup>39</sup> highlight, in addition, that hosting raises awareness and illustrates the importance of values such as academic freedom amongst students and staff. But for many hosts this is also a pragmatic alternative to hiring international staff by other avenues, and researchers at risk are indeed a welcome addition to the institution's overall talent pool (38%). The latter is confirmed by other projects' research. Institutions participating in the S.U.C.RE survey indicated that one of the main benefits was the increased teaching and research capacity.<sup>40</sup>

**Figure 4: Top five skills and competencies offered by researchers at risk** (RQ13: What are your most important competencies/resources you bring to your (prospective) employer/host? Please select up to five options. N=112)



<sup>36</sup> S.U.C.RE (2018)

<sup>37</sup> Defined as "...the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments". Beelen J., Jones E. (2015), p. 69.

<sup>38</sup> S.U.C.RE (2018), p. 17.

<sup>39</sup> Academic Refuge (2019), p. 5.

<sup>40</sup> S.U.C.RE (2018), p. 17.



These expectations are by and large reflected in the responses from researchers at risk. When asked about the top skills they would bring to prospective employers, 73% of the responding researchers point to their knowledge and skills in their academic discipline, half of them to cross-disciplinary experience and around a third to skills and knowledge in research methods, teaching, regional expertise, innovation and international networking (Figure 4).

This largely meets the hosts' top five expectations on skills and competencies: knowledge and skills in their discipline (61%), sound knowledge of research methods (38%), and teaching skills (24%) are also featured. Only for a small number of hosts (15%), the support to and solidarity with researchers at risk is more important than their skills and profile (Figure 3). Hence, while hosting researchers at risk is mainly motivated by the values of the institution, and expected to contribute to its internationalisation, for most institutions, academic quality as the main selection criterium for individual researchers does not seem to be overridden.

While the above-mentioned skills and competencies would probably be expected from any new research staff member, surprisingly, relatively few host institutions emphasise their publication records (15% of hosts, while 17% of researchers count this amongst their top five). In a focus group, researchers at risk reported that while they themselves allocated high importance to publications, they found that for their host institutions these were less important. As one researcher put it:

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***“It took me some time to realise that not a new publication in a reviewed journal, but rather acquisition of research funding would decide on the prolongation of my appointment.” (Krakow, January 2020<sup>41</sup>)***

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However, overall, many hosts show a high degree of flexibility regarding the profile of the researchers at risk they want to host and more than half of the participating institutions (52%) do not focus on any specific career level. Those who do, tend to target recognised or established researchers (R2 or R3).<sup>42</sup> While the stages of career attainment in the researchers at risk survey sample are varied, most of them identify themselves as established (R3, 33%), or recognised researchers (R2, 28%).

Participating host institutions also show a high degree of flexibility regarding the roles that researchers at risk would take up: 37% state to be open to all profiles, and 30% state that they aim to find positions that match as closely as possible the background and profile of the individual researcher. However, the chances for researchers (26%) and/or professors/lecturers (23%) to obtain a placement are higher than, for instance, teaching assistants (6%).

The main motivation for hosting researchers, revealed in the Inspireurope surveys, thus lies in institutional values, though the expected contribution to the internationalisation is an added value, and academic skills and competences an unneglectable condition. Interestingly, while researchers and hosting institutions both converge on a strong background of academic discipline, on all other skills and competencies, researchers tend to be more research-oriented, whereas institutions emphasise abilities for the daily working practice, such as English language, teaching and collaboration skills.

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<sup>41</sup> Inspireurope Outreach Workshop, Poland, 9 January 2020

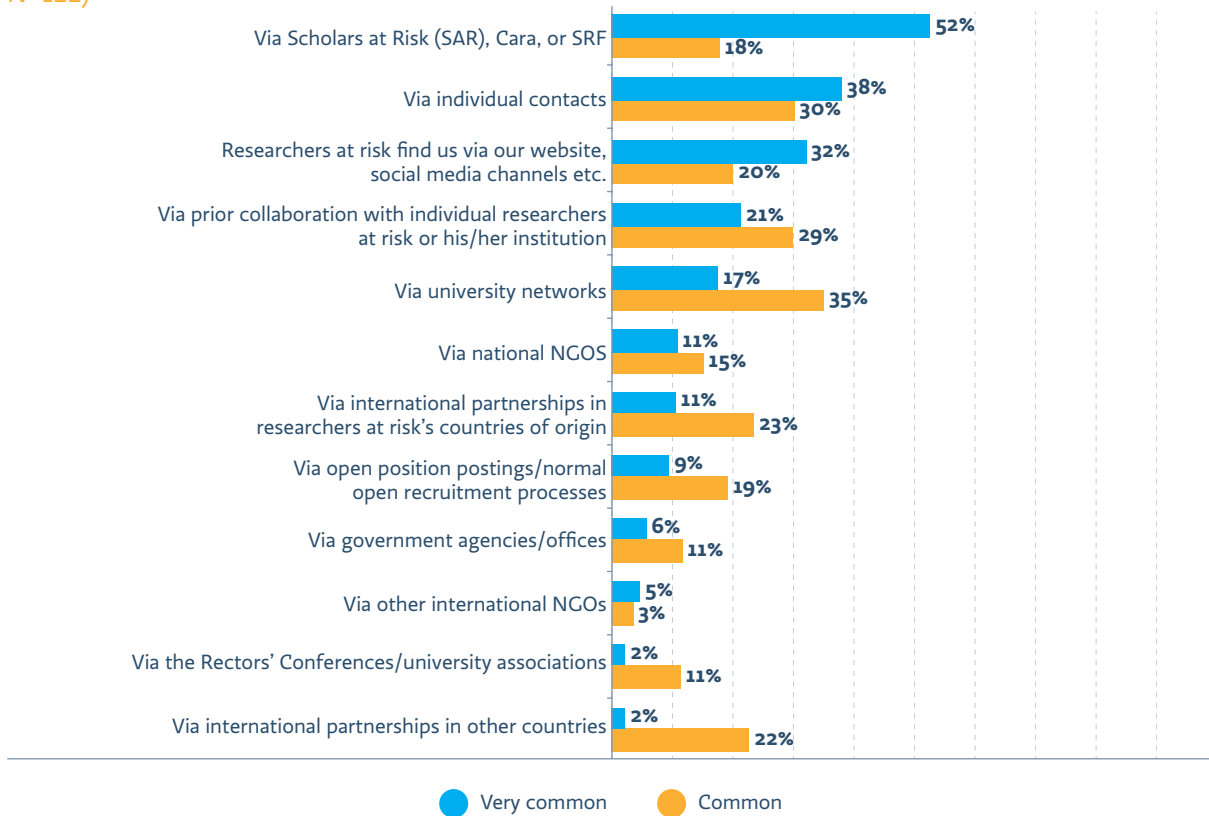
<sup>42</sup> EURAXESS Research profiles descriptors:  
<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/europe/career-development/training-researchers/research-profiles-descriptors>

## 2.2 Recruitment & hosting experiences

Researchers indicate that they use a variety of information sources and support mechanisms when trying to find a placement or employment in Europe: around 80% had experience with web

portals, and specific services and organisations targeting researchers at risk, but also general portals for researchers in Europe.<sup>43</sup>

**Figure 5: Recruitment of researchers at risk** (HQ11: How do you identify and recruit researchers at risk? N=122)



On the other hand, hosts tend to establish contact with researchers at risk mainly via support organisations such as SAR, CARA or the SRF (70% very common or common), PAUSE, or other (international) NGOs. Of almost equal importance to hosts are prior direct contacts with the researchers (68%), and prior collaboration with them or their institutions (50%). Supporting organisations commented that these percentages most certainly include the cases of researchers at risk who have already left their country, and are in their first placement, which opens contacts to another host institution for a follow-up placement.

In addition, contacts generated by the researchers via the institutions' websites, social media etc. are also of high importance (52%). While not uncommon, national agencies, national level rectors' conferences, university networks and partnerships, and national and international NGOs other than SAR, Cara, SRF and PAUSE, play a lesser role in the identification of researchers at risk for host institutions (Figure 5).

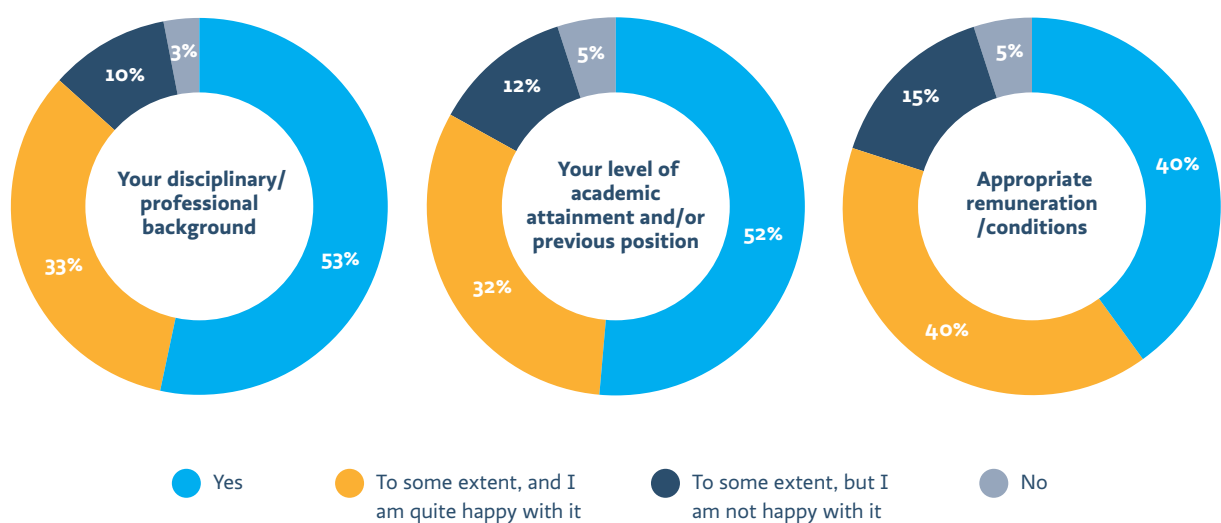
About one-third of the participating researchers at risk currently benefit from a fellowship (33%), 27% are employed, 11% are PhD candidates and 15% are at present looking for employment or (another) fellowship.

<sup>43</sup> The most commonly mentioned organisations were Scholars at Risk's national sections, the PAUSE programme and Cara. Frequently mentioned web portals include <https://www.academy-in-exile.eu>, as well as various national and Europe-wide job portals.

Among those currently employed or on a fellowship (60% of the sample), 78% were currently at a higher education institution, 17% at a research institute, or similar, and 5% indicated “other”, which included employment in the public sector or in NGOs. Their stays are commonly temporary, usually limited to one (60%), or between one and two years (25%). Only 5% have a permanent position.

Support organisations and host institutions confirm these findings: their placements are usually on a temporary basis, within a one- to two-year range, very rarely permanent arrangements (3% of hosts, one of the supporters). This finding is confirmed by other projects.<sup>44</sup>

**Figure 6: Employment/fellowship match** (RQ12.4: If employed or on a fellowship [RQ12], how would you describe your present position, does it match...? N= 47)



Apart from the fact that their positions are temporary, the researchers tend to be quite content with them regarding the match to their backgrounds: 80% or more stated that it matches fully or to some extent their disciplinary and professional backgrounds, their level of previous academic attainment, and the remuneration and employment conditions. It is these conditions that seem to be the subject of highest dissatisfaction (Figure 6).

Thus, support organisations play a crucial role in the matchmaking and recruitment of researchers at risk, next to international research collaboration and study, which generate direct contacts, but also enhanced social mobility. Placements and fellowships are most likely to be short term, but beyond the timeframe constraints (as further discussed in section 2.6), researchers provide positive feedback overall on their positions.

Similarly, a high satisfaction rate was reported by hosts who responded to the S.U.C.RE survey, with 95% indicating that they were happy with the research performance of the scholar.<sup>45</sup> However, this slightly contradicts the perspective of higher education institutions, who noted that scientific matching between the scholar's expertise and the research group was a prominent problem.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> CARE (2020.I) p. 21.  
<sup>45</sup> S.U.C.RE (2018), p. 32.  
<sup>46</sup> S.U.C.RE (2018), p. 20.

## 2.3 Fellowships and other direct support for researchers at risk

### Overview of existing support

When it comes to fellowships or positions/ placements in Europe for researchers at risk, the mapping results show that such support is for the most part provided through an interplay between higher education and research institutions, dedicated support organisations, and different available funding and fellowship programmes.

As discussed above, host institutions are first and foremost higher education and sometimes research institutions which provide a placement. While some host institutions also assume all or most of the costs, the majority of institutions rely on at least partial funding support.

While some host institutions identify the researchers at risk on their own (or are identified by a researcher at risk), most rely on direct assistance from a support organisation, whose mission is to assist at-risk scholars/researchers. The most significant ones are the Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF),<sup>47</sup> SAR,<sup>48</sup> Cara,<sup>49</sup> the French national PAUSE programme,<sup>50</sup> and the Philipp Schwartz Initiative (PSI)<sup>51</sup> in Germany. Some organisations operate at national level, such as PAUSE and PSI. Cara, SAR and SRF work internationally. Together with North-America, Europe plays an important role as a hosting region: in 2019, 79% of SAR's placements, 38% of IIE-SRF's placements and 75% of Cara's placements were at European higher education institutions, the latter primarily being at universities in the UK. Apart from the operational capacity, a key issue is of course the availability of funding, which is quite limited, as described below:

At the **European level**, there is currently no dedicated European-level fellowship mechanism for researchers at risk. However, a number of Erasmus+ and H2020-funded projects provide very valuable support to institutions and organisations offering career development opportunities for researchers at risk (mentoring, webinars, trainings). Support also comes from some other parts of the EU budget.

There are three **state-funded national-level** fellowship programmes in Europe for researchers at risk: in Finland (EDUFI<sup>52</sup> partnership with IIE-SRF, co-funding five scholars in 2017-2020), in France (PAUSE programme launched in 2017, co-funding 100 fellowships per year), and in Germany (PSI launched in 2015, 65 fellowships per year). The PAUSE programme benefits from funding from the European Union's Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) which it dedicates towards co-funding fellowships for researchers at risk. The EDUFI IIE-SRF partnership allocates national funding (from the Ministry of Education and Culture) to co-fund IIE-SRF funds for researchers at risk and students arriving in Finland through the IIE-SRF framework.

There are a small number of dedicated initiatives at the **sub-national level** (e.g. Baden-Württemberg Fund for Persecuted Scholars in Germany),<sup>53</sup> as well as at the **institutional level** (e.g. Université Libre de Bruxelles Solidarity Fund).<sup>54</sup>

In addition, there are a modest number of initiatives founded in recent years **by and for researchers from Turkey** (but which have now broadened the scope of their work to other countries), including notably the Academy in Exile and Off-University.

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.scholarrescuefund.org/>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.scholarsatrisk.org/>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.cara.ngo/>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.college-de-france.fr/site/en-program-pause/index.htm>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/philipp-schwartz-initiative-en.html>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.oph.fi/en/programmes/scholar-rescue-fund>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.bwstiftung.de/bw-fonds/>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.ulb.be/fr/actions-solidaires/solidarity-fund-for-researchers-in-need>

All of the above categories of initiatives are listed and described on the Inspireurope website.<sup>55</sup>

Thus, across Europe, there are numerous organisations, foundations and funds, some of them quite small, and focused on particular a target group and region, and not every country is covered. The latter underlines the urgency of enhancing cross-border support and cooperation for researchers at risk. Despite all these initiatives and efforts, overall, there are insufficient funding opportunities to cope with the demand for positions as outlined above. A shortage of fellowships and the competitiveness of the academic labour market in Europe continue to be identified by researchers at risk and support organisations as the top two obstacles faced.

### Survey results on existing funding support

In the Inspireurope surveys, researchers at risk, hosts and support organisations were asked to provide information on the most relevant programmes at national, regional and international levels, that either directly or indirectly support researchers at risk. Twenty-seven programmes could be identified that directly provide or assist with fellowships and placements for researchers at risk in Europe and that offer other direct support (see Annex I). In addition, 12 dedicated research and collaboration initiatives, some of a temporary nature (projects), and 33 fellowship listings, jobs, career development opportunities in Europe open to all international researchers, including researchers at risk, were gathered together (see extended list online).<sup>56</sup> Activities and services offered by these programmes and organisations most frequently include the provision of information, advice, and referrals (about half of the organisations/programmes). Over a third support researchers at risk with fellowships, grants or scholarships, and another quarter provide funding support to host institutions.

Networking opportunities, and the organisation of speaking engagements and matchmaking between researchers and hosts, are also frequently offered services.

Most of the support organisations surveyed for this report prioritise support for researchers without stable residency status, in particular those who face immediate risks, rather than those who are already established in a country, have a resident status, seek or hold student visas, or are recognised as a refugee. Where applicants with refugee status (or other protection status) apply for assistance, such applications are assessed by the support organisations, together with the applicant, to understand the risks they are currently facing in order to determine whether they can be prioritised for an urgent placement, in a context where there are always more applicants than placements available. But as support organisations state this priority in their information and application forms, researchers with refugee status, in particular those with stable residency status in a safe country, might not see them as their first port of call for assistance with job placements.

The fact that more male than female researchers apply may also be due to gender disparities in the researcher population of some of their countries of origin.<sup>57</sup> Support organisations have made special efforts to identify female candidates for assistance, as reflected in slightly higher rates of acceptance for qualified female candidates in relation to all applications over the last three years. For example, in 2017–2018, 41% of researcher applications received by PAUSE were from women and 59% were from men. Acceptance rates were 45% for women and 55% for men.

<sup>55</sup> Full list available at: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sar-europe/resources>

<sup>56</sup> Annex I lists the fellowships or placements in Europe and other direct support to researchers at risk identified in 2020. An extended version, including references to fellowship listings, jobs, and career development in Europe that are open to all international researchers is available online: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sar-europe/resources>

<sup>57</sup> Turkey is a notable exception. See also: The World Bank Data - UNESCO Institute for Statistics: Tertiary education, academic staff (% female). <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.TCHR.FE.ZS>

## Fellowships and placements

Over the last three years (2017-2019) the support organisations participating in the Inspireurope survey have helped to place approximately 1,600 researchers at risk at host institutions worldwide. The majority of these placements are supported by SAR and its national sections, as well as Cara UK, the IIE-SRF, AvH and PAUSE. However, national initiatives also make an important contribution to supporting researchers at risk in Europe, often in partnership with the larger international support programmes.

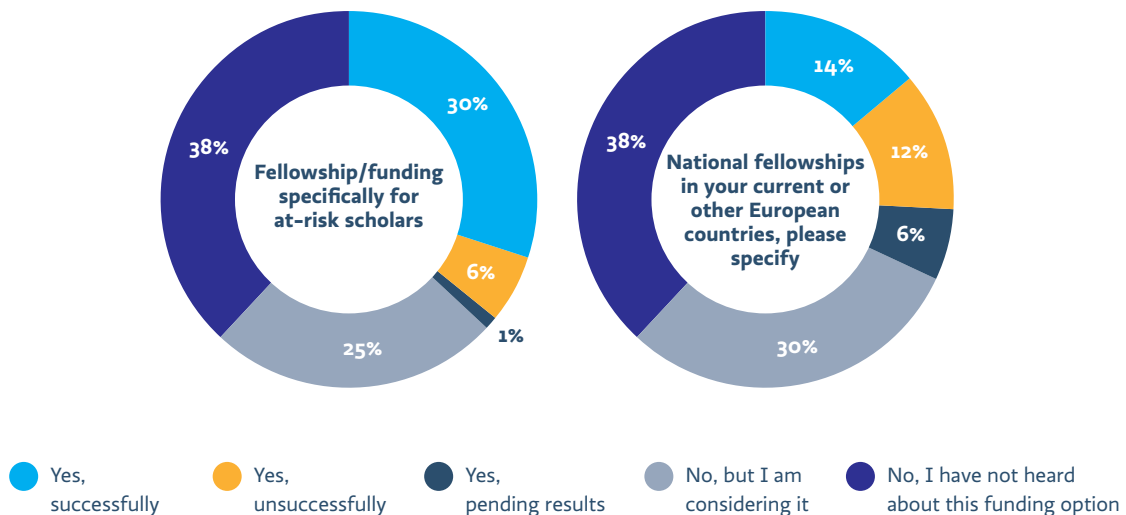
But there are far more qualified applications for assistance through these organisations than there is funding to provide. For instance, IIE-SRF, Cara and SAR have received a combined total of 2,200 requests for assistance from at-risk scholars over the last two years and have managed, together with PAUSE, PSI, UAF, and EDUFI, to arrange about 950 placements.

The organisations that directly financially support researchers at risk (a quarter of the sample) provide fellowships ranging from approximately 20,000 EUR to 42,000 EUR per annum, depending on the organisation and average salaries in the country

in question. One organisation tops up the funding that the host institution provides to researchers. All participating support organisations also provide other direct support (for instance advice, referrals, mentoring, networking) to researchers, and the cost for these is more likely to be covered by EU funds (6 respondents). The sources of funding for fellowships and placements vary amongst the support organisations: national funds (R&I as well as other funds (7 respondents) and charities and foundations (6 respondents) are the main sources. Regional funds and individual contributions (2 respondents each), and contributions by hosting universities and EU project funding (1 respondent each) only play a small role.

All participating support organisations also provide other direct support (for instance advice, referrals, mentoring, networking) to researchers, and costs for these are more likely to be covered by EU funds (6 respondents). But as for the fellowship funding, charities and foundations as well as national funds (R&I and other national funds) (8 each) play the biggest role to fund such measures, with only marginal support from individuals (2), industry, member and host institutions (1 each).

**Figure 7.1: Applications to fellowships** (RQ14: Have you yourself or part of a team applied or will be applying for any of the below funding opportunities in Europe? N=100)





In the Inspireurope sample, 37% of the researchers have previously applied to fellowship programmes addressing specifically researchers at risk (30% successfully, 6% pending results, 1% unsuccessfully). 32% per cent of researchers have applied for a national fellowship, 14% with success, 12% without success and 6% who are currently awaiting results (Figure 7.1).<sup>58</sup>

Host institutions themselves may offer fellowships and scholarships, as well as a variety of support services to welcome and integrate researchers into their institutions (see also Figure 10 below). Overall, only 55% of host institutions that currently, or which have been recently, hosting have received external funding to finance scholarships, fellowships, and grants for researchers at risk. Some use external funding also to cover living allowances (48%) and family support (46%). A further 10% of host institutions repurposed external funds received for other activities to support researchers at risk. But up to 72% of hosts co-fund these costs with their own core budget.

As for the support organisations, the most relevant external sources for host institutions – apart from their own budget – are charities or foundations (46% highly or somewhat relevant), national funds (43%) and specifically national R&I funds (38%). 40% of host institutions also confirm that researchers would bring their own funding, which are likely to be fellowships or others provided by a support organisation. A small number of host institutions receive, in addition to fellowships, also some funding for administrative or auxiliary costs from support organisations, ranging from 3,000 EUR to 20,000 EUR per researcher hosted.

<sup>58</sup> These figures suggest a perhaps misleadingly high success rate of more than 80% under the fellowships for researchers at risk, and just under 50% for national fellowships. But it has to be considered that many of the researchers participating in the surveys were contacted via host institutions and support organisations, a good proportion of whom have already successfully secured a placement.

## 2.4 European Union funding opportunities for researchers

Under the Erasmus+ and H2020 programmes, the European Union supports collaborative projects of institutions and organisations which provide excellent resources for researchers at risk, in terms of career development, mentoring, skills training, information and advice, guidance materials and networking opportunities.<sup>59</sup>

There is currently no dedicated European-level fellowship mechanism for researchers at risk, but some of the Union's funding and fellowship programmes for international researchers are also eligible to those at risk. These however are unlikely to be of immediate use to researchers at risk. Compared to the dedicated programmes provided by support organisations, applying for EU research fellowships and grants is quite complex, requires substantial effort and time to prepare, is highly competitive, and has a relatively low success rate. They would mainly serve researchers at risk who seek post-fellowship placements and employment, or project funding for their current host institution.

For instance, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)<sup>60</sup> Individual Fellowships provide grants for researchers at all career stages and encourage transnational, inter-sectoral and interdisciplinary mobility. MSCA also (co-)funds international collaboration and research networks. The European Research Council (ERC)<sup>61</sup> funds projects for frontier research, which can last up to five years. The grants support both emerging research leaders as well as already well-established and recognised scientists. The Erasmus+ programme supports short-term staff mobility exchanges and international collaboration projects,<sup>62</sup> but only for researchers currently employed at an institution in an Erasmus programme or partner country. Survey results indicate that researchers at risk lack information on these opportunities:



**Dr Refet Ali Yalcin**,  
Université de Poitiers,  
discussed his career trajectory  
in Europe during the  
Inspireurope Stakeholder  
Forum, 8 June 2020. Dr  
Yalcin was awarded a MSCA  
Fellowship in 2020, however,  
there are considerable  
difficulties facing researchers  
at risk who wish to access  
existing EU fellowship  
schemes

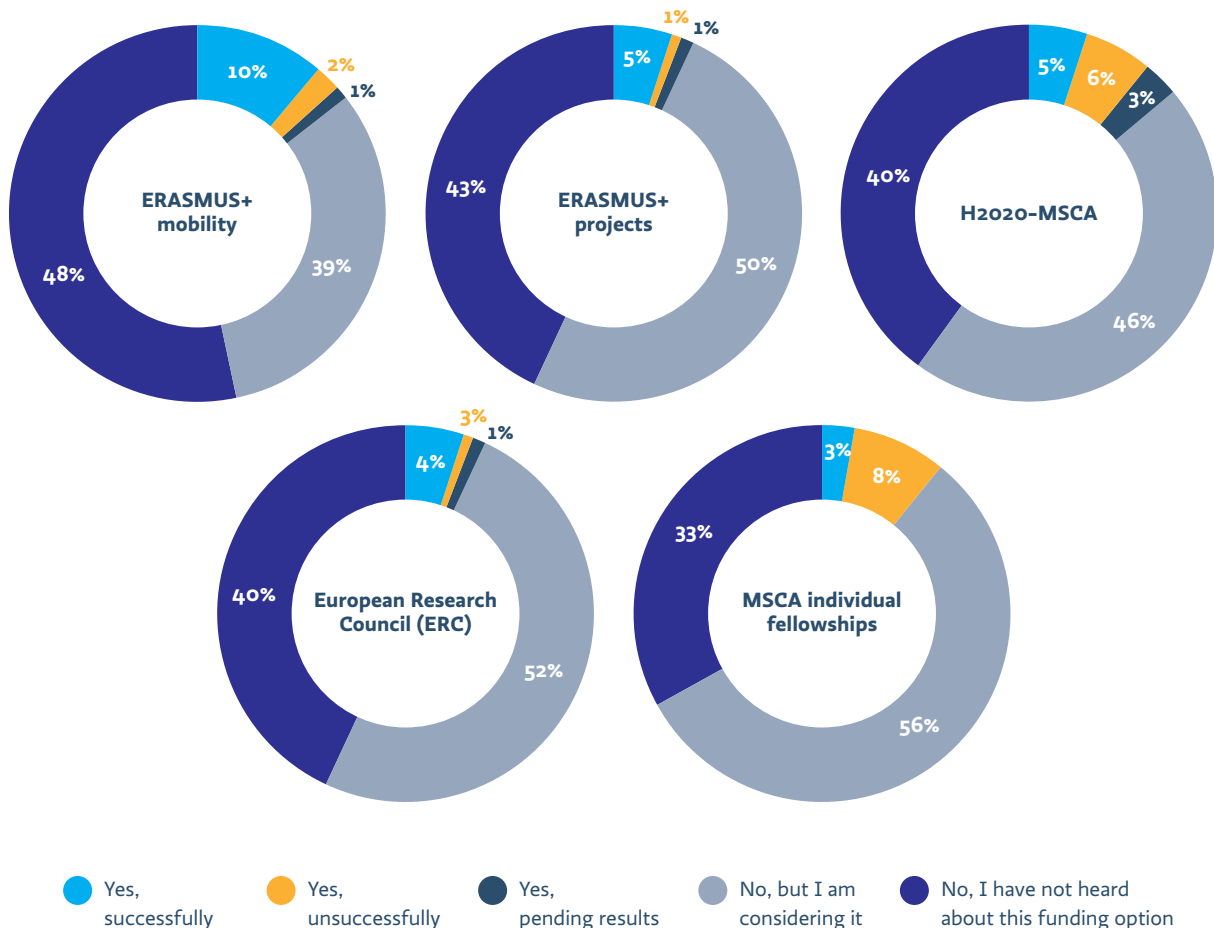
<sup>59</sup> A list of such projects is available on the Inspireurope website: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sar-europe/resources>

<sup>60</sup> Further information: <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/marie-sklodowska-curie-actions>

<sup>61</sup> Further information: <https://erc.europa.eu/funding/non-european-researchers>

<sup>62</sup> Further information: [https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en)

**Figure 7.2: Applications to European funding opportunities open to all international researchers**  
 (RQ14: Have you yourself or part of a team applied or will be applying for any of the below funding opportunities in Europe? N=100)



Erasmus+ funding is only known by about half of the respondents. This is probably not surprising, as neither mobility nor collaboration project funds are of immediate help to researchers, who are currently not in stable positions and are more urgently seeking opportunities. 10% of survey respondents have successfully participated in Erasmus+ staff mobility and 5% of respondents have successfully applied for Erasmus+ collaboration projects (Figure 7.2).

A third of respondents did not know about the MSCA Individual Fellowships, and around 40% of respondents were not aware of the wider funding opportunities under MSCA and those provided by the ERC. 11% of the sample have applied to MSCA individual fellowships (a quarter of them were successful) and only 8% to the ERC (half of them were successful).<sup>63</sup>

While the survey sample shows that 11% of respondents applied to MSCA individual fellowships, in the experience of organisations supporting researchers at risk, this percentage is unlikely to align with the percentage of all researchers at risk applying for such grants. However, official statistics on this particular question are lacking, given that researchers are not asked to identify themselves as 'at risk' during the application process for such grants.

Around half of the survey participants reported that they would consider applying for MSCA, ERC and Erasmus+ in the future, perhaps prompted by the survey itself or by Inspireurope's related awareness-raising of existing EU funding opportunities via webinars, social media, email lists, a pilot coaching programme, FAQs and events. Researchers participating in a focus group<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> As in Figure 7.1 these figures also suggest a misleadingly high success rate. But it has to be considered that many of the researchers participating in the surveys were contacted via host institutions and support organisations – a good proportion of them having already successfully secured a placement and potentially having received support for follow up funding opportunities.

<sup>64</sup> Inspireurope Outreach Workshop, Poland, 9 January 2020

highlighted that thanks to the - then draft - survey, they learnt about a host of different funding opportunities.

Some researchers reported that the information they received at their host institutions was mainly about national funds, and some only learned about such opportunities towards the end of their placements, with not sufficient time to apply. Some also explained that from their home institutions, they were used to posts “for life”, and it was only during their fellowship that they realised that, also for their colleagues in their host country in Europe, requisition of grants and research funding was at least as important as research achievement and publications. Only one researcher highlighted that he had been confronted with the issue from the very beginning, as his host institution involved him in research project application development, and also made him a member of an internal selection committee for project and fellowship applications.

Another obstacle for applying to EU programmes confirmed by researchers, support organisations, and host institutions in the surveys is the high level of competitiveness of the European research programmes and positions: for instance, 81% of hosts report this as a potential obstacle. In 2019, MSCA individual fellowships had an overall success rate of 14%,<sup>65</sup> and the ERC starter, consolidated and advanced grants a success rate of 12%.<sup>66</sup> This highlights how difficult it is to win a grant, even for those who have worked their entire research lives within well-resourced, stable institutions in stable countries.

Researchers also confirm the highly competitive nature of MSCA and ERC fellowships, and also the rather complex application processes (see below – Spotlight MSCA).

Without doubt, the awareness of and participation in European Union programmes could be enhanced by providing more targeted information to researchers at risk, and by offering guidance and support for applications. The need for this is also confirmed by other projects.<sup>67</sup> Some such support mechanisms are currently already offered in the Inspireurope project: since September 2019, the project has worked to raise awareness amongst researchers at risk of existing EU funding opportunities via webinars, social media, mailing lists, a pilot coaching programme, FAQs and events. However, as outlined below, awareness is but one of several challenges facing researchers at risk vis-a-vis EU-funded fellowships.

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<sup>65</sup> Meaning 14% of *all* researchers who apply are successful, not 14% of researchers at risk. See: Net4Mobility+ (2020)

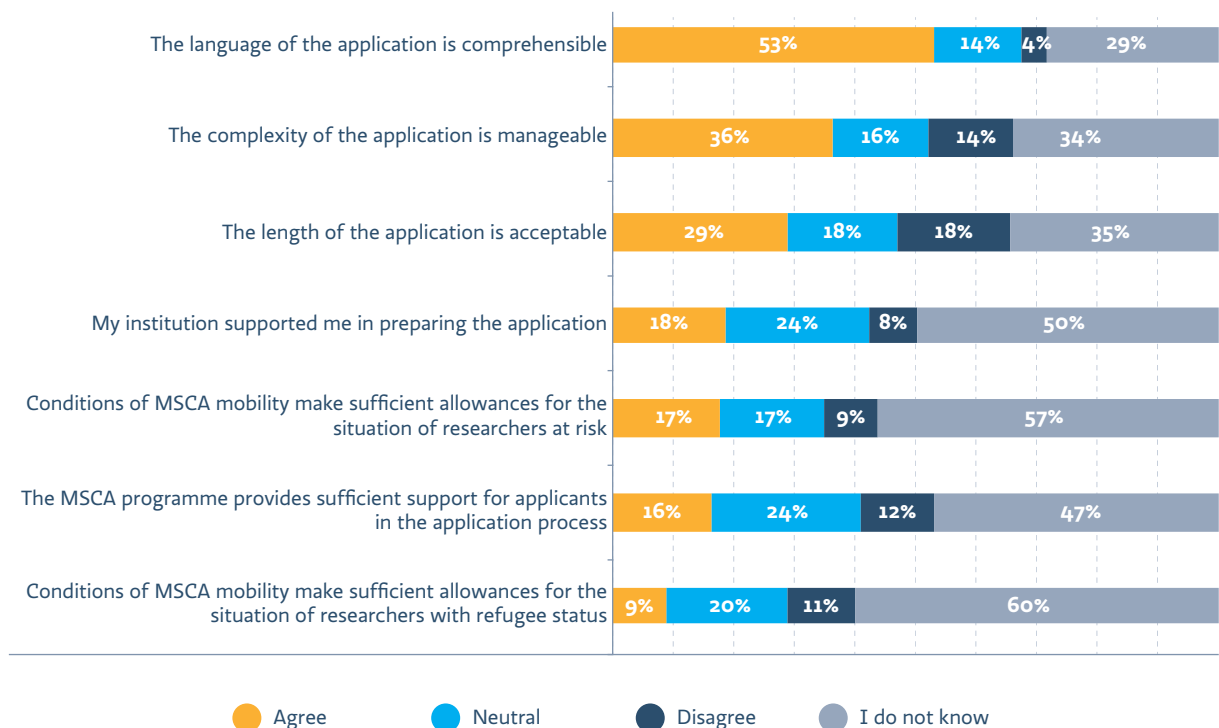
<sup>66</sup> ERC (accessed online 2020)

<sup>67</sup> e.g. CArE (2020.III)

**Spotlight:  
 MSCA**

Specific conditions and the structure of the MSCA programme may hinder researchers at risk to participate.

**Figure 8: MSCA feedback** (RQ14.1: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions (MSCA)? N=50)



Among those survey participants who knew about the MSCA grants or applied previously, almost every other one found the application difficult in terms of language, and about two out of three in terms of complexity and length. Less than one in five have received support at their host institution in preparing their application (Figure 8). However, the majority of those who succeeded with their MSCA applications confirm that the grant provides appropriate funding, and hence it is worth submitting an application.

Indeed, awareness raising about European programmes and their opportunities for researchers at risk is one of the key purposes of the Inspireurope project.

In autumn 2019, the project partners made a preliminary assessment of the accessibility of the MSCA-Individual Fellowship scheme to researchers at risk, drawing on their extensive experience from their own support to significant numbers of researchers at risk. In January 2020, an Inspireurope webinar on the topic of EU research funding confirmed high interest from researchers at risk in EU funding opportunities. Based on the numerous questions and comments received from the 76 participating researchers at risk, and input from the EC's MSCA unit, the Inspireurope project coordinator developed a Frequently Asked Questions document.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Inspireurope (2020). Webinar recording available at: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sar-europe/inspireurope/webinars>

The main findings from all these activities were as follows:

### i. MSCA eligibility criteria:

**MSCA mobility rules:** The MSCA mobility provisions have special rules for researchers in the refugee process, who are still eligible after 12 months of residence. But these currently do not extend to researchers facing risks to their lives or their work but are outside the refugee process. The standard MSCA fellowship criteria state that the researcher cannot have resided or carried out his/her main activity in the country of the beneficiary for more than 12 months in the three years immediately preceding the call deadline. However, preparation of a competitive MSCA individual fellowship application requires that an at-risk researcher is out of immediate danger, and in a more stable situation. For example, candidates who are at a SAR members' university, supported by first or second one-year temporary placement, at a Germany university under the two-year Philipp Schwartz Initiative fellowship, or at a French university with a PAUSE fellowship, are usually in a better position to apply for an MSCA fellowship than those who are still facing risks in Syria or Turkey. Once such candidates are in a better position to submit competitive applications in the second year of their temporary placement, they are no longer eligible to apply for an MSCA fellowship.

But the mobility rules also pose challenges to researchers with a refugee status in one EU country, as with an MSCA grant they would have to move to another EU country for two or three years, which will almost always have consequences for their residency rights in the first country. In addition, moving to yet another country is not necessarily an appealing option for somebody who has just started to settle in. As one refugee scholar put it during an Inspireurope webinar in January 2020: "For researchers who have lived in Europe for more than three years as refugees, their main concern is to settle down and integrate into the local community.

Requiring them to leave the country for another European country in order to be eligible for MSCA-IF funding to continue their research is not helpful for the integration of refugees"<sup>69</sup>

**Timeline for applications:** One call per year with approximately six-months between the application submission and the funding decision makes it an unlikely opportunity for researchers in an emergency. Other fellowship programmes or international networks, and universities themselves, will need to continue filling this urgent gap with their own fellowships.

**Supervisor:** For some researchers at risk with no strong contacts and networks in Europe, it is challenging to find a supervisor for their MSCA project.

**Application:** The language of calls for applications, and references to norms around ethics, open science, research integrity etc. are not always immediately understood and can be confusing for those applying for the first time for EU/MSCA funding.

### ii. MSCA evaluation criteria:

**Excellence:** Many researchers at risk have significant gaps in their track record of publications and their teaching experience. This might be due to external circumstances, such as imprisonment or exile (e.g. Syria), being suspended by their institutions (e.g. signatories of the Academics for Peace petition in Turkey), censorship or the threat of it, or denial of access to online journals containing recent research in areas deemed politically sensitive (e.g. women's rights scholars/political scientists in Iran). Many have not had access to libraries, state-of-the-art laboratory facilities, and research funds. Many lack international academic experience, e.g. as they have been prevented from travel abroad and exchange with colleagues and to attend academic conferences, do not have a strong academic network, or not outside of their country, and maybe not be sufficiently fluent in English, or other European languages.

<sup>69</sup> Webinar recording available at: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sar-europe/inspireurope/webinars>  
The point raised by the refugee scholar was during the Q&A discussion.



These and other possible hurdles and disadvantages intersect and accumulate, creating an uneven playing field with their competitors for MSCA fellowships who may have worked within well-resourced, stable institutions within stable countries their whole research lives.

The conclusion is therefore that in their present construction neither the MSCA-IF, but also none of the other EU grant programmes (ERC, Erasmus+) are well suited to support researchers facing immediate risks, as least not in the first period of emergency and settling in a host country, which can be decisive for the continuation of their careers, and generally for their own and their families' wellbeing and sustainability for the rest of their lives.

As shown above, international support schemes do not have the resources to accommodate all qualifying requests from researchers at risk, and national schemes exist only in a few countries in Europe, also usually with scarce funding, compared to demand.

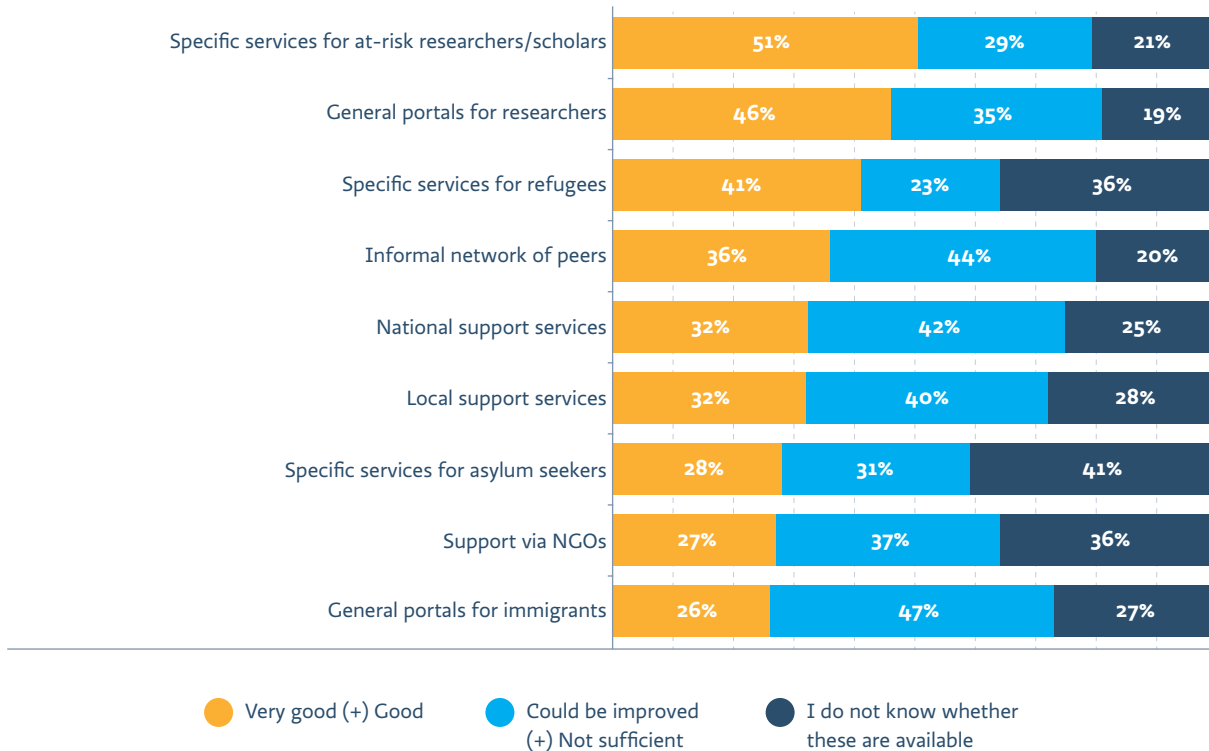


## 2.5 Support for career development and integration

Beyond fellowships and placements, researchers at risk require other support for their professional and

private lives, to foster their long-term integration and employment prospects.

**Figure 9: Portals, services, support mechanisms used by researchers at risk (RQ13: What are the portals/services/support mechanisms you have used as a guide in your present hosting country and how would you rate them? N=98)**

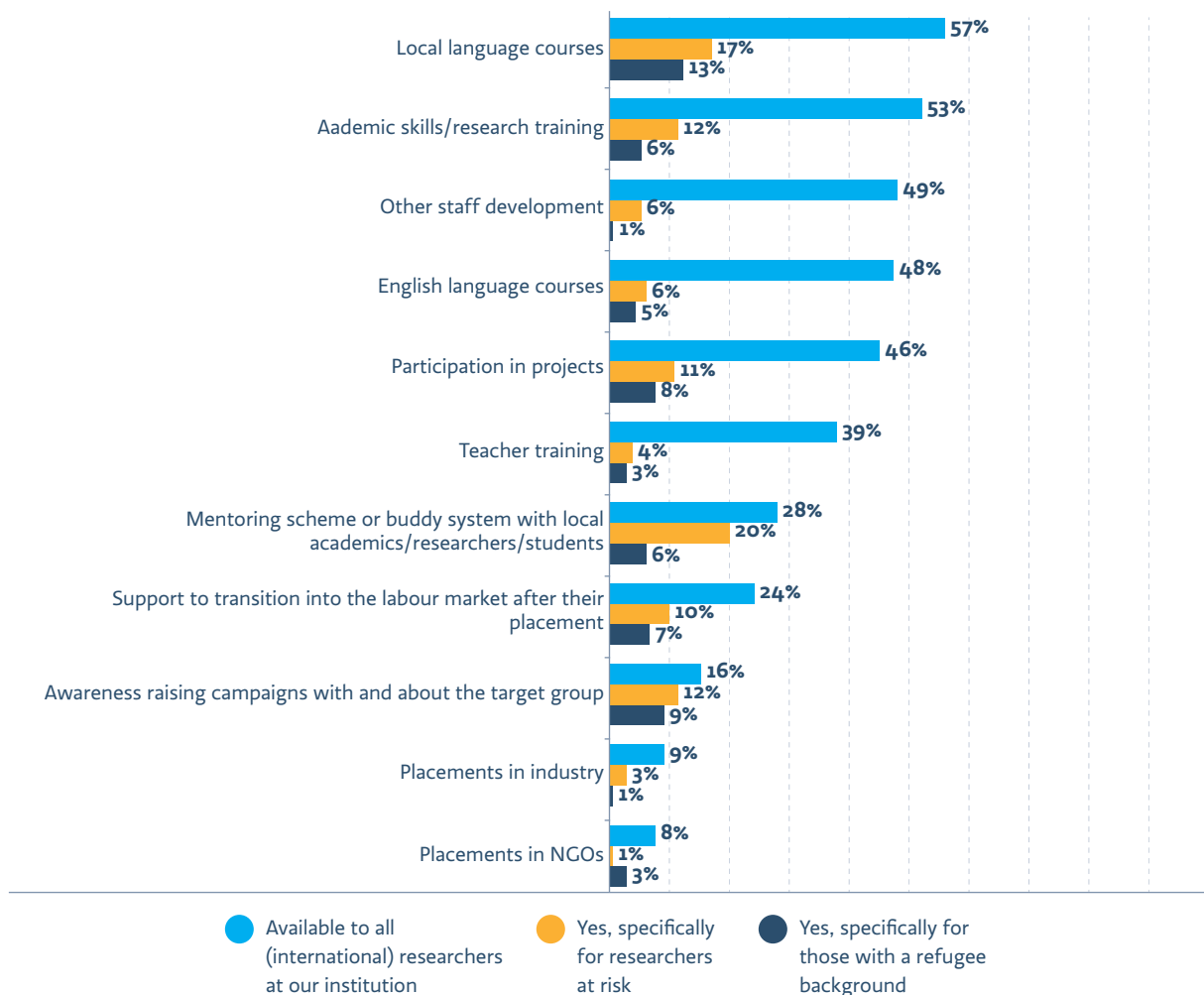


Researchers at risk who took part in the survey indicated that they would use a variety of information sources and support mechanisms that may be offered by host institutions, support organisations, and national initiatives and organisations, including general portals for researchers and specific services for at-risk scholars, some of which would require improvement. When asked to rate the portals, services and support mechanisms they used, those targeting specifically at-risk researchers were rated as (very) good, and 21% said these could be improved.

General portals for researchers received a similar rating. A further 41% gave positive feedback on portals or services specifically addressing those in a refugee-like situation; however, around one-third were not aware of any such services or portals.

Informal exchanges, such as peers and informal networks, have been emphasised as one of the most useful and frequently used resources and play a crucial role for many of the respondents. 80% of researchers have in the past gathered information and support via an informal network of peers, but 44% said that these could provide even better support if enhanced (14% not sufficient, 30% could be improved), perhaps with a more formalised network structure (Figure 9).

**Figure 10: Support services and activities offered by hosts** (HQ16: Does your institution offer any of the specific services or activities for researchers at risk? N=118)



Host institutions confirm that they have a variety of support services and integration mechanisms in place. However, they are usually not specifically offered to researchers at risk, but rather are open to all (international) researchers at the institution (Figure 10). This is likely because of the relatively low number of researchers at risk and as they share many characteristics of other international researchers, but also because there is usually no extra funding available for these activities. Most of the hosts' support services for researchers at risk are funded from institutions' core budgets. This is in line with the trend that overall activities on diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as those on higher education values, tend to be covered by the institutions themselves, rather than being supported by external funding.<sup>70</sup>

Support for international scholars includes for instance language courses (local 57%, English 48%), academic/research skills training (53%), teacher training (39%) and other staff development (49%). But some host institutions offer also some services specifically for those with an at-risk background, including mentoring and buddy schemes (20%), courses in the local language (17%), academic/research skills training and awareness-raising campaigns with and about the target group (both 12%) (Figure 10).

The CARE project's survey report found, on the other hand, that the majority of hosts employing researchers with a refugee background provides support services for them, e.g. in the form of additional academic training, assistance on arrival and introduction to the academic community, individual academic counselling and information

<sup>70</sup> Claeys-Kulik, A.L., Jørgensen, T.E., and Stoeber, H. (2019)

sessions on research funding, and generally by granting sufficient flexibility and time to avoid unnecessary hurdles and pressures.<sup>71</sup>

A very small number of host institutions also support researchers to create professional links outside academia: placements in industry or at NGOs were only available at less than 5% of institutions for at-risk and refugee researchers and for less than 10% for international researchers in general.

However, due to the low number of permanent, or tenure track positions available in academia, support to transition to the non-academic labour market after their initial placement is urgently needed, in order to ensure long-term prospects for researchers at risk in Europe (see in detail section 3).

**Figure 11: Support services offered by support organisations and projects (SQ6: What types of services does your organisation/section/project provide to researchers at risk? N=20<sup>72</sup>)**



In addition, support organisations offer specific advice and services, which the majority of participating researchers at risk have previously accessed (see Figure 9 above). These services frequently comprise general information, advice and referrals, networking opportunities and speaking engagements. About half of the participating support organisations also offer training and career development, as well as matchmaking for placements (Figure 11).

In conclusion, some direct and indirect support, in particular fellowships and placements, for researchers at risk in Europe is provided by dedicated support organisations, and (co-)funded by host institutions and organisations. However, demand largely exceeds funding and placements available. National support initiatives exist only in some countries, and international schemes are oversubscribed.

<sup>71</sup> CARE (2020.1), p. 45.

<sup>72</sup> Due to the small sample, data for support organisations is displayed as a count, not as percentages.

The European Union supports a number of initiatives for researchers at risk, mainly via project grants and usually involving support organisations and host institutions, to develop and provide services such as mentoring, career guidance and language training. This has resulted in some excellent materials and information structures, and beyond benefiting the researchers, it has also helped to enhance cross-organisational and Europe-wide exchange and cooperation, including in countries where specific initiatives for researchers at risk do not yet exist.

But the EU does not currently offer a dedicated fellowship programme specifically for this target group. While researchers at risk technically have access to EU funding programmes for international researchers, there is clearly a lack of awareness of these programmes. While the Inspireurope project is addressing this issue of awareness, and while this should be relatively easy to solve through better information, support organisations and (potential) host institutions, the findings suggest that eligibility criteria, and the high competitiveness of the programmes, keep application and success rates amongst researchers at risk low. In addition, European programmes have requirements and conditions that might not help, but rather hinder, at-risk researchers' integration and career development, such as the mobility requirement under MSCA.

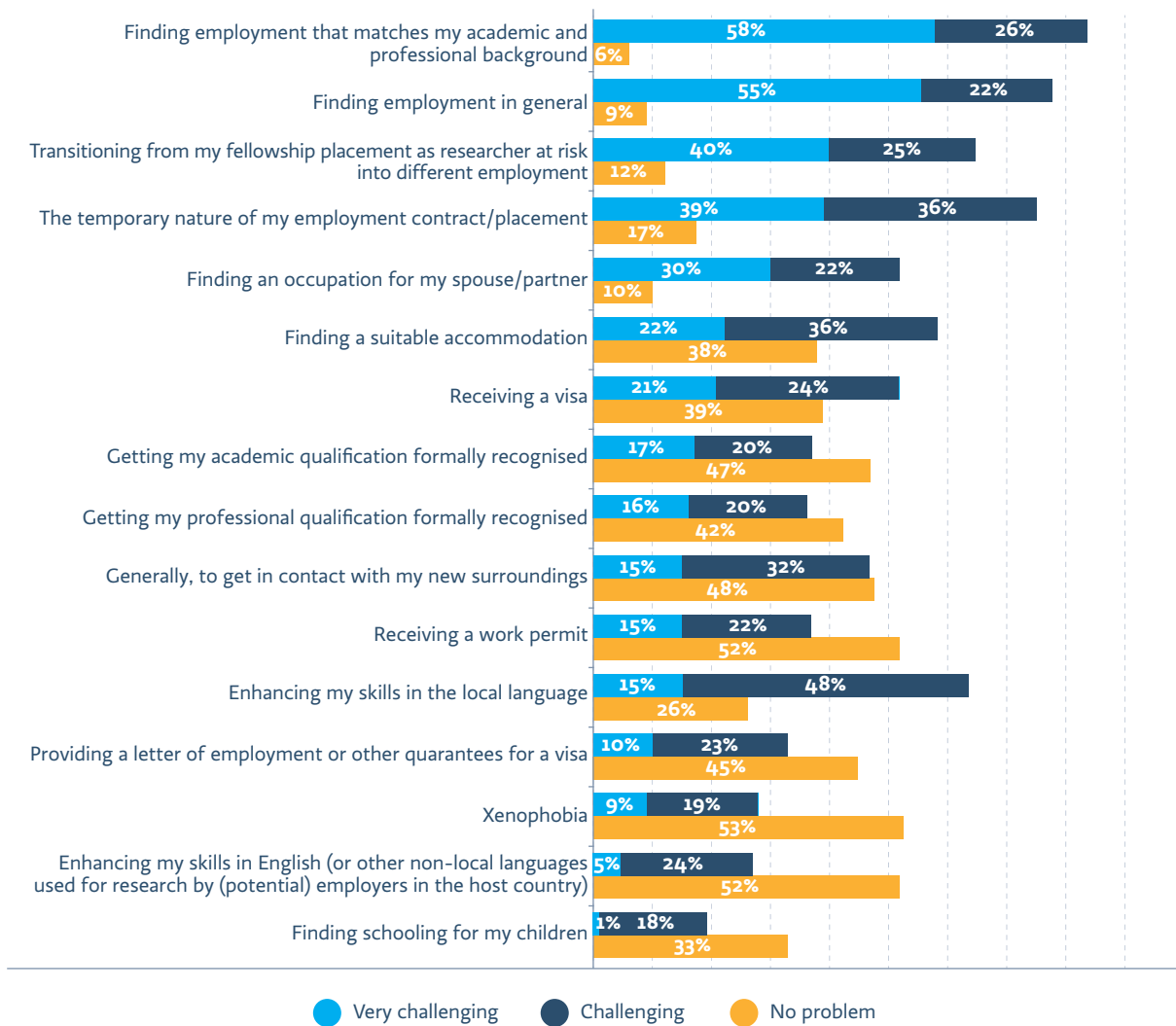


## 2.6 Challenges and gaps in support

One of the main aims of the mapping report for the Inspireurope project was to identify the needs of researchers at risk in Europe, and the challenges they may face, and to compare to what extent the

perceptions of the researchers themselves, the hosting institutions and the support organisations correspond.

**Figure 12: Main challenges faced by researchers at risk** (RQ16: According to your experience as researcher at risk in Europe, how would you rate the following issues in your current country of residence? N=87)



The top five challenges identified by **researchers at risk** in Europe all relate to employment and professional development, such as finding employment that matches their academic and professional background (84% very challenging or challenging), finding employment in general (77%), temporary placements and employment contacts (75%), issues around the resulting transitions into different employment (65%), and learning the local language (64%) (Figure 12). In addition, their earlier

history, migration, transitions between placements, international relocation and the consequences for careers and personal lives, as well as the continued existential uncertainties due to the prior risks they took, often have an impact on mental health and wellbeing of researchers at risk and their families. These findings have also been confirmed by other research: the CARE project identified finding suitable employment, orientation in the job market and temporary contracts as the main issues

researchers at risk faced in their host country.<sup>73</sup> Respondents to the S.U.C.RE survey also pointed to job-related insecurity and the competitive disadvantage faced by refugee researchers compared to local researchers as key challenges.<sup>74</sup>

There is interesting complementarity in the findings. While researchers at risk focus on their future careers and employment prospects, hosting institutions emphasised continued structural and regulatory problems. Discussions at an Inspireurope event<sup>75</sup> found that these different perspectives may be due to the different positions academics have in different higher education systems. As some researchers at risk had previously enjoyed a fairly stable or even permanent employment at their home institutions, they assumed that the temporary arrangements at their host institution were mainly due to the fact that they were at-risk and foreigners. Colleagues from host institutions however pointed to the generally difficult labour market situation facing researchers in Europe, while arguably the situation is even worse for researchers at risk. While, indeed, institutions in almost all European countries offer both fixed-term and indefinite job opportunities, the contractual stability is largely determined by the career stage, and in particular for early stage academics receiving permanent contracts is quite difficult. There is also some indication of decreasing job stability for academics in Europe. However, there exist significant differences across countries, as well as types of higher education institutions, for example, university professors in two-thirds of European countries are largely employed on permanent contracts, while fixed term employment is the norm in the remaining third.<sup>76</sup>

For the participating researchers at risk, fewer problems seem to be caused by xenophobia, insufficient English language skills, work permits, contacts with the new surroundings and formal recognition of academic qualifications (between 53% and 47% said these issues were no problem for them). 57% of those researchers who have children said that finding schooling was also not a concern. However, feedback from support organisations suggests that this may vary between countries, and also depend on how often families have resettled, and what this implies in terms of language of instruction, recognition of prior schooling, and different curricula, let alone the distress of leaving known environments and social contacts behind.

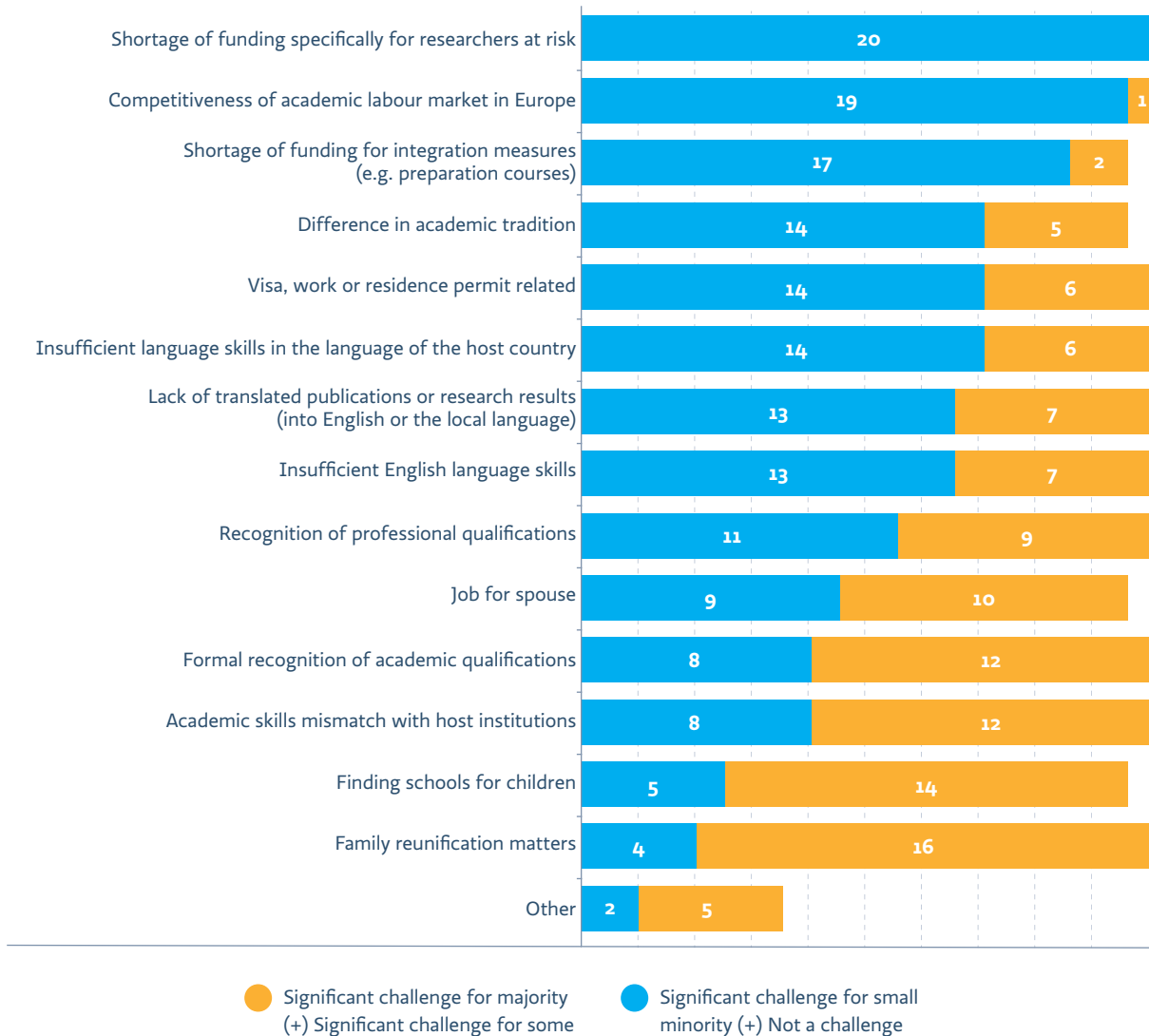
<sup>73</sup> CARE (2020.II)

<sup>74</sup> S.U.C.RE (2018), pp. 16–26.

<sup>75</sup> Inspireurope Outreach Workshop, Poland, 9 January, 2020

<sup>76</sup> European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2017), Chapter 5

**Figure 13: Main challenges faced by researchers at risk according to support organisations and projects** (SQ11: In your experience, what are the major obstacles facing at-risk researchers outside the refugee system and who are seeking positions in Europe? N=20<sup>77</sup>)



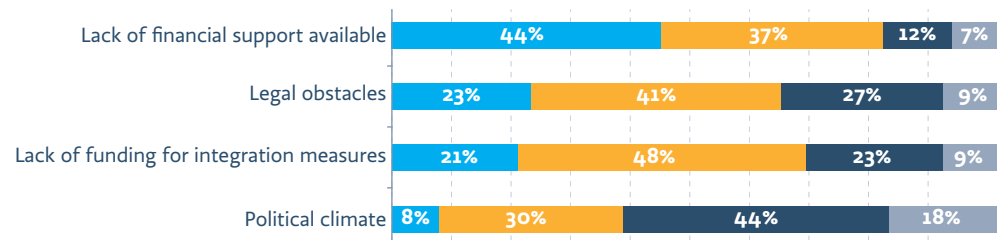
Support organisations all point to the shortage of dedicated funding as a significant challenge for researchers at risk, followed by the competitiveness of the academic labour market in Europe (19) and the shortage of funding for integration measures at host organisations and institutions (17). Several support organisations comment on the difficulty for researchers at risk to “build bridges outside academia” to potentially find post-placement employment in the private research market.

Differences in academic traditions, as well as visa, work permit and language issues are also described as having a negative impact on many of the researchers they support (Figure 13).

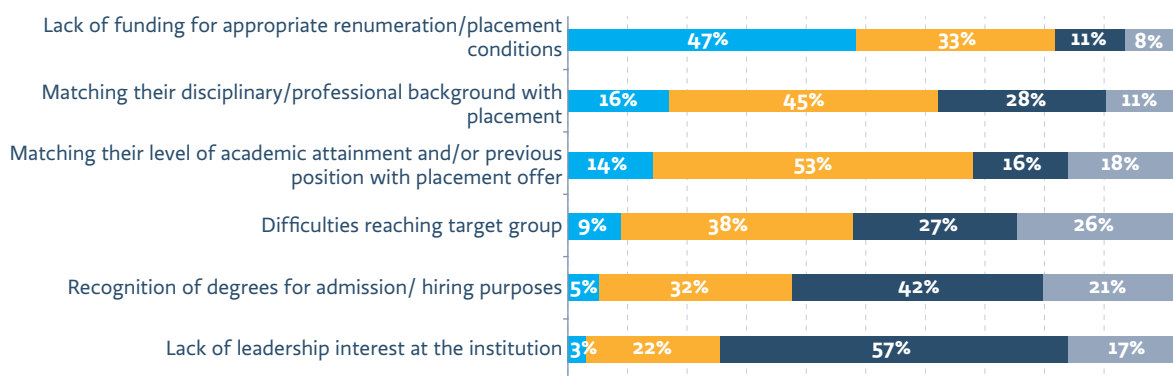
<sup>77</sup> Due to the small sample, data for support organisations is displayed as a count, not as percentages.

**Figure 14: Main challenges faced by hosts** (HQ21: For your institution/organisation, what are the main challenges and barriers for integration and access of researchers at risk? N=116)

**Hosting institution/organisation external concerns**



**Hosting institution/organisation internal concerns**



● Very challenging  
 ● Challenging  
 ● No problem  
 ● Not applicable / I do not know

Funding issues are also the main concern of host institutions: 81% identified a lack of overall financial support available to host, specifically for 80% a lack of funding for offering appropriate remuneration and placement conditions, and for 69% a lack of funding dedicated to integration measures. Matching disciplinary and professional background and the level of previous academic attainment with a placement is identified as (very) challenging by 67% and 61% respectively (Figure 14), as confirmed also by some of the researchers themselves (Figure 6 above). Lack of leadership interest, the overall political climate and recognition of academic qualifications are the least problematic areas for hosts (57%, 44% and 42% respectively said these present no problems).

Some reflections on the challenges faced as a host institution are related to the location of the institution in question: perhaps unsurprisingly, the political climate was seen as least problematic by host institutions in northern Europe, while between 80% to 100% of southern European hosts underlined it as (very) challenging. Leadership support on the other hand seems to depend on

the institution in question, rather than following national trends.

In summary, the main challenges identified across the different stakeholders include funding issues and issues around finding and retaining adequate employment positions in the highly competitive European research labour market. All three surveys also point to the challenges resulting from the limited timeframe of placements, during which researchers at risk have to carry out research and teach, to settle in professionally and privately, possibly also having to learn a language, deal with visa/permit/legal issues, and find follow-up employment. As one respondent puts it:

*“It is especially challenging to focus on your research duties, expand your academic expertise, learn a new language, apply for fellowships, search for a new job opportunity, and [take]care of your private responsibilities during this very limited time. [In this case a one-year contract.] It is not easy to be productive without feeling stable.” (RQ17)*

The survey also asked all three respondent groups for their suggestions on how to overcome the challenges that have been identified, either through specific survey questions, or – in the case of the researchers at risk survey – through written feedback on support structures and activities that they would like to see established in the future in their host country and/or the EU.<sup>78</sup>

**Table 1: Top suggestions on how to address challenges and obstacles according to researchers at risk, hosts and support organisations** (RQ27: In your opinion, what support structures and activities should be provided in addition to those that already exist in your host country, or in the EU in general? Please use bullet points (500 characters max.) (N=49); HQ22: What would be helpful for addressing the biggest challenges your institution faces in supporting researchers at risk?: “very useful” option (N=116); SQ19: In your opinion, what would be helpful in addressing the biggest challenges your organisation, section or project faces in supporting researchers at risk?: “very useful” option (N=20)

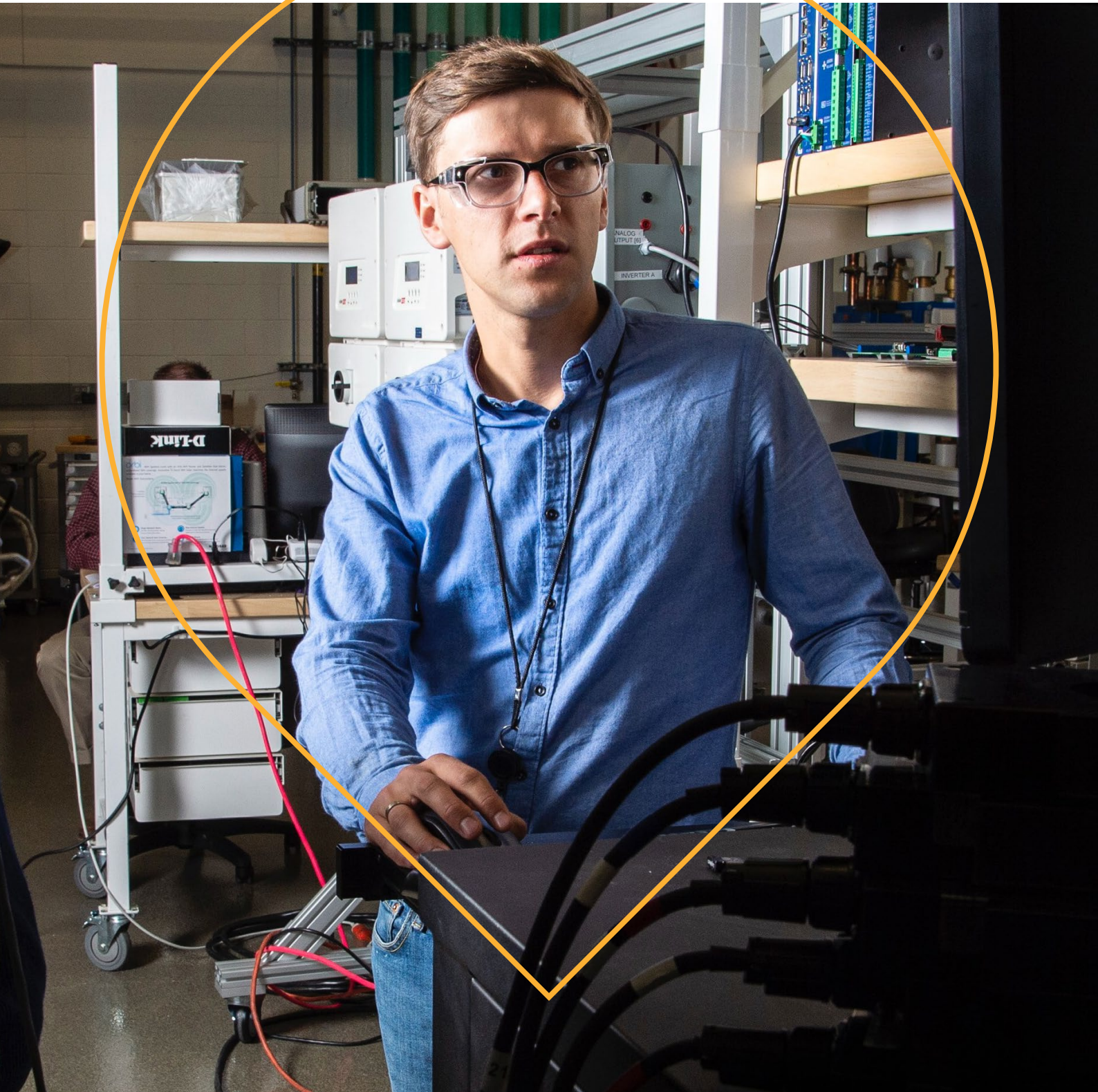
Researchers at risk	Host institutions	Support organisations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Career guidance for post placement employment (43%)</li> <li>▪ Better funding or salary conditions (14%)</li> <li>▪ Legal support (12%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Additional funding to host researchers at risk (83%)</li> <li>▪ Support from national or European policy levels (60%)</li> <li>▪ Support from higher education institutions' leadership (50%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More funding for positions for researchers (17)</li> <li>▪ Political support for issue at EU level (16)</li> <li>▪ Political support for issue at national level (16)</li> <li>▪ Support from higher education institutions' leadership across Europe (16)</li> </ul>

Table 1 displays the most frequently mentioned suggestions to overcome challenges that have been identified by the survey respondents. Together with the overall findings of the report they form the basis for the next steps of Inspireurope.

<sup>78</sup> Written feedback by the researchers at risk was of course multifaceted, and responses mentioned many different, often overlapping themes – the first column of the table only displays responses according to the main theme mentioned in each response.



# 3. Conclusions and Next Steps





The mapping report outlines the situation of researchers at risk, their host institutions and support organisations, from different European countries with different regulations and conditions. It is based on data provided by three stakeholder groups under three parallel surveys, which reflects a wealth of experiences, in terms of established good practices, and how they could be further enhanced, and also major challenges, and some pointers on how to tackle them.

The findings of this report will help to inform and guide discussions and activities of Inspireurope (webinars, discussions, events, trainings, coachings) and result in policy recommendations to the EU and the national research and innovation programmes in view of improving support for and integration of researchers at risk in Europe. Recommendations will also be developed at the strategic level for higher education institutions.

This last chapter makes preliminary suggestions on how to improve the situation of researchers at risk, based on the feedback and suggestions of the three stakeholder groups consulted (See Table 1 above), and underpinned by a summary of the main findings of the report and references to ongoing and forthcoming activities and initiatives of the Inspireurope project.

These suggestions will feed into the project's exchange and collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, ultimately aiming to identify practices and structures that would enhance European-level coordination of support for researchers at risk and ensure its long-term sustainability. They will also inform the project's work for development of detailed policy recommendations.

The overall findings of the report and suggestions on how to overcome challenges by survey participants can be grouped along the lines of the following themes.

- I. European support and fellowships for researchers at risk,**
- II. Long-term prospects for researchers at risk,**
- III. Navigating the European research labour market,**
- IV. Enhancing information and training at host institutions,**
- V. Gender dimensions of support for researchers at risk,**
- VI. Expanding collaboration opportunities with private enterprises and businesses,**
- VII. Policy-level support for researchers at risk.**

#### **I. European and national support and fellowships for researchers at risk**

European level support for researchers at risk should be enhanced, in particular by establishing a dedicated European fellowship scheme. The need for enhanced funding is highlighted as one of the key challenges by all three stakeholder groups participating in the Inspireurope surveys, i.e. support organisations, hosting institutions and researchers at risk themselves. This concerns funding for actual fellowships and placements, but also development and maintenance of other support measures. There is clear evidence that European support, beyond the material contribution, has an added value, as it enables and encourages cross border exchange of information and good practice, collaboration and coordination among support organisations and host institutions, and pooling and sharing of resources. While this would support existing national initiatives, it would be of particular value for countries with no or very small national capacities. Overall, it would raise attention to and awareness of the issue. It would also underpin the commitment of the European Union regarding the European Research Area, and emphasis on freedom of research (upcoming Bonn Declaration, European Research Area (ERA) communication)<sup>79</sup> and hence set also internationally a strong signal towards countries and regions with similar intentions, but also towards “challenging countries”.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> European Commission (2020.I)

<sup>80</sup> The ministerial conference on the European Research Area on 20 October 2020 aims to achieve an ambitious re-organisation of the ERA. The adoption of the Bonn Declaration will serve to demonstrate a joint commitment to the freedom of research. Further information: [https://europa.eu/newsroom/events/ministerial-conference-european-research-area-era\\_en](https://europa.eu/newsroom/events/ministerial-conference-european-research-area-era_en)

**Findings:** There is a growing number of researchers who are outside of the international protection systems, and rely on support organisations and host institutions, with insufficient resources to assist all qualified applicants.<sup>81</sup> Increasing the number of placements for these researchers at risk is in the first instance a question of insufficient funding for fellowships and organisational support. While many universities and research institutions are willing to host, they cannot cover all costs. Support organisations and national fellowships exist only in a few countries and are usually limited to the national context. International support organisations do not have enough resources to respond to the level of demand.

Existing European fellowships (such as MSCA and ERC fellowships) and national fellowship programmes for all researchers are open also to researchers at risk, but their application procedures, eligibility criteria and their highly competitive nature make them difficult to access to most researchers at risk. Their purpose and conditions do not align with the actual needs of researchers at risk, who often require fast support, and need time to settle in a safe and stable environment, given that many have just left or are about to leave their home institutions and countries, often under traumatic circumstances.<sup>82</sup> Therefore, a dedicated European-level fellowship programme should be established.

Survey results confirm the usefulness and impact of ongoing European funding support: Erasmus+ and H2020-funded projects have enhanced exchange and collaboration among host institutions and support organisations across Europe. They have developed approaches and materials which are of direct significance to researchers at risk (e.g. measures for career development opportunities through mentoring, trainings for researchers and hosting universities, webinars to raise awareness and disseminate good practice).

Hence, contrary to some years ago, there are now some excellent resources available and widely used throughout Europe. In addition, some support organisations receive European funding support for their work.<sup>83</sup>

Researchers at risk, host institutions and support organisations all strongly agree on the need to establish a European funding mechanism and a fellowship programme that would directly support researchers. They also confirm the need to provide some funding for host institutions (87% of hosts and almost all of the supporters would find this very useful), e.g. for the coordination, integration and support services offered to researchers (see also section 2.5). While not a focus of this report, all three respondent groups also support similar measures for students in an at-risk situation and with a refugee(-like) background. In addition, an EU funded pilot scheme that would co-fund new and emerging support organisations and institutions to establish national programmes for researchers at risk is suggested. This could focus on currently underserved countries and regions (e.g. eastern and southern Europe).



**Nikolaos Papaioannou**, Rector of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece, host and keynote speaker at the Inspireurope Outreach Workshop, Thessaloniki, 30 September 2020. The Rector announced new AUTH support to host a researcher at risk within the next year

**Action by Inspireurope:** The project will continue to explore and actively encourage the development of EU fellowship funding for researchers at risk (based on model fellowship programmes already in place) and promote and provide advice on the development of national fellowship programmes for researchers at risk.

<sup>81</sup> As non nationals of the European Economic Area they have no automatic right to reside in Europe without a job, and without stable residency in a safe place they have no access to any state social protections. They are dependent on a temporary position for a visa to help them leave (or remain away from) the dangerous situation at home. In the sample of researchers participating in Inspireurope, 27% have recognised refugee status or similar, 6% are on subsidiary protection and 5% on other international protection statuses. 13% are currently seeking asylum.

<sup>82</sup> The challenges around accessibility are outlined in detail in section 2.4 above.

<sup>83</sup> For instance, the PAUSE programme in France (launched in 2017, co-funding 100 fellowships per year) also benefits from funding from the European Union's Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) which it dedicates to co-funding fellowships for researchers at risk.

## II. Long-term prospects for researchers at risk

Prolonging first placements that currently range from one year to three or at least two years would significantly enhance the at-risk researchers' chances for transition into a stable professional and personal life. It would also ease the task of host institutions and support organisations, as well as allow for a better use of human and financial resources. While this issue meets unanimous agreement among experts and stakeholders, and is also confirmed in practice by some national initiatives, scarce funding, and a high number of applicants for placements are preventing improvement in this direction.

**Findings:** Initial placements for researchers at risk are usually temporary and often limited to one year. Many of the surveyed researchers highlighted the difficulty for them and their families to manage the following in only one year: their removal and settling-in in a country with a different language and culture, sorting out residence and work permits, schooling for children, and building a day-to-day routine, take up a new position in teaching and research and getting acquainted with colleagues and students, while often continuing unfinished prior research work. This leaves hardly enough time to apply for research funding and to look for a new position. Therefore, longer placement and employment periods, ideally of three years, were seen by many respondents (researchers, hosts and supporters) as key to enhancing integration opportunities into the European labour market, as well as into society overall. Support organisations and host institutions who have experience with two-year placements confirm that this is better, but still insufficient, and recommend three years.

If support organisations and host institutions were in a position to shift to two- or three-year placements, in addition to the benefits this would bring the researchers, it may save the organisations and host institutions themselves time and resources. However, there is wide agreement that in the current funding situation this would be unrealistic and irresponsible. Where funding for fellowships is limited, longer placements would mean providing fewer placements overall and leaving larger numbers of applicants facing life-threatening risks.

**Action by Inspireurope:** In its efforts to actively encourage the development of EU fellowship funding for researchers at risk and in providing advice on the development of national fellowship programmes for researchers at risk, the project will encourage funders to support longer placement periods where possible, in order to enhance the longer-term career prospects of researchers at risk.

## III. Navigating the European research labour market

As placements and fellowships via support organisations are limited in duration, and given that conditions in the home country are unlikely to have changed within a one to two-year timeframe so that an early safe return is possible, researchers at risk require well-prepared and timely measures for ensuring consecutive arrangements (such as career advice, coaching, etc.). Ideally such arrangements would enable transition into employment at research and higher education institutions, but also in the wider labour market in Europe.

**Findings:** Enhanced career guidance and support for finding post-placement employment positions stood out as one of the most crucial areas for enhanced support, mentioned by more than 40% of researchers (Table 1 above). Several confirmed interest in working outside of academia, with its limited number of permanent and tenure track positions. Therefore, there is a need for connecting researchers early on with private sector organisations and enterprises.

Some researchers provided very concrete suggestions on how to enhance their career prospects in Europe, such as “career mentors (academic or industrial)”, “profession and [research] area based workshops where one can meet potential employers”, and “(...) short term internship or training in (...) private industry related to our research background”.

Apart from mentorships, both host institutions and support organisations emphasise the need for better information on placement opportunities for researchers at risk, and on funding opportunities in general. Once in employment, academics often need to provide their own research funding to continue with an academic career (SC comments). As discussed in section 2, knowledge about European research funding opportunities

is currently rather low amongst researchers: 68% stated that they would require additional information and training on this topic. Many host institutions recommend streamlining information at national level (42% would find this very useful) and European level (37%).

All surveyed support organisations provide some help after the period of the initial placement/fellowship, but over time the nature of the support changes from fellowship funding/urgent placement towards other services such as information, advice, referrals and introductions, and references. Once the researchers have settled into a safe place, they can begin to network and submit job applications but would also need information and advice, referrals and introductions and references, often with regard to the national and local environment. There is scope for national and local governments and administrations, NGOs specialising in integration and inclusion, and other agencies with local and national professional development experts, to step in and partner with support organisations in the provision of longer-term career development measures for researchers at risk. There are examples for existing fruitful partnerships between NGOs that provide emergency assistance and other entities (state agencies, refugee councils etc.) focused on long-term integration.

**Action taken by Inspireurope:** The project has initiated a list of support and funding opportunities for researchers at risk (Annex I and online). It currently conducts webinars, information workshops and coachings.



**Dr. Majid Mgamis**,  
Department of Languages,  
Linnaeus University, Sweden  
participates in an Inspireurope  
focus group at Jagiellonian  
University, Poland, 9 January  
2020

How these could be scaled up and continued beyond the project duration is still to be explored. The project will also develop further approaches on collaboration with a wider range of governmental and non-governmental partners in this area and provide policy recommendations.

#### **IV. Enhancing information and training at host institutions**

**Information services and training for researchers at risk at host institutions should be enhanced. Peer learning could be scaled up, both for the researchers themselves and the host institutions.**

**Findings:** Most researchers at risk confirm that they have received training on various topics provided by their host institutions and/or support organisations (section 2.5). But there is a clear need for streamlining this offer and provide more and better information and training materials.

Researchers list as top themes, which are currently not included or could be improved, as follows: navigating the academic job market in Europe (72% find that the current offer could be improved, or is non-existent), applying to national fellowships and grant programmes (70%), applying for EU research funding opportunities (68%), advice on formulating career development plans (66%), information and skills for open science (66%), mental health and well-being support (64%), and skills for teaching at higher education institutions (62%). Thus, they recommend that future hosts should receive training in how to prepare researchers for post-fellowship transition (72% - very useful), welcoming researchers at risk (funding, selection, arrival/introduction, academic support etc. - 69%), assisting researchers at risk with career development plans and integration into labour market (68%), and assisting researchers to access national and EU funding and fellowships (64%). Researchers at risk also confirm that they learn a great deal from fellow researchers at risk, usually via informal contacts.

Due to limited resources and low numbers of researchers at risk who are hosted, host institutions provide information services and training usually as part of the measures provided for their own staff, or for international researchers. Many host institutions confirm the need for enhancement, and the usefulness of exchange and peer learning with other institutions on the topic



of hosting (44% - very useful) - via a dedicated European network (42%) and through staff exchange in dedicated training modules (41%).



**Dr Eqbal Dauqan**, Biochemist from Yemen, hosted by the University of Oslo speaks at an Inspireurope webinar on 'Hosting Researchers at Risk', 9 December 2020.

**Action by Inspireurope:** Inspireurope is active in preparing the work environment to receive researchers at risk (academic and non-academic sector) through the provision of webinars and trainings for universities, businesses, NGOs, European R&I networks, governments and other stakeholders, and further events and materials will be offered throughout the lifetime of the project.<sup>84</sup>

#### V. Gender dimensions of support for researchers at risk

**More consideration should be given to the situation facing female researchers at risk, and the gender dimensions of support in Europe.**

**Findings:** Support organisations report lower numbers of applications from female than from male researchers. For instance, the share of women scholars supported was 45% at the French national PAUSE programme in 2017 and 2018 combined, 38% at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's Philipp Schwartz Initiative over the last three years and 30% at the Scholars at Risk Network in 2019.

A range of factors may cause a lower rate of female scholars seeking assistance. SAR refers to a gender gap at postgraduate level, in particular in the regions from which it has historically received the highest numbers of applications (MENA, South Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa).

On the other hand, the repression, dismissals, and prosecutions in Turkey, a country with a relatively high number of female scholars, brought in recent years a rise in the proportion of female scholars applying for assistance.

Several support organisations make special efforts to identify female candidates for assistance. For example, whereas only 41% of applications came from women, PAUSE accepted 45%, as mentioned above. In the Inspireurope survey, the response rate of only 27% from female researchers is significantly lower than the gender ratio reported by support organisations, and hence survey results may not fully reflect the situation of women, in particular on issues concerning career, family and the social situation generally.

**Action taken by Inspireurope:** Further reflection and consultation will be carried out on the gender dimensions of support for researchers at risk and related measures, in view of the project's future policy recommendations and a roadmap for future support.

#### VI. Expanding collaboration opportunities with private enterprises and businesses

**There are widely untapped opportunities in exchange and collaboration with private enterprises and businesses, and their representative organisations. Partnerships could help to expand the opportunities for researchers at risk, e.g. by making their skills more transferrable and also through placements and employment programmes.**



**Sofia Klingberg**, Diversity and Inclusion Manager at AFRY Sweden discussed industry recruitment of researchers during an Inspireurope webinar in May 2020. AFRY Sweden is an international engineering, design and advisory company that recruits highly skilled researchers for its immigrant engineers programme

**Findings:** While many researchers at risk confirm interest and some also have professional experience in employment outside of higher education and institutions, existing placement

<sup>84</sup> The Inspireurope project produces a series of webinars. Registration is free of charge and open to all. For upcoming webinars and links to recordings of previously held webinars please visit: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sar-europe/inspireurope/webinars>

schemes and support measures have not yet fully exploited the opportunities with private enterprise and business. Therefore, the Inspireurope project puts a strong emphasis on exchanges with the non-academic sector across Europe, to increase employment and career development opportunities for researchers at risk. This comprises meetings with industry representatives to raise their awareness of the diverse talent pool of researchers at risk.

**Action taken by Inspireurope:** Partnership opportunities which are currently explored with companies, enterprise networks and industry representatives in Europe comprise:

- **Diversity and Inclusion partnerships:** A large number of private companies have developed diversity and inclusion programmes in line with their organisational mission and to maintain talent pipelines and market competitiveness, which could expand into career development opportunities for researchers at risk.
- **Skills training (transferable, upskilling and retraining):** Researchers transitioning from a career in academia will benefit from training on transferring their own experience and skills from academia to private business and industry sectors in the EU. Some may require upskilling in particular areas, while others may need retraining on similar or completely new job markets. Inspireurope partners are exploring joint activities with private sector companies in these areas, either through short online information sessions and/or dedicated online workshops with researchers at risk.
- **Mentoring schemes:** Inspireurope partners are exploring possible mentoring schemes for researchers at risk, together with private sector partners, to include both pre- and post-placement/employment mentoring. Pre-employment mentoring could be linked to the skills training detailed above and involve the provision of dedicated support on country specific workplace customs and structures, drawing-up CVs and cover (motivation) letters, and interview preparation. Post-employment mentoring could include tailored career and professional development.
- **Speaker invitations:** Inspireurope has been extending invitations to industry representatives to speak during Inspireurope

webinars with a target audience of researchers at risk and their employers/host institutions. The project is continuing to seek more representatives from industry to participate as expert speakers in webinars in autumn 2020 which will focus on intersectoral mobility and welcoming highly skilled researchers to private companies.

- **Dedicated placements/ job schemes:** Inspireurope is exploring the possibility of placement or job schemes in industry for researchers at risk.

These activities will be expanded as discussions develop, in light of the findings of Inspireurope surveys, and continuing exchanges with other EU-funded projects. As a result of the above activities and discussions, it is expected that detailed policy recommendations will be issued in relation to expanding opportunities in industry in Europe for researchers at risk.

## VII. Policy-level support for researchers at risk

**More policy attention at European, and at national levels is needed, to underpin and enhance the operational initiatives supporting researchers at risk, and to embed them in the broader agendas, such as freedom of research, democracy and civic rights, and migration. Among others, it would confirm the engagement for researchers at risk as part of the mission of higher education and research institutions.**

**Findings:** Policy advocacy is one of the key suggestions to overcome challenges faced by researchers and their hosts: all support organisations and the vast majority of host institutions (93% - (very) useful) emphasise national and European policy support. They find it of crucial importance to raise awareness of the plight of researchers at risk at the various policy levels and beyond aspects of research capacity; excellence and employability; address academic freedom and more broadly the values of higher education and research; and generally, the importance of free research for society. Not surprisingly, this is fully in line with the motivation of the universities and research institutions to host researchers at risk: they see it as their social responsibility and refer to their institutional and academic values (see section 2.1), in addition to the welcome addition to their international talent pool.



The question of support for researchers at risk overlaps between several EU policy areas (and their respective European Commission (EC) Directorates General (DG) and Committees of the European Parliament (EP)): research and innovation, education, employment, integration, foreign affairs, external action, etc. It is also related to the general debate on refugees and migration, which is unsolved, and at times these issues are regrettably considered as toxic on the EU's policy agenda. All this underlines the importance of addressing the issue in multiple policy contexts and complicates the development of coherent policy advocacy approaches.



**Margaritis Schinas**, European Commission Vice-President for Protecting our European Way of Life in opening session of Inspireurope Outreach Workshop, Thessaloniki, Greece, 30 Sept. 2020

As Margaritis Schinas, European Commission Vice-President for Protecting our European Way of Life, stated in his keynote message at the Inspireurope Outreach workshop on September 30th, 2020 "to restore global public health security, we need to bridge talent beyond borders and even more importantly, beyond politics".

Therefore, it is important for the representatives of support organisations and higher education and research institutions to seize opportunities to link engagement for researchers at risk to national and European policy initiatives which refer to academic freedom, protection of academic values, social inclusion, etc.

Currently, there are a number of high calibre opportunities: The European Union has recently launched its Communications on the European Education Area (EEA)<sup>85</sup> and the European Research Area (ERA),<sup>86</sup> both putting a strong emphasis on the promotion and defence of common values.

The latter communication underlines that "without academic freedom, science cannot progress and the ERA cannot function".<sup>87</sup> These topics were also on the agenda of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 2018,<sup>88</sup> and are likely to figure prominently in the next Ministerial Communiqué<sup>89</sup> (19 November 2020). A dedicated Task Force for future monitoring of values has deliberated a common understanding of academic freedom,<sup>90</sup> and is likely to continue its work on monitoring post 2020.<sup>91</sup> Hence, there are good chances for enhanced awareness of the issue at the policy levels of the EU and the EHEA countries, including the perils for academic freedom in relatively democratic countries, from economic pressures, third party funding and certain governance models.

Policy level support (and the funding that may be linked to it) might be more urgently required in some countries than in others: for example, France and Germany are comparatively more active in supporting researchers at risk, and have well-established support structures and organisations in place. But institutions and organisations in other countries might also be interested to host (more), but face lack of support and funds. For instance, Spain might be a very attractive host country for Latin American researchers at risk, but currently it only hosts very small numbers.

Policy support is also confirmed as a key enabler for enhancing volume and quality of support for researchers at risk at host institutions. Despite their overall positive attitude and collegial value-based solidarity towards researchers at risk, the host institutions themselves would welcome more institutional leadership support (50% very useful, 38% useful) – and this was also subscribed by three quarters of support organisations for institutional leadership in their respective countries. Beyond placements, such support should also reflect on creating an inclusive academic culture overall, and perhaps even foster a more general debate on inter-cultural awareness in the context of peer reviews and recruitment procedures, considering different career paths and achievements of

<sup>85</sup> European Commission (2020.II)

<sup>86</sup> European Commission (2020.I)

<sup>87</sup> European Commission (2020.I), p. 15.

<sup>88</sup> e.g. EHEA (2018)

<sup>89</sup> EHEA (2020.I)

<sup>90</sup> EHEA (2019)

<sup>91</sup> EHEA (2020.II)

researchers at risk. Institutional leadership confirms that the institution cherishes its values and demonstrates solidarity, but also points to the lack of external interest, including at national policy levels, as reasons for not allocating more attention and resources.

**Action by Inspireurope:** The project will continue to foster exchanges between different stakeholders and actors across Europe, to ensure that all opportunities for advocacy are seized. Greater attention will be turned to facilitating exchange with countries that have low levels of support for researchers at risk, and sometimes negative attitudes towards migration in general. To formulate more specific policy recommendations on how to expand and diversify support in this area, a wide range of stakeholders will continue to be consulted in 2020-2022 for their views and expertise to inform the final recommendations of the project.

# Annex



## I. Overview of dedicated fellowships & placements in Europe, & other direct support for researchers at risk in 2020

Annex I lists fellowships and placement opportunities in Europe and other direct support to researchers at risk identified during the Inspireurope research in 2020. Additional initiatives supporting researchers at risk and/or their host institutions/countries with links to resources and materials produced by these projects is also included.

An extended version of the overview is available online,<sup>92</sup> including references to fellowship listings, jobs, and career development in Europe that are open to all international researchers.

### Fellowships/placements in Europe & other direct support to researchers at risk

Name of organisation/ initiative	Short description
<u><a href="#">The Philipp Schwartz Initiative of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation</a></u>	The Philipp Schwartz Initiative provides universities and research institutions in Germany with the means to host threatened foreign researchers for a period of 24 months on a fully funded research fellowship. An extension is possible under a co-financing model.
<u><a href="#">The French national PAUSE programme, hosted by the College de France</a></u>	The PAUSE programme is a national project initiated by the French state with support from civil society and economic stakeholders. Its mission is to facilitate the hosting of scientists from crisis zones for sufficiently long periods to enable them to integrate and ensure continuity in their research.
<u><a href="#">Institute of International Education Scholar Rescue Fund</a></u>	The Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF) arranges and funds fellowships for threatened and displaced scholars at partnering higher education institutions worldwide. In addition to assisting individual scholars, IIE-SRF has implemented special initiatives to respond to large-scale crises affecting national academies. For example, in 2007, IIE-SRF launched the <b>Iraq Scholar Rescue Project</b> that supported more than 300 of Iraq's most senior and threatened academics to continue their work, primarily in the Middle East and North Africa. Since the 2011 outbreak of conflict in Syria, the programme has awarded fellowships to over 100 Syrian scholars.

<sup>92</sup> Please visit <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sar-europe/resources> for the full list.

Name of organisation/ initiative	Short description
<b><u>Scholars at Risk Network</u></b>	Scholars at Risk (SAR) is an international network of higher education institutions and individuals working to protect threatened scholars, prevent attacks on higher education, and promote academic freedom and related values. SAR arranges placements for at-risk scholars at higher education institutions around the world and offers information and advisory services. <b>Scholars at Risk Europe</b> , hosted at Maynooth University (Ireland), is the European office of the global Scholars at Risk network. The European office supports and coordinates the activities of Scholars at Risk national sections and partner networks across Europe to strengthen our collective voice at the European level and contribute to informed policymaking for the greater protection of scholars and increased respect for academic freedom worldwide.
<b><u>SAR Denmark</u></b>	SAR Denmark is coordinated by the University of Copenhagen and includes nine universities and associations in Denmark working to promote academic freedom and to protect threatened scholars.
<b><u>SAR Sweden</u></b>	SAR Sweden is coordinated by the University of Gothenburg and includes 21 universities and associations in Sweden working to promote academic freedom and to protect threatened scholars.
<b><u>SAR Italy</u></b>	SAR Italy is coordinated by the University of Trento and the University of Padua and includes 23 universities and associations in Italy working to promote academic freedom and to protect threatened scholars.
<b><u>SAR Slovakia (with Bratislava Policy Institute)</u></b>	SAR Slovakia is coordinated by the Bratislava Policy Institute and includes seven universities and associations in Slovakia working to promote academic freedom and to protect threatened scholars.
<b><u>SAR Norway</u></b>	SAR Norway is currently chaired by the University of Agder and includes 19 universities and associations in Norway working to promote academic freedom and to protect threatened scholars.
<b><u>SAR Ireland (with Universities Ireland)</u></b>	SAR Ireland is coordinated by Universities Ireland and includes nine universities and associations working to promote academic freedom and to protect threatened scholars.
<b><u>SAR Netherlands</u></b>	SAR Netherlands is coordinated by UAF (Foundation for Refugee Students) and includes 19 universities and associations in the Netherlands working to promote academic freedom and to protect threatened scholars.
<b><u>SAR Finland (with UNIFI)</u></b>	SAR Finland is coordinated by UNIFI (Universities Finland) and includes 11 universities and associations in Finland working to promote academic freedom and to protect threatened scholars.
<b><u>IIE-SRF-- EDUFI Fellowship, Finland</u></b>	In Finland, Scholar Rescue Fund grants are targeted to scholars from conflict regions in the early stages of their academic career (recent PhD graduates or scholars with limited academic experience after graduation). IIE-SRF and EDUFI finance the scholarship periods together.
<b><u>SAR Germany (with AvH)</u></b>	SAR Germany is coordinated by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and includes 45 universities and associations in Germany working to promote academic freedom and to protect threatened scholars.



Name of organisation/ initiative	Short description
<a href="#"><u>SAR Switzerland</u></a>	SAR Switzerland is coordinated by a steering committee, currently chaired by the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences and includes 24 universities and associations in Switzerland working to promote academic freedom and to protect threatened scholars.
<a href="#"><u>Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA)</u></a>	The Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA) is a charitable British organisation dedicated to assisting academics in immediate danger. The Cara Fellowship Programme was developed in close partnership with a network of 121 UK universities, who provide financial support for Cara, fee waivers and other support for Cara beneficiaries. As of mid-2020, Cara has been actively engaged with some 300 Fellows and around 450 of their immediate dependents.
<a href="#"><u>The Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) Solidarity Fund</u></a>	The ULB Solidarity Fund offers one-year postdoctoral fellowships to enable threatened academics to continue their work at ULB.
<a href="#"><u>Academy in Exile</u></a>	Academy in Exile offers scholars who are threatened in their home countries, because of their academic or civic engagement for human rights, peace and democracy, the opportunity to resume their research abroad. Academy in Exile fellowships allow scholars the opportunity to continue their careers in Germany and to work on a research project of their own choosing in a multidisciplinary environment.
<a href="#"><u>Einstein Junior Scholars and Einstein Guest researchers' programmes</u></a>	The Einstein Foundation is committed to fostering academic freedom and international collaboration. It offers two special programmes, "Einstein Junior Scholars" and "Einstein Guest Researchers" on a temporary basis in order to reach this objective and to enable researchers and scientists who are experiencing constraints in their work around the world to come to Berlin for two years to pursue their research without undue restrictions or threats.
<a href="#"><u>Zukunftskolleg Bridge Fellowships</u></a>	The Zukunftskolleg Bridge Fellowships offer researchers at risk the opportunity to carry out research and teach at the University of Konstanz for a period of up to nine months and to be integrated into the German academic system. In addition, the fellows can benefit from a variety of career development measures, including the University of Konstanz's Academic Staff Development and Research Support offices.
<a href="#"><u>State of Bremen Scholarship Programme</u></a>	The Senator for Science, Health and Consumer Protection of the State of Bremen supports young scientists whose scientific work in their home country is endangered due to persecution and threats. PhD and postdoctoral candidates are eligible for these scholarships which consist of a monthly stipend and family allowance.
<a href="#"><u>Baden-Württemberg Fund for Persecuted Scholars</u></a>	The Baden-Württemberg Fund for Persecuted Scholars supports research placements for guest scientists at universities, colleges and research institutes within Baden-Württemberg, so that scientists who are persecuted in their home countries can continue their work in safety. Applications are made directly to the <a href="#"><u>IIE Scholar Rescue Fund</u></a>

Name of organisation/ initiative	Short description
<u>Hamburg Programme for Scholars at Risk (HPSAR)</u>	The Hamburg Programme for Scholars at Risk (HPSAR) aims to enable endangered scientists to bridge acute emergencies and at the same time to further qualify and orient themselves in the German science system. HPSAR offers a monthly grant to at-risk scholars who have found a supervisor at the University of Hamburg for a period of up to one year.
<u>Hessian Fund for Refugees</u>	The Hessian Ministry of Science and the Arts (HMWK) grants scholarships for particularly talented and high-performing refugee students, doctoral candidates and scientists at the state universities of Hesse as part of the 'Hessen Fund'. Students, PhD candidates and researchers are all eligible for funding.
<u>VolkswagenStiftung</u>	The Volkswagen Foundation wishes to contribute to the integration of refugee scholars and academics in research and society and help them to pursue their academic career in Germany through the refugee scholar and scientist fund.
<u>Academics in Solidarity- Freie Universität Berlin</u>	'Academics in Solidarity' is a peer-mentoring programme that connects exiled researchers and established scholars in Germany, Lebanon and Jordan. It seeks to create a network of solidarity, strengthen the value of cross-cultural research cooperation and open up new perspectives within the academic environment of the host country. The programme offers support to displaced and endangered scholars through mentoring, academic counselling, systematic network building, and funding of small research endeavours. It further benefits mentors by offering them special training as well as administrative and technical support both prior to and throughout the mentoring process.
<u>OFF University</u>	Off-University creates new strategies to uphold and sustain academic life and knowledge threatened by anti-democratic and authoritarian regimes. It was established for and by academics from Turkey yet addresses itself to academics all over the world: academics who have been purged from their institutions, forced to resign, who are legally and politically persecuted and even imprisoned because of their opinion and their research. Located in Germany, Off-University offers researchers and students with limited opportunities to move around freely and an opportunity to participate in online education.

## Additional initiatives supporting researchers at risk and/or their host institutions/countries

Name of organisation/ initiative	Short description	Resources
<a href="#"><u>Inspireurope project</u></a> (September 2019 – August 2022)	Inspireurope is a coordinated, cross-sectoral, Europe-wide alliance for researchers at risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trainings &amp; <b>webinars</b> for researchers at risk and host organisations</li> <li>▪ Pilot 1-to-1 coaching for selected researchers at risk</li> <li>▪ Mapping of support mechanisms in Europe</li> </ul>
<a href="#"><u>EURAXESS-Science4Refugees</u></a>	The Science4Refugees initiative on the EURAXESS portal provides information on research internships, part-time and full-time jobs listings, access to a European Research Community, as well as a complete range of information and support services on working and living in Europe.	<p>EURAXESS-Science4Refugees offers the following services for refugee researchers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#"><u>Science4Refugees Research Buddies</u></a>: Matches a refugee researcher's research field, scientific studies and interests to those of European researchers to support discussions, study and help integrate the refugee researcher into the European Research Community.</li> <li>▪ <a href="#"><u>Online training courses</u></a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#"><u>EURAXESS Career Development Centres</u></a></li> </ul>
<a href="#"><u>BRiDGE – Step II</u></a> (December 2018– November 2020)	BRiDGE – Step II focuses on supporting the long-term careers of 300 highly skilled refugee researchers and their integration into the labour markets of the European Union member states and its associated countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Materials from <b>training workshops for refugee researchers</b> on the following topics; career development, careers outside academia, social integration for refugee researchers, research careers, transferrable skills, research integrity can be downloaded for free <a href="#"><u>here</u></a> from the project website.</li> <li>▪ The BRiDGE II project has also developed a <a href="#"><u>Career development services map</u></a> for both the academic and non-academic sector that could be of particular relevance for refugees at risk in a selection of EURAXESS countries.</li> </ul>

Name of organisation/ initiative	Short description	Resources
<b>BRiDGE project</b> (April 2018-March 2020)	The BRiDGE project was an all-in-one solution for the localised guidance of refugee researchers (RRs) and enabled the 40 EUAXESS country members in the ERA to identify and utilise the potential of RRs across Europe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The project produced the <b><u>BRiDGE Video Handbook</u></b> in which researchers can find out about the difficulties faced by refugee researchers in Europe and the support they received to overcome them.</li> <li>▪ The project also developed the <b><u>European Directory of Services for Researchers in Danger</u></b> for refugee researchers.</li> </ul>
<b>CARe project</b> (January 2019 – October 2020)	The CARe project (Career Advancement for Refugee Researchers in Europe) aims to support the integration of researchers with a refugee background into the European research labour market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The CARe project has produced a <b>report</b> based on focus groups conducted between June 2019 and February 2020 with refugee researchers<sup>43T</sup> to discuss the research labour market in the respective host country and their career paths.</li> <li>▪ An <b><u>Employer survey report</u></b> has also been produced based on a survey conducted with employers in the period November 2019 - February 2020 on the labour market conditions and requirements for refugee researchers.</li> <li>▪ A <b><u>brief comparative report</u></b> combines the above two sets of results and looks into ways to further support researchers at risk and with refugee background, at regional, national and EU level;</li> <li>▪ Country specific webinars on support for refugee researchers in and out of academia.</li> </ul>

Name of organisation/ initiative	Short description	Resources
<p><b><u>S.U.C.RE project</u></b>            (September 2016 – October 2018)</p>	<p>S.U.C.RE. specifically focused on the processes required for the proper integration of refugees/migrants (students and scholars) in higher education as well as on their academic support after their acceptance/ entrance in a university.</p>	<p>The S.U.C.RE project produced a number of key reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b><u>Challenges for Refugee Students in accessing higher education in Europe &amp; Strategies to Overcome Them</u></b></li> <li>▪ <b><u>Supporting Refugee Students for Academic Success in HEIs in Europe</u></b></li> <li>▪ <b><u>Institutional Support for Refugee Scholars in Higher Education</u></b></li> </ul> <p>As well as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ online <b><u>modules &amp; guidelines</u></b> for training regarding psychosocial support of refugees</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Academic Refuge</u></b>            (September 2016 - August 2019)</p>	<p>The EU-funded 'Academic Refuge' project aimed to improve the capacity of European universities to assist refugees and threatened academics on campus and to promote understanding and respect for higher education values.</p>	<p>The Academic Refuge project produced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b><u>Staff training on Welcoming Refugees and Threatened Academics to European Campuses</u></b></li> <li>▪ <b><u>Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on academic freedom and higher education values</u></b></li> <li>▪ <b><u>Electronic handbook on putting higher education values into practice</u></b></li> </ul>
<p><b><u>SIMHE Services</u></b></p>	<p>The aim of SIMHE services is to enhance the identification and recognition of prior learning of highly educated immigrants of different statuses and make it easier to direct immigrants to higher education on national and regional levels.</p>	<p>The following <b><u>Universities are part of SIMHE: University of Jyväskylä, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, University of Helsinki, Karelia University of Applied Sciences, and University of Turku.</u></b></p>
<p>CMinaR            2016-2019</p>	<p>The CMinaR project aimed to tackle the challenge of integrating refugees and migrants into the labour market by bringing together experienced partners from countries that are amongst the most affected by, and play a key role in the integration of refugees.</p>	<p>The CMinaR project produced a report on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b><u>Counselling and Migrant Integration into the labour market</u></b></li> </ul>



Name of organisation/ initiative	Short description	Resources
<p><b><u>MERIC-Net</u></b> 2016-2020</p>	<p>The MERIC-Net project addressed the recognition of refugees' qualifications and the practical challenges related to it.</p>	<p>The MERIC-Net project produced the following resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b><u>Guidelines for the recognition of qualifications of refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation</u></b></li> <li>▪ <b><u>Report on Transnational Education in Lebanon, Tunisia, Lebanon and Morocco</u></b></li> <li>▪ <b><u>Recognition procedures and mobility flows</u></b></li> <li>▪ National reports on the higher education systems of <b><u>Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco</u></b> and <b><u>Tunisia</u></b></li> </ul>

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### III. Inspireurope survey questionnaires

Survey for researchers at risk (RQ):

[https://www.eua.eu/downloads/projects/inspireurope\\_survey\\_researchers.pdf](https://www.eua.eu/downloads/projects/inspireurope_survey_researchers.pdf)

Surveys for host institutions and organisations (HQ):

[https://www.eua.eu/downloads/projects/inspireurope\\_survey\\_institutions.pdf](https://www.eua.eu/downloads/projects/inspireurope_survey_institutions.pdf)

Survey for support organisations and projects (SQ):

[https://www.eua.eu/index.php?option=com\\_attachments&task=download&id=2929:Survey-questions-for-organisations](https://www.eua.eu/index.php?option=com_attachments&task=download&id=2929:Survey-questions-for-organisations)

### IV. Full dataset for the Inspireurope surveys

Please note that only a small share of the data that was collected through the Inspireurope surveys is featured in the report in detail.

The full dataset for the Inspireurope surveys for (1) researchers at risk (RQ) and for (2) host institutions and organisations (HQ) is published in an anonymised format on EUA's Slideshare account:

<https://www.slideshare.net/EurUniversityAssociation/presentations>






# Inspireurope

Supporting Researchers at Risk

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**SCHOLARS AT RISK**  
NETWORK EUROPE



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ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ  
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 protection  advocacy  learning



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