

Support Talent Circulation / Mobility

26 Feb 2025



**Choose Europe: Turning Europe's
Braindrain into Brain Gain– Opportunities
and challenges for Universities.
Perspectives from the Spanish Alianza 4
Universidades**

Ignasi Salvado - Estivill



UAB
**Universitat Autònoma
de Barcelona**



UAM
**Universidad Autónoma
de Madrid**

uc3m
**Universidad
Carlos III
de Madrid**

My presentation

- *Introduction to the A4U*
- *Manuel's Heitor "Choose Europe" Concept*
- *Spanish Scientific Career Path*
- *2 exemples from A4U*

What is **Alliance** **4 Universities?**

A strategic partnership of 4 research leading Spanish Public Universities... **since 2009**

4 Universities
2 Cities

1 Alliance



MADRID

Universidad Autónoma
de Madrid

Universidad Carlos III
de Madrid



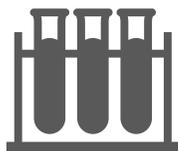
BARCELONA

Universitat Autònoma
de Barcelona

Universitat Pompeu Fabra
de Barcelona

A-4U

Objectives and Joint Actions



1. **Promotion of European research** activities through a permanent office in Brussels (OPERA), which facilitates participation of A-4U researchers in European programmes and decision-making



2. **IUNE Observatory**
an information database for the evaluation of research in Spanish universities, recognised by the Ministry of Education of Spain

3. **Common strategy of internationalisation**
Africa (South, West)



4. **Joint undergraduate programmes**
Philosophy, Politics and Economics (since 2013)
Sciences (since 2020)
Science, Technology and Humanities (since 2021)
Partially English-taught





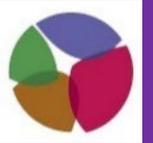
A4U-OPERA – Added Value

Promotion of European research activities through a permanent office in Brussels (OPERA), which facilitates participation of A-4U researchers in European programmes and decision-making processes

- ✓ Radar to strategic information and opportunities (new programs, new initiatives)
- ✓ Digestion of all the information created daily in Brussels and inform adequately Local European Projects Support Offices (bulletins and dedicated emails)
- ✓ Participation in brokerage events and position A4U research and researchers
- ✓ Meeting spaces for A4U Researchers

Key Universities Figures

at Alliance 4 Universities

| University Figures |  UAB Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona |  UAM Universidad Autónoma de Madrid |  uc3m Universidad Carlos III de Madrid |  upf. Universitat Pompeu Fabra Barcelona |  |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| Founded in | 1968 | 1968 | 1989 | 1990 | 2009 |
| Total number of Students (23/24) | 42.047 | 30.214 | 24.641 | 12.953 | 109.855 |
| ... of which PhD Students | 4.753 | 3.966 | 1.301 | 1.397 | 11.417 |
| Positions in Rankings | | | | | |
| QS 2024 | 149 | 199 | 319 | 310 | n/a |
| THE 2024 | 201-250 | 351-400 | 801-1000 | 201-250 | n/a |
| H2020 Nr of Projects | 193 | 104 | 135 | 168 | 600 |
| H2020 EU Net Contribution (M€) | 85,0 | 40,4 | 64,1 | 83,6 | 273 |

| |  UAB Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona |  upf. Universitat Pompeu Fabra Barcelona |  |
|---|--|--|---|
| HORIZON EUROPE (Nr Projects) | | | |
| Pillar I: Excellence Science | 87 | 71 | 234 |
| ERC | 30 | 32 | 70 |
| MSCA | 55 | 36 | 154 |
| Research Infrastructures | 2 | 3 | 10 |
| Pillar II: Global Challenges | 49 | 19 | 118 |
| Climate, Energy and Mobility | 10 | 0 | 20 |
| Culture, creativity and inclusive societies | 18 | 5 | 32 |
| Digital, Industry and Space | 6 | 6 | 35 |
| Food, Bioeconomy Natural Resources, Agriculture and Fisheries | 9 | 2 | 14 |
| Health | 6 | 6 | 14 |
| Pillar III: Innovative Europe | 2 | 3 | 16 |
| European innovation ecosystems | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| EIC | 2 | 3 | 15 |
| WIDERA | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| Widening | 3 | 2 | 7 |
| ERA | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 143 | 95 | 378 |
| TOTAL (EU Net Contribution M€) | 77,8 | 66,2 | 187,6 |

Source: Organisational Profile (CORDIS). Date: 08feb2025

Increase of activity since Dic 2023

| |  UAB Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona |  upf. Universitat Pompeu Fabra Barcelona |  |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| N projects | 54 | 34 | 143 |
| Net EU contribution | 21,8 | 33,1 | 72,2 |
| <i>Destacamos</i> | + 24 Pilar II | + 24 Pilar I | |
| | +10 CL2 | + 14 ERC | |
| | + 27 Pilar I | +10 MSCA | |
| | + 19 MSCAs | | |



ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TALENT THROUGH AN ENHANCED MSCA PROGRAMME, INCLUDING A NEW INSTRUMENT TO FOSTER CAREERS OF YOUNG RESEARCHERS (“Choose Europe”). Increase the MSCA industrial network programme for larger cohorts.



COMMISSION

SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PERFORMANCE OF THE EU 2022

Building
a sustainable future
in uncertain times

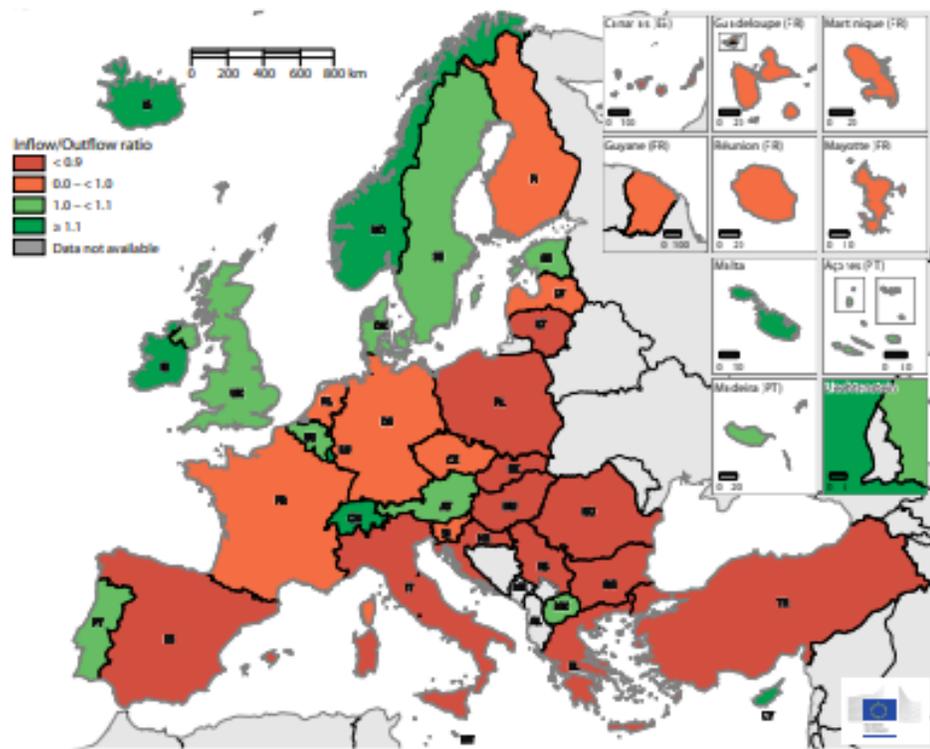


SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PERFORMANCE OF THE EU 2024

A competitive Europe
for a sustainable
future

Research and
Innovation

Figure 6.2-4: Map of inflow and outflow ratio of researchers⁽¹⁾ during the period 2001-2020⁽²⁾ by country



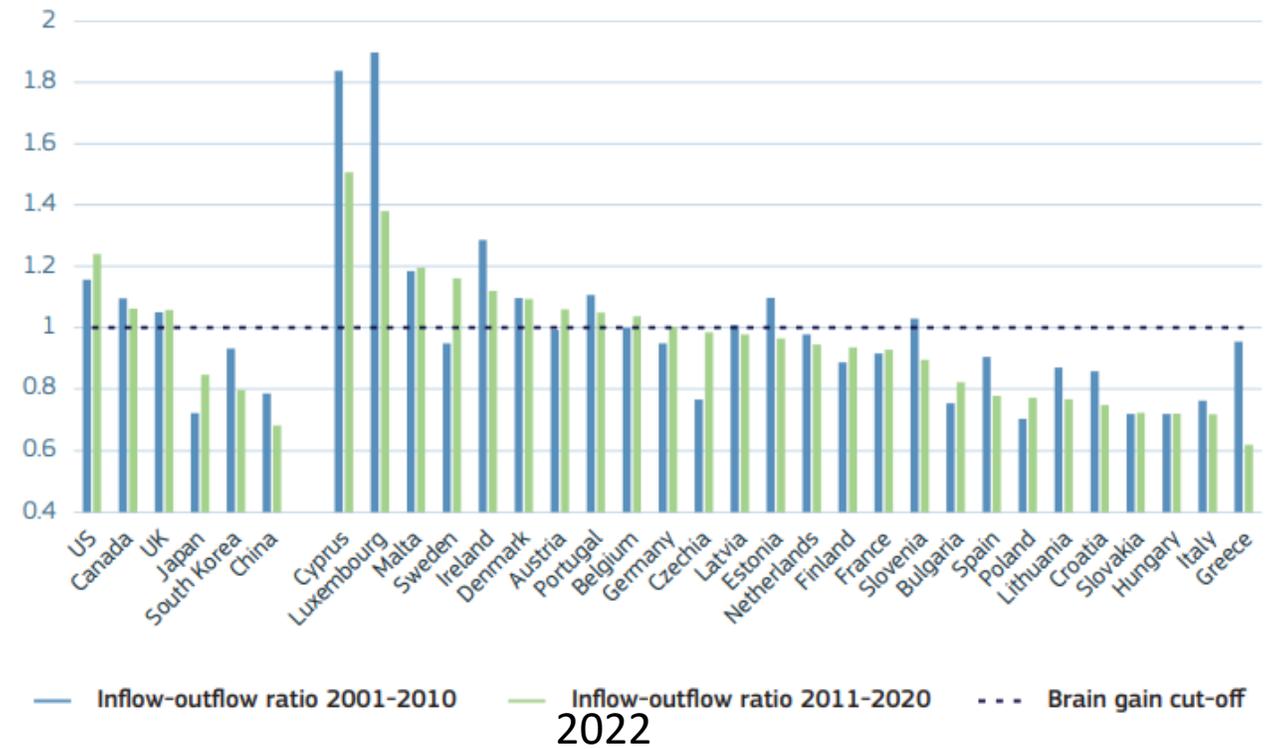
Science, Research and Innovation Performance of the EU 2022

Source: DG Research and Innovation – Common R&I Strategy and Foresight Service – Chief Economist Unit based on Science-Matrix using Scopus database

Note: ⁽¹⁾To investigate the mobility of individual researchers, Scopus author IDs (AUIDs) were selected as unique identifiers for individual researchers. AUIDs are generally quite precise and allow for the identification of sets of publications related to unique researchers. One drawback is that it is not as precise for common names, which mostly affects Chinese and Korean researchers, as well as researchers with highly frequent English names. In addition, because an AUID relies partially on institutional affiliations, mobility may cause a rupture in the portfolio of publications of researchers, resulting again in a split of the output between the original AUID and a new distinct AUID assigned after moving, again impacting the measurement of mobility. Therefore, the indicator will tend to underestimate mobility because of the aforementioned issues. ⁽²⁾R0: period corresponds to 2001-2019.

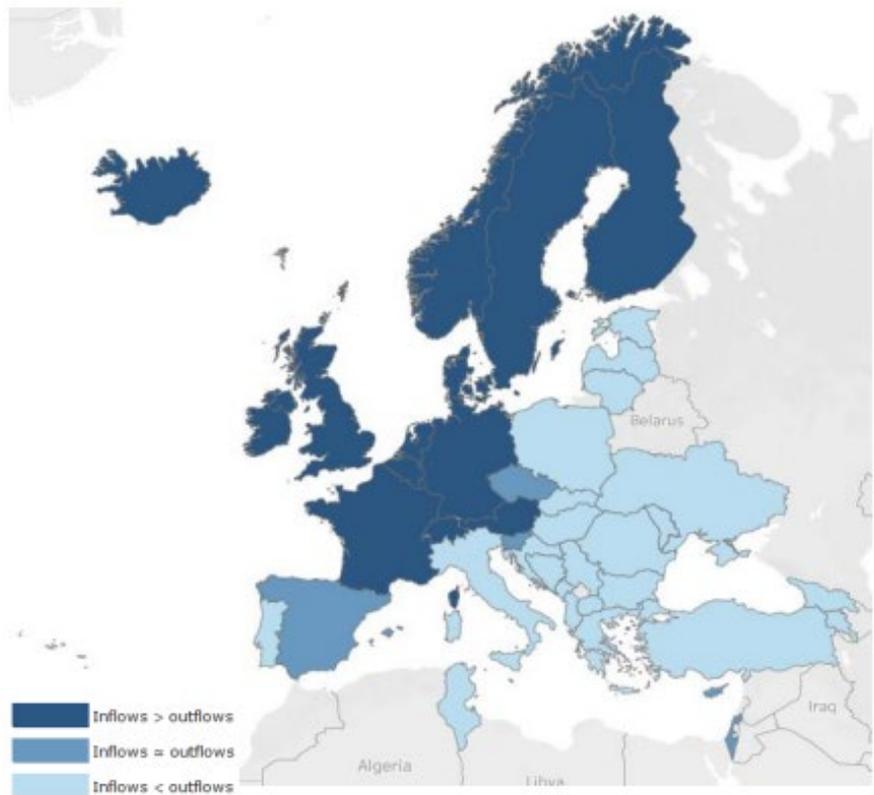
Stat. link: <https://ec.europa.eu/assets/r/ri/ri/2022/figure-f-2-4.xlsx>

Figure 3.2-3 Brain drain trends around the world



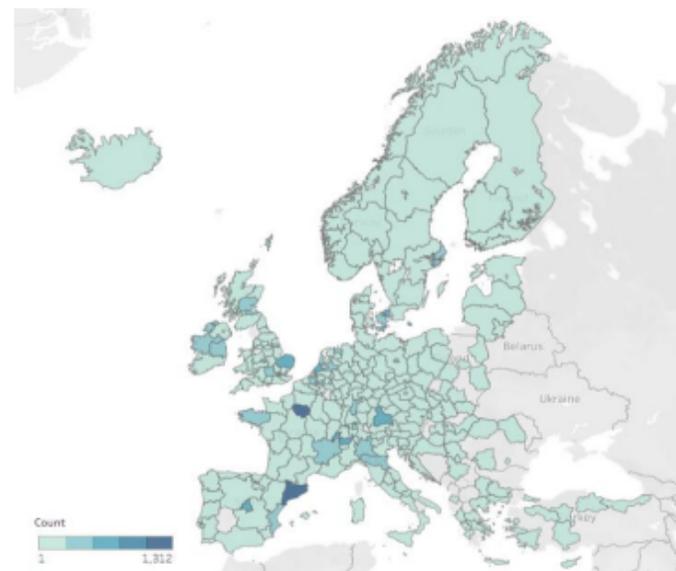
— Inflow-outflow ratio 2001-2010 — Inflow-outflow ratio 2011-2020 - - - Brain gain cut-off 2022

Figure 3. Balance of MSCA long-term mobility flows in the EU and associated countries (IF, ITN, COFUND), Horizon 2020



A large share of the most attractive host organisations is concentrated in only a handful of European regions. As illustrated in the map below, these regions are mostly located in Western Europe.

Figure 14. Number of researcher inflows by NUTS-2 region (IF, ITN, COFUND), Horizon 2020



Source: CORDA database.

In fact, 12 regions⁵³ hosted 30% of all fellows involved in MSCA long-term mobility. The most popular regions were the areas surrounding Barcelona (ES) and Paris (FR), which hosted 1,215 and 1,119 fellows, respectively. A detailed list of the most popular IF, ITN and COFUND destination regions is presented in the table below⁵⁴.

Table 1. Most popular host regions among IF, ITN and COFUND fellows

| NUTS2 region | Total number of fellows hosted | Most prominent cities | Examples of the most prominent participant organisations |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Catalonia (ES51) | 1,215 | Barcelona | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spanish National Research Council Autonomous University of Barcelona University of Barcelona |
| Ile de France (FR10) | 1,119 | Paris | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> French National Centre for Scientific Research Sorbonne University |

The main **highlights** of 2024 report are:

- Immigration, particularly skilled immigration, plays a crucial role in enhancing research and innovation (R&I), with immigrants disproportionately represented among inventors and entrepreneurs.
- Factors contributing to the EU's brain drain include **language barriers**, **rigid academic hierarchies**, **low salaries** and **strict immigration laws**, in contrast to more welcoming policies in the US, Canada and Australia.

Some **policy recommendations**:

- Liberal immigration policies can serve as catalysts for innovation by attracting highly skilled immigrants who often make significant contributions to research, patenting and scientific achievements. These talents enrich the host country's intellectual capital without adding to educational costs.
- The EU brain drain is diminishing thanks to internationalisation policies such as the Bologna and Lisbon processes.

Heitor's Recommendations to the European Commission, Member States and Institutions:

Recommendation 1

- 1.1. Set **ambitious targets** to reverse European brain drain by 2030/2035, achieving brain gain in Europe, at large and in the majority of MS
- 1.2. Establish, effectively, the **European Research Careers Observatory** to monitor careers, funding and mobility.
- 1.3. Expand Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions :
 - 1.3.1. Launch « **Choose Europe** » **programme**, using the existing MSCA-COFUND
- 1.4. Simplify immigration procedures and processes across Europe
- 1.5. Implement “Letta fifth freedom” for free circulation of knowledge through an **adequate and legally binded “ERA Act”**.

Nov 2024 Brussels

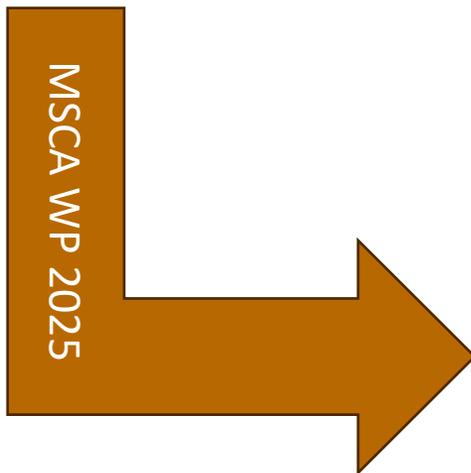
Recommendations 1 (cont.): European Commission

“Choose Europe”:

a unique opportunity for Europe in “Trump 2.0 Era”....

- Use the **existing MSCA’s co-funding mechanism**, to launch and test new scheme in **2025-2027**;
- Funding requirements: to **Institution/employer** (i.e., University/RTOs/firms), with the requirement and **guarantee of a “career development path”**, with the clear possibility of a **“permanent contract” for successful grantees with positive assessment at the end of 4th year**;
- Goal: Between **0,5 and 1 million Euros for 5 years** (i.e., less than a “ERC starting grant”), with **50 % from EC/MSCA and 50% from national or institutional funding**, including salary for grantee and other subsidies for launching a research group (e.g., fellowships for research students, travel,...);
- To be adjusted with each institution based on their salaries.
- **ACTION:** experiment **pilot in 2025** targeted to **MSCA cofund projects which host postdoctoral fellowships**: offer an extension to their fellowship by 2-3 years (so 4-6 years in total) using MSCA conditions and rates, on the condition that institutions commit to offer longer term job opportunities.

84



| | | |
|--|---|-----|
| Call · MSCA · Choose · Europe · COFUND · 2025 | → | 67¶ |
| Conditions for the Call..... | → | 67¶ |
| HORIZON-MSCA-2025-COFUND-02-01: MSCA · Choose · Europe · COFUND · 2025 ... | → | 68¶ |

Recommendation 2 to Member States:

1. Stimulate “good jobs”: promote research career development opportunities, together with adequate support/technical careers and salaries throughout Europe.
2. Simplify Visa processes for international researchers
3. Promote CO-funding schemes to meet the 3% GDP target for R&I (Seal of Excellence, MSCA – COFUND)

Recommendation 3 to Universities (and Research Organi)

1. Foster improved career pathways for researchers and support staff
2. Pursue and advocate for decoupling of research contracts from project duration.
3. Collaborate with public and private sectors to create and promote high-quality jobs and, if necessary, foster creation of new institutions/employers.
4. Promote innovative schemes to recruit for early-career researchers.

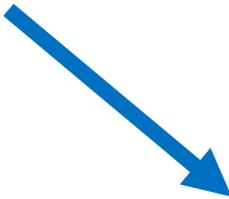
Researcher Career path in Spain at a glance!

Explore available positions and funding opportunities at each stage of the researcher career in Spain

7th edition

Researcher Career path in Spain at a glance! February 2024, 7th edition

Explore available positions and funding opportunities at each stage of the researcher career in Spain



RESEARCH INTENSIVE AND RESEARCH & TEACHING POSITIONS AT THE SPANISH ACADEMIC SECTOR

Likelihood to obtain a contract/position at the Spanish academic sector in regards to the European Framework for Research Careers

| Legend | Position titles are kept in Spanish | Estimation of probability to obtain a contract/position (weight of diagram correlates with probability) | Fixed term contract | Open-ended contract | Mutually agreed duration | Permanent position | Civil servant | Non-required R3 certification | 25% of open positions are reserved for R3 certified applicants | 25% of open positions are reserved for R3 certified applicants | Required accreditation of merits issued by regional agencies or ANECA |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| European Framework for research careers | | | R1 | R2 | R3 | R4 | | | | | |
| rch is | Contrato predoctoral | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Contrato de acceso | | | | | | | | | | |

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPANISH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION CAREER

| European Framework for research careers | Years |
|---|--|
| R1 | 1 2 3 4 |
| R2 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 ... |
| R3 | |
| R4 | |

| European Funding Opportunities | Timeline |
|--|---|
| MSCA-DN, MSCA-COFUND | Years 1-4 |
| MSCA-PF, MSCA-COFUND | Years 1-10 |
| ERC Starting Grant, ERC Consolidator Grant, ERC Advanced Grant | Years 1-20 |
| Agencia Estatal de Investigación (AEI) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formación de doctores: * (Years 1-4) Juan de la Cierva (Years 1-10) Ramón y Cajal (Years 1-10) R. Consolidation (Years 1-10) ATRAE (Years 1-20) |
| Spanish Government (Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PFIS (Years 1-4) Sara Borrell (Years 1-10) Miguel Servet (Years 1-10) |

European Opportunities

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| MSCA Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions | Doctoral Networks (DN), Doctoral programmes supporting research in academia and other sectors | http://bit.ly/MSCA |
| | Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF), Supporting the careers of individual researchers and promoting excellence | Support in Spanish: http://bit.ly/ES_MSCA |
| | COFUND, Co-Funding of Regional, National & International Programmes | |
| ERC European Research Council Grants | ERC StG, Starting Grants | https://erc.europa.eu/ |
| | ERC CoG, Consolidator Grants | Support in Spanish: http://bit.ly/ES-ERC |
| | ERC AdG, Advanced Grants | |

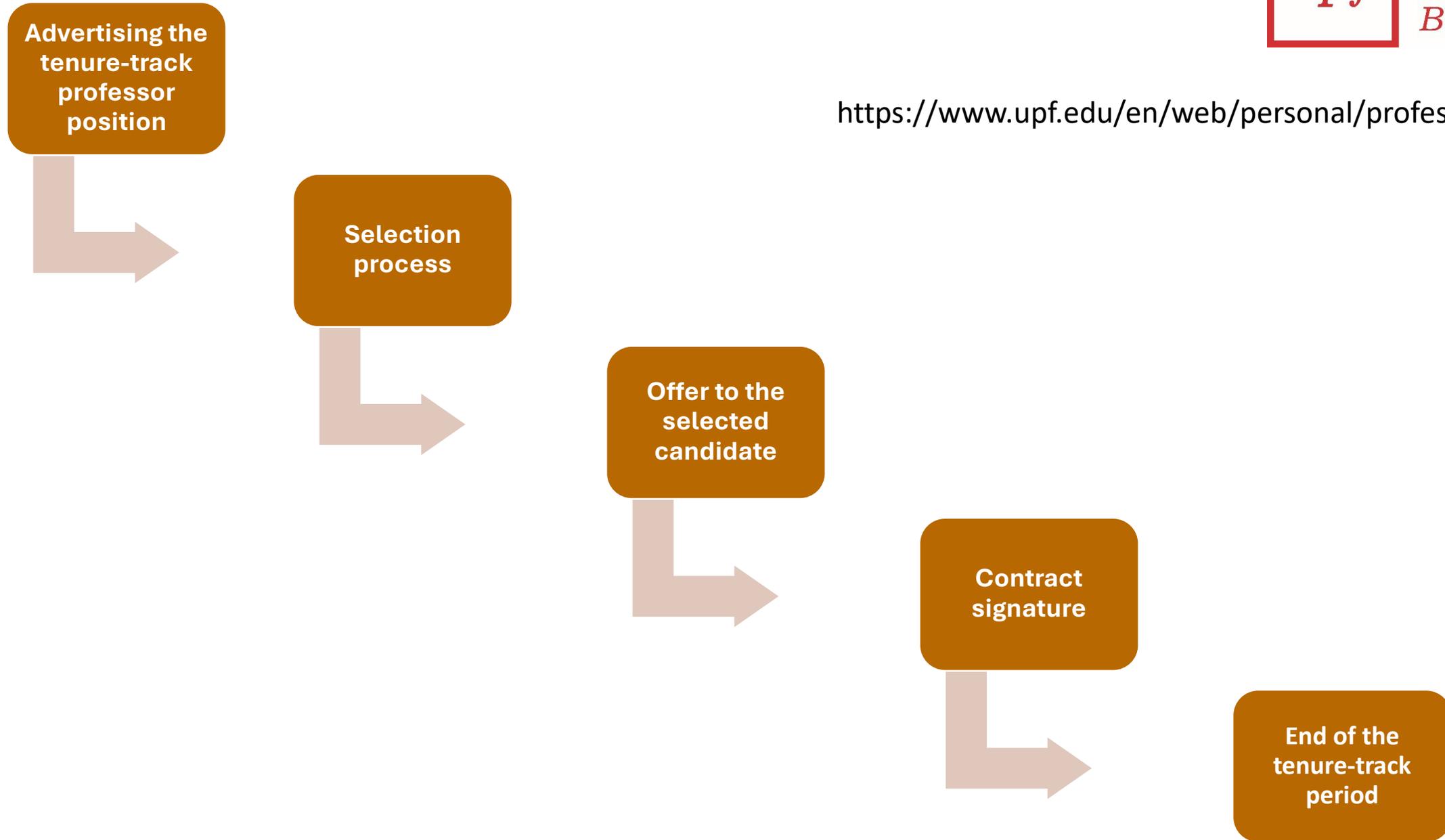
Spanish Government Opportunities

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | Formación de Doctores, Ayudas para contratos predoctorales para la formación de doctores | https://bit.ly/Pradoc_2024 |
| | Doctorados Industriales, Ayudas para contratos para la formación de investigadores en empresas | https://bit.ly/DoctInd_2022 |

The UPF Case: Tenure-track professor

Pompeu Fabra University (UPF) has adopted the **tenure-track** system to attract and retain talent. The tenure-track professor contract involves starting an academic career to attain a permanent position. It implies the evaluation of the performance in the year prior to the end of the contract, accordingly to previously defined evaluation criteria, but it does not guarantee the permanence of the professor at the University. In this academic career model, stabilization is only possible after the successful completion of a tenure-track period.

<https://www.upf.edu/en/web/personal/professor-tenure-track>



The UAB Case: A Focus on ERC (... and SSHs)

“Attracting and retaining international talent UNIT” is a UAB strategic initiative aimed at ensuring a smooth generational transition among all permanent research staff.

Reporting directly to the Research Deputy Executive Administrator, it serve as a liaison among the various UAB management units responsible for talent recruitment. This allows us to coordinate the promotion, search, attraction, and onboarding processes for international talent.

Who is this intended for...

We are aimed at researchers who have been awarded or intend to apply for international research projects and who wish to have a contractual relationship with UAB.

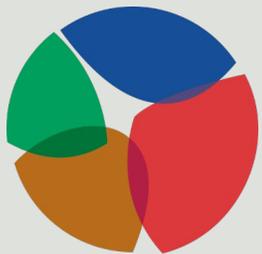
A focus on ERCs



Universitat Autònoma
de Barcelona
Vicerectorat de Personal Acadèmic

INCORPORACIÓ A LA UAB D'INVESTIGADORS AMB UN ERC GRANT

(Aprovat a la Comissió de Personal Acadèmic del de de 2019)



Thank you
for your attention

For more information:

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