

Pracownia **E**waluacji **J**akości **K**ształcenia

**European Charter for Researchers at the University of Warsaw**

# REPORT

**Marek Bożykowski  
Albert Izdebski  
Mikołaj Jasiński  
Joanna Konieczna-Sałamatin**



UNIwersytet  
WARszawski



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Warsaw 2022

Authors: Marek Bożykowski  
Albert Izdebski  
Mikołaj Jasiński  
Joanna Konieczna-Salamatin

Technical research supervision  
and data processing by Przemysław Kopa

Translated by Wojciech Drajerzak  
Kierownik Sekcji ds. Koordynacji Tłumaczeń  
Biuro Rektoratu UW

Translation proof-read by Ruairi O’Neil  
Asystent, WPiA UW

Typesetting by Joanna Konieczna-Salamatin

# Table of Content

---

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. WORKING CONDITIONS.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. ASSESSMENT OF THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4. ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCH SUPERVISOR .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5. COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL RULES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR RESEARCHERS.....</b>	<b>13</b>

# 1. Introduction

---

The University-wide survey “European Charter for Researchers at the University of Warsaw” was addressed to all academic staff working at the University of Warsaw. The aim of the survey, which took the form of an online questionnaire, was to assess the implementation of the recommendations contained in the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct (C&C) for the Recruitment of Researchers at the UW.

The data were collected between 1 and 24 December 2021. The survey was completed by 1,065 respondents out of a total of 4,065 academics who were sent an invitation to participate in the study. This corresponds with a survey completion rate of 26.2%.

Respondents were dominated by those possessing a doctoral degree, who accounted for 45% of the sample. The proportions of representatives from the various scientific disciplines – humanities, social sciences as well as science and natural sciences – were similar in participation rates. The average length of employment at the UW was 15.5 years. The study involved 57 academics who did not possess Polish citizenship.

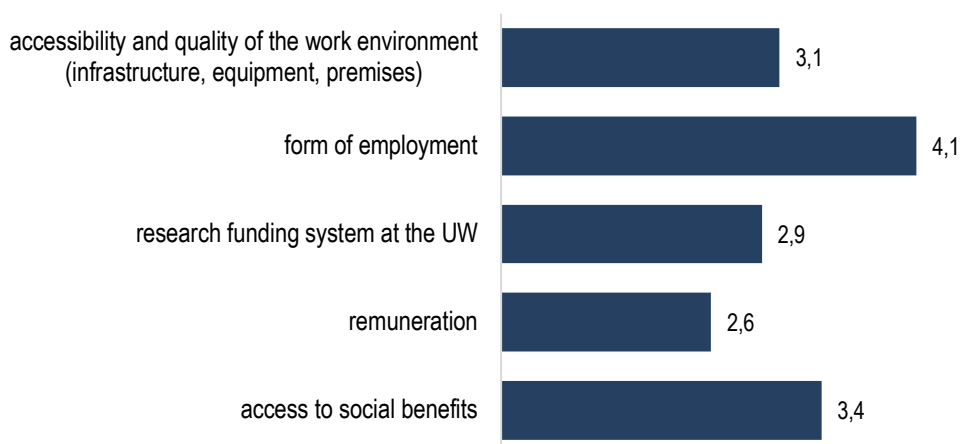
Women predominated in the sample, accounting for 53.8% of respondents. The structure of respondents by gender varied according to degree/title and scientific field. Those surveyed with a professional title and a doctoral or doktor habilitowany degree were predominantly female, while those with a professorial title were predominantly male. Women predominated among those representing the humanities and social sciences, while men predominated among respondents representing the sciences and natural sciences.

## 2. Working conditions

---

Broadly speaking, work conditions determine the motivation of employees and the effectiveness of actions undertaken. Scientific work - like any creative activity - requires a significant commitment of intellectual resources. Suitable work conditions are those in which the researcher can concentrate on the task at hand and does not have to devote too much energy to resolving other problems - e.g. administrative or formal issues or the search for additional sources of income.

**Figure 1 Assessment \* of the extent to which particular elements of working conditions at the UW are conducive to academic work.**

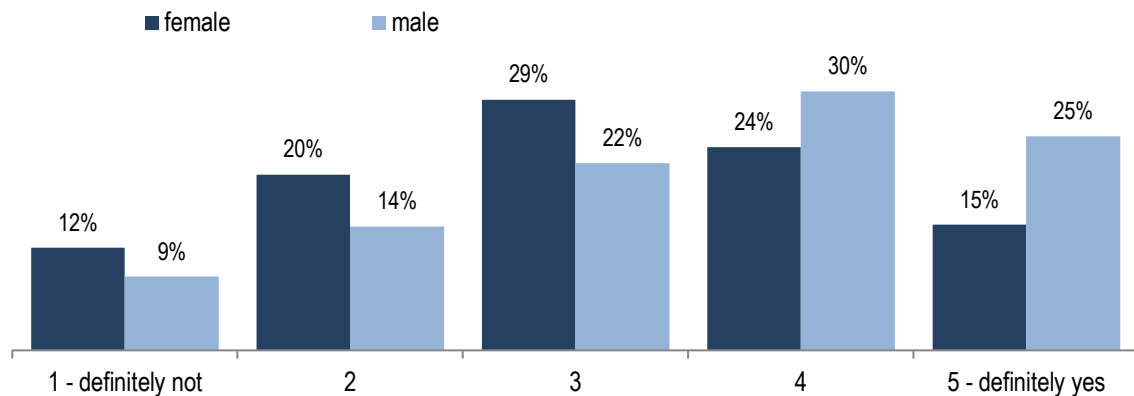


\* Averages for a five-point scale where 1 means "definitely not conducive" and 5 means "definitely conducive".

The results of the survey show that the form of employment and access to social benefits are the elements of working conditions that were most frequently rated as conducive to scientific work. From this perspective, the worst rated was the system of remuneration.

The opportunity to reconcile professional development and private life (with particular emphasis on family life) is a very important element of a "good" work environment. At the University of Warsaw, this issue was assessed moderately positively - 45% of the respondents felt that work conditions were conducive to work-life balance and having children, while 29% held the opposite view.

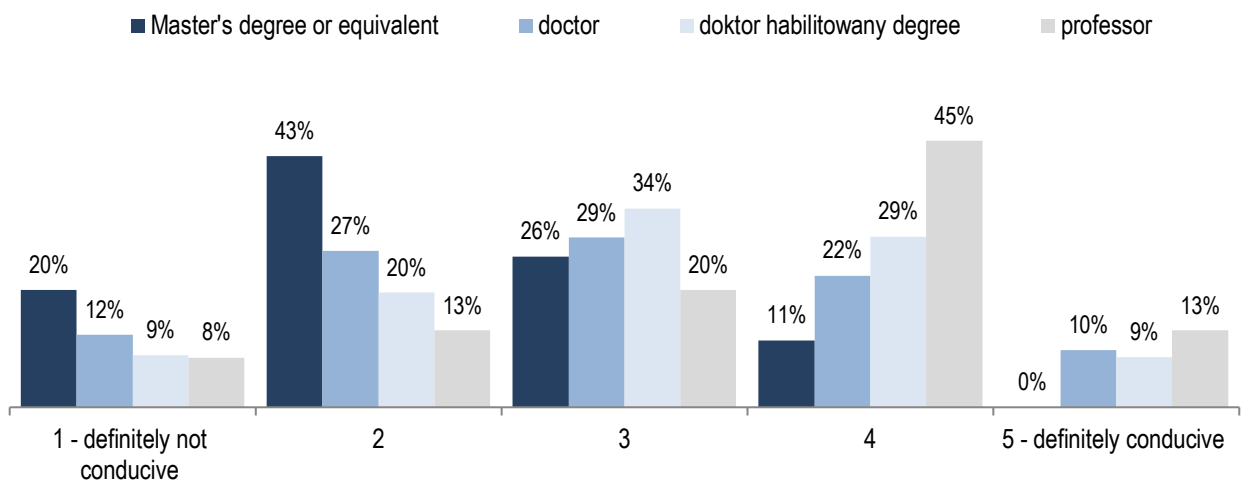
**Figure 2 Distribution of ratings of working conditions at the UW from the point of view of reconciliation of work and personal life, including having children, by gender.**



Among women and men working at the UW, the opinion that their working conditions allow for work-life balance prevailed, with women being more critical than men on this issue: 32% were of the opposite opinion (among men the percentage of critical assessment was 23%).

An important issue is how staff perceive the employee career development strategy at the university. The distribution of responses to this question shows that respondents were slightly more likely to rate it positively - 37%, than negatively - 33%.

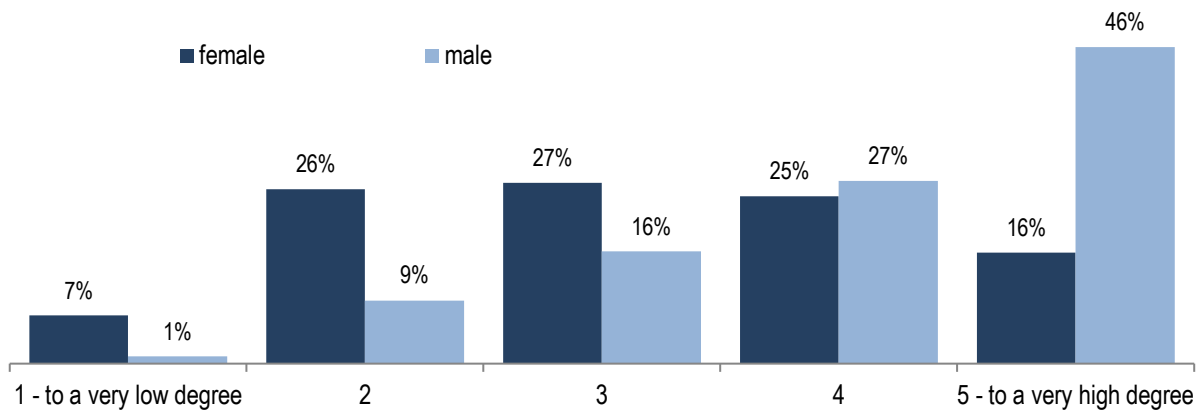
**Figure 3 Distribution of ratings of career development strategies at the UW, and whether it fosters academic development, by degree/title.**



The evaluation of career development strategies at the UW varied strongly according to professional position: those with a professor's degree rated it best and those with a master's degree rated it worst.

A very important issue is the public perception of equal opportunities for men and women at successive stages of their careers. The University makes every effort to ensure equality, but the realisation of this goal depends to a large extent on the behaviour of specific individuals and the taking of concrete decisions in various situations. From the point of view of all those participating in the survey, the situation is quite positive: 56% felt that equal opportunities for men and women at the UW were provided.

**Figure 4 Distribution of assessments regarding the degree of equal opportunities for women and men at successive stages of their careers, by gender.**



The assessment of equal opportunities for men and women at all career stages strongly differentiated according to gender. Men generally did not see a problem, with 73% thinking that equality was ensured. Women perceived inequalities much more frequently, with 33% feeling that there was inequality and 41% feeling that equality was provided.

The University of Warsaw provides employees with various types of support, which are designed to foster effective academic work and positively influence employees' professional development.

**Figure 5 Assessment \* of the support provided to staff by the University from the perspective of employee professional development.**



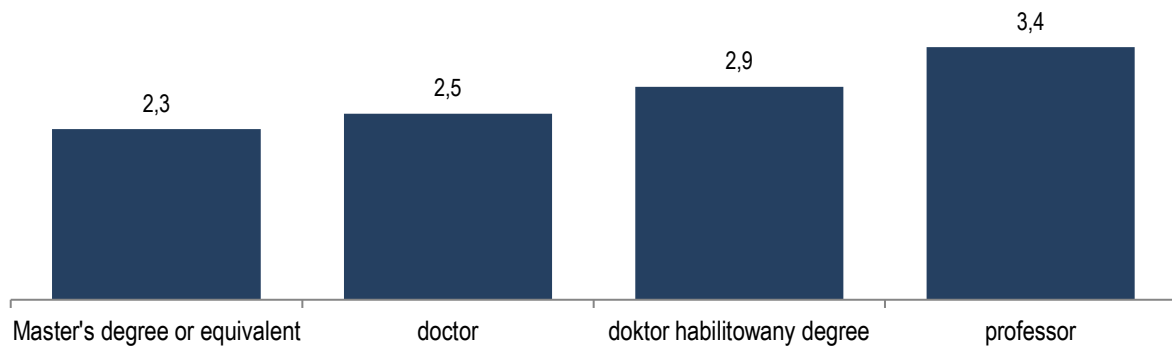
\* Averages for a five-point scale where 1 means "very bad" and 5 means "very good".

Evaluations of the support provided by the University in selected aspects were quite critical. Only two aspects were rated above the neutral rating - support for recognition of authorship of research to which the employee had made a material contribution and support for enhancing professional skills. Other types of support were rated quite low - i.e. below 3 (neutral rating).

An important aspect of working conditions is the employee's sense of empowerment. Taking this into account, we asked academics to rate the influence they have over decisions made within their organisational unit. The results indicate that the respondents were outnumbered by those who felt that their influence over decisions is insignificant - 42% - and those who felt that they have a lot of influence - 31%.



**Figure 6 Assessment \* of the impact on post-decision making within the teaching unit by degree/title.**

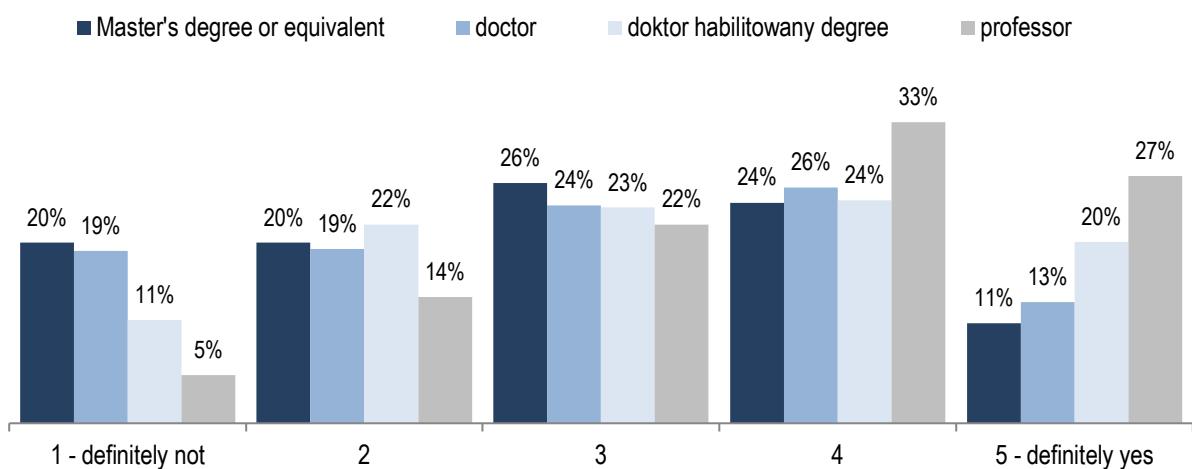


\* Averages for a five-point scale where 1 means "lack of influence" and 5 means "very big influence".

The perception of one's own influence over decisions depended on one's professional position, with professors having the highest and those with a master's degree the lowest.

Teaching activities ought to be closely related to academic activities - hence the question about the extent to which teaching duties at the UW are carried out in a way that is conducive to the respondent's academic work. Opinions on this issue were divided, with a slight majority of those convinced that the teaching work they were doing was conducive to their academic work.

**Figure 7 Distribution of ratings on the extent to which teaching work is conducive to academic work by degree/title.**



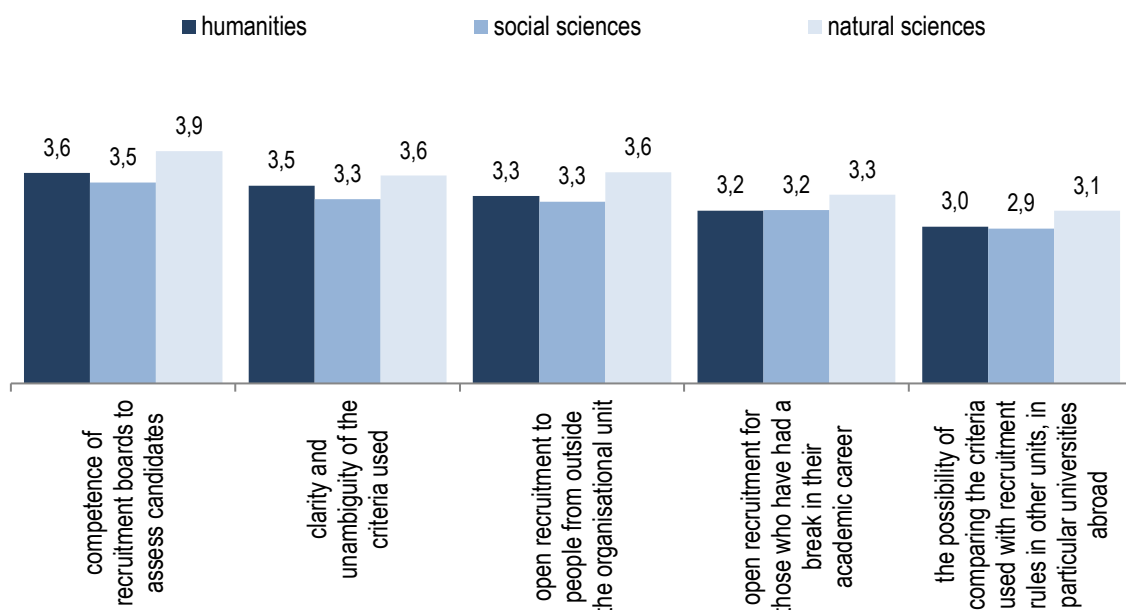
The researchers surveyed were divided as to whether their teaching work was connected to their academic work. People with a professor's degree were most likely to perceive such a relationship, while masters and doctorate holders were least likely to do so.

### 3. Assessment of the recruitment process

One of the key issues covered by the European Charter for Researchers is the recruitment of researchers. It points to the need for clear standards applied by employers for the admission of researchers. For this reason, the survey included a number of questions relating to the recruitment process.

The highest rated aspect of the recruitment process at the University of Warsaw was the competence of the recruitment committees to assess candidates, which obtained a mean score of 3.7 (on a scale from 1 to 5), while the lowest rated aspect was the ability to compare the applicable criteria with recruitment rules applied by different units, including foreign universities, which obtained a mean score of 3 (neutral).

**Figure 8 Assessment \* of selected aspects of the recruitment process for positions at the UW, categorised by academic discipline.**



\* Averages for a five-point scale where 1 means "definitely no" and 5 means "definitely yes".

All surveyed aspects of the employment recruitment process at the UW were rated higher by representatives of the sciences and natural sciences than by those in the humanities and social sciences disciplines.

Respondents clearly indicated that in the UW recruitment process in which they participated, the required level of qualification and seniority matched the needs of the position for which they were recruited, obtaining a mean of 4.1. They were much less likely to agree with the statement that the full range of qualifications and competences, including 'soft competences', were included in the process, obtaining a mean of 3.3 (on a scale from 1 to 5).

Foreign nationals working at the University were significantly more likely than those with Polish nationality to indicate that the recruitment process in which they participated took into account the full range of qualifications and competencies of the candidate, including 'soft competencies', with a mean score of 3.8 and 3.3 for the respective nationality groupings.

**Figure 9 Assessment\* of the level of consideration given to the full range of qualifications and competencies of candidates and the adequacy of the required level of qualifications and work experience to the needs of the advertised position in the recruitment process at the University in which they participated - among people with and without Polish nationality.**



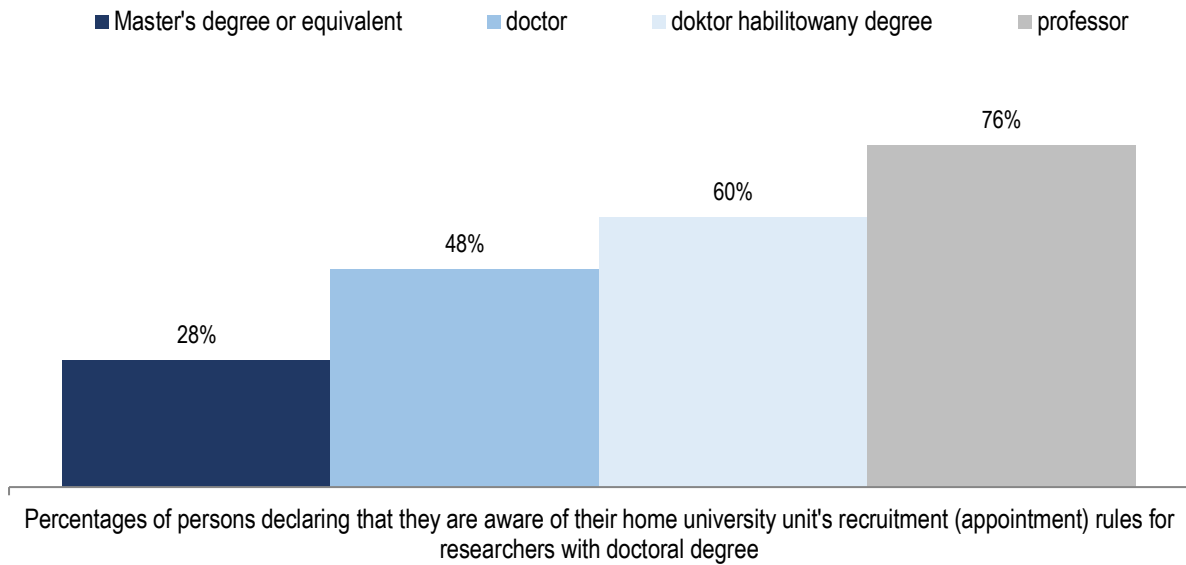
\* Averages for a five-point scale where 1 means "definitely no" and 5 means "definitely yes".

Only one quarter of respondents said they received feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their application after the recruitment process. The highest proportion of those declaring to have received feedback after recruitment to an employment position at the UW

was among those with a professor's degree (35%), while the lowest was among those with a doctoral degree (20%).

More than half of the respondents declared that they were familiar with the recruitment rules in place for postdoctoral researchers at their organisational unit.

**Figure 10 Percentages of persons declaring that they are aware of their university unit's recruitment (appointment) rules for postdoctoral researchers by degree/title.**



Knowledge of recruitment rules was closely related to the degree/title: the higher the degree or title, the higher the proportion of respondents declaring knowledge of these rules.

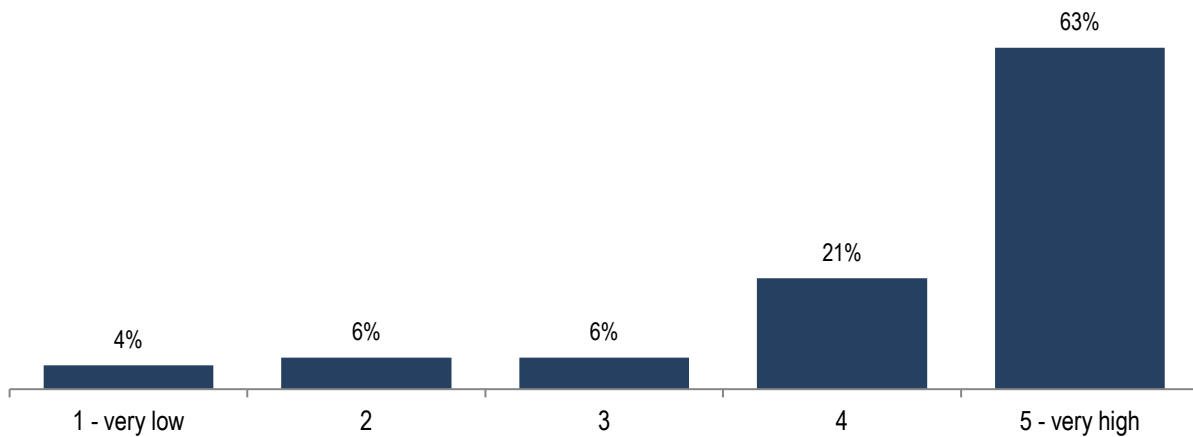
## 4. Assessment of the role of the research supervisor

---

The research supervisor is a key institution in academic life and is a role model for young researchers. Under the guidance of a mentor, early-stage scientists shape their interests, improve their research methodology and working methods, and develop themselves in their scientific field. There were several questions in the survey that addressed issues related to the role of the research supervisor. The majority of academics surveyed (59%) said they were undertaking the role of a supervisor, while only 13% said they were under the supervision of a mentor.

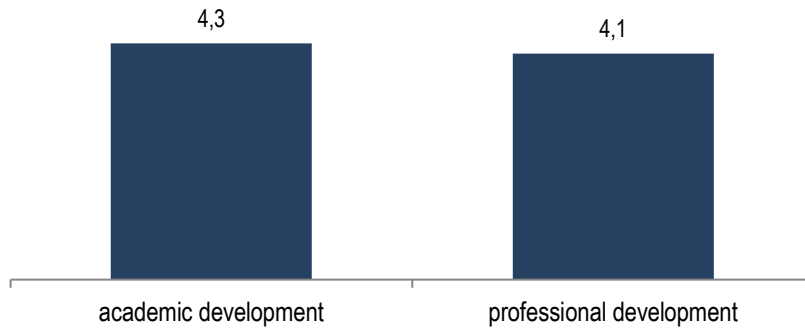
Those who had research mentors rated the competences of their mentors highly - nearly two thirds of respondents rated the competences of their research mentor very highly.

**Figure 11** Distribution of responses to the question: *How do you rate your supervisor's competence to fulfil this role, in particular proficiency in supervising research work, availability, knowledge, experience and commitment?*



The respondents with a mentor were also overwhelmingly positive about the principles of collaboration with their mentor - 64%.

**Figure 12 Assessment \* of the impact of the supervisor on academic and professional development.**

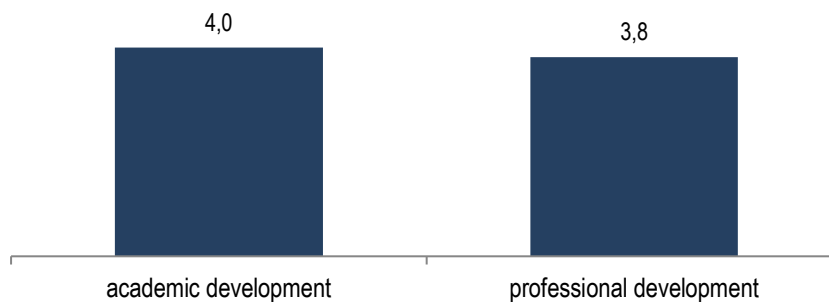


\* Averages for a five-point scale where 1 means "very negative" and 5 means "very positive".

The respondents availing of the support provided by their mentors appreciated their role in shaping their own academic and professional development.

Academic teachers were overwhelmingly positive about their own competence to fulfil this role - 86% rated their own competence highly or very highly. The vast majority of mentors - nearly three quarters - expressed the belief that they had established a good working relationship with their mentee.

**Figure 13 - Self-assessment \* of influence on the academic and professional development of mentees.**



\* Averages for a five-point scale where 1 means "very negative" and 5 means "very positive".

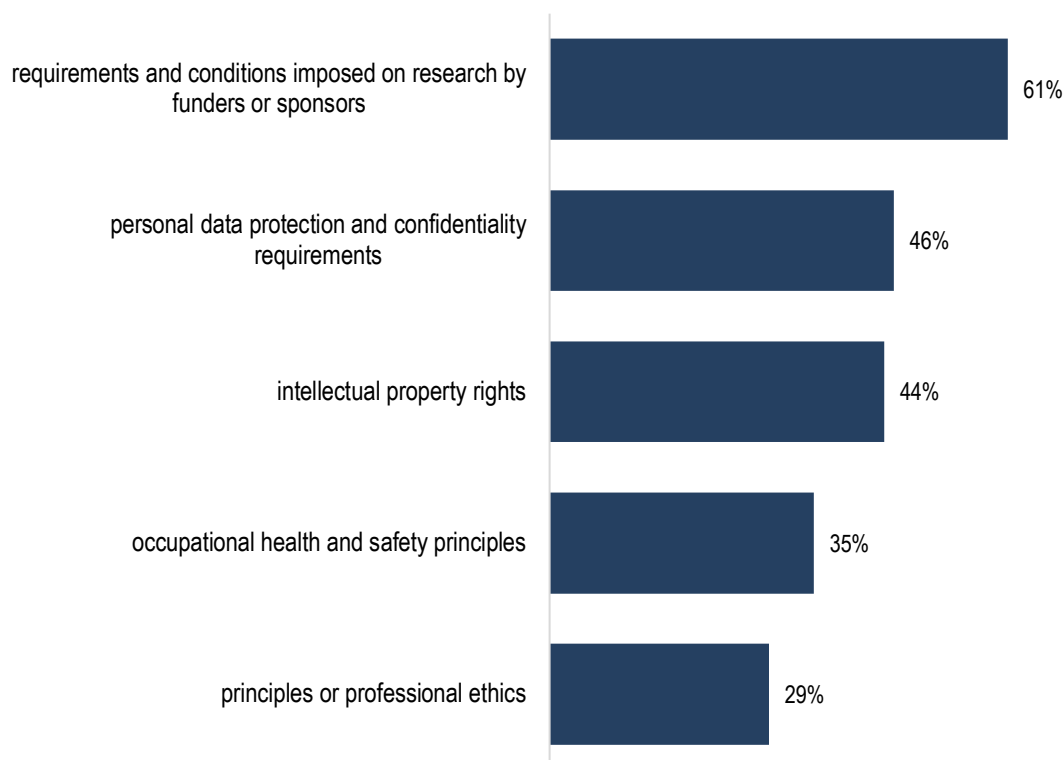
Supervisors indicated that they feel they have a positive impact on the academic and professional development of their mentees.

## 5. Compliance with the general rules and requirements for researchers

---

The European Charter for Researchers formulates a number of general principles and requirements to which researchers should adhere. In the survey, several questions were devoted to these issues. Findings indicate that serious breaches of rules and requirements are very rare.

**Figure 14 Percentages of people who never encountered a violation of the listed rules, regulations and requirements while working at the UW.**



According to respondents, violations of requirements were the least frequent, while violations of professional ethics and health and safety regulations were the most frequent.

In the survey, we also asked respondents to rate their knowledge of selected rules and requirements.

**Figure 15 Assessment \* of knowledge of rules, regulations and requirements.**



\* Averages for a five-point scale where 1 means "I do not know " and 5 means "I know very well".

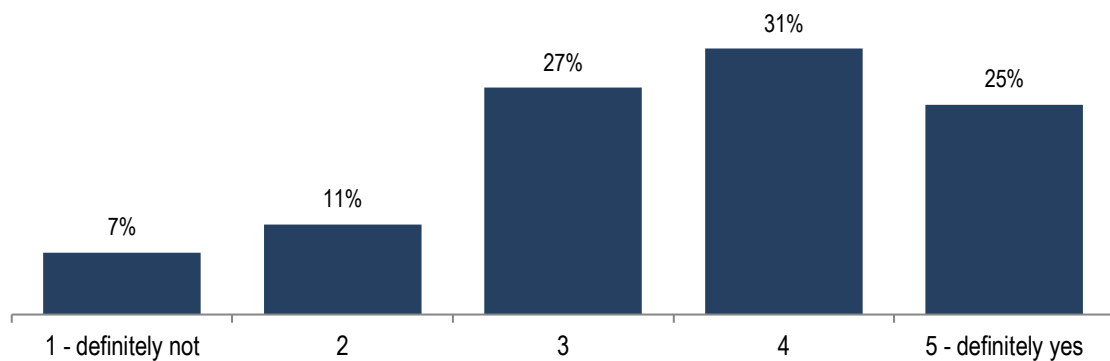
Among the respondents, the level of declared knowledge of rules and regulations turned out to be quite high - the average ratings for knowledge of almost all of the surveyed aspects usually exceeded the value of 4 (on a scale of 1 to 5).

Researchers should enjoy freedom of scientific research, with which freedom of belief and expression are inextricably linked. They should also be free from discrimination on the grounds of sex, colour, nationality, ethnic or social origin, religion, political opinion, etc. The survey results indicate that these principles are generally followed at the University of Warsaw. However, we found that 16% of those surveyed had encountered a situation at UW within the last year where their freedom of belief or freedom of expression had been violated. In addition, 9% had encountered a form of discrimination by superiors at the UW, with 5% affected by both discrimination and violations of their freedom of belief and/or expression.

The European Charter for Researchers calls for effective financial management of research in terms of responsibility for the proper use of public funds.



**Figure 15 Distribution of responses to the question: *Was the financial management of the research in which you were involved carried out in an efficient way?***



Respondents from the University of Warsaw were most often of the opinion that financial management of their research meets the mentioned postulate of efficiency.

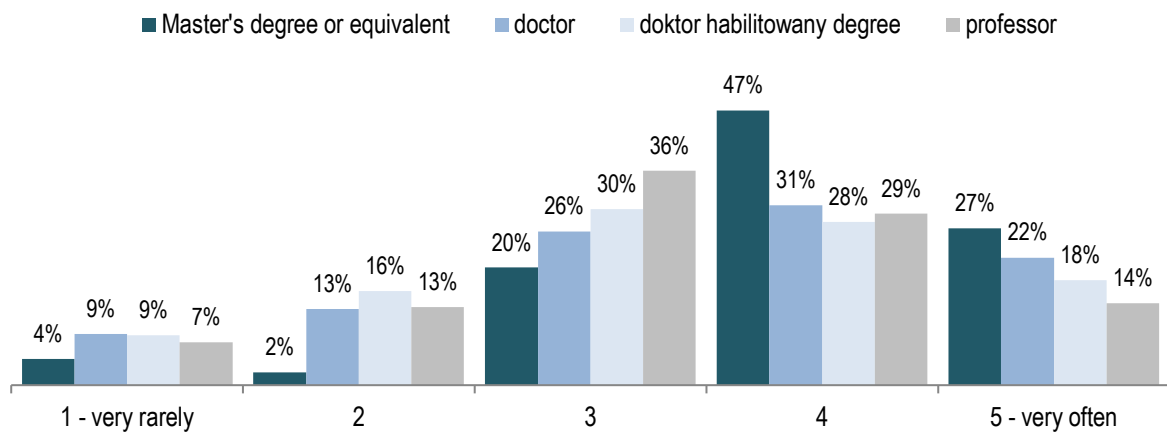
Among the requirements addressed to academic staff included those related to the dissemination of research results and the need to improve qualifications.

The results of the survey indicate that research workers at the University of Warsaw quite often undertake various activities to popularise knowledge in their scientific field. Almost half (49%) declared that they do this very often or often.

Findings indicate that UW researchers are pursuing the requirement to improve their skills: 49% of them declared that they often or very often take action to improve their teaching qualifications, and 68% said the same about improving their scientific qualifications.

Activities aimed at improving teaching qualifications were slightly more frequently declared by women than by men, with a mean score of 3.5 and 3.2 respectively (on a scale from 1 to 5).

**Figure 16 Distribution of evaluations of the frequency of actions taken to improve teaching skills by grade/title.**



Raising teaching qualifications was also linked to the degree/title. The results obtained show that people with a master's degree declared this kind of activity more often than other respondents.