Perspectives on the strengths & weaknesses of the research assessment system in Romania

Survey report – Version 1

Publication details

Perspectives on the strengths & weaknesses of the research assessment system in Romania, Survey report – Version 1*

UEFISCDI - The Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding

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*This report offers an initial overview of the results, providing the first version of the analysis. A more thorough examination, including a deeper analysis of all open-ended responses and a comprehensive review of all data, will follow, with a final, more detailed version of the report to be published.

**This material was produced by UEFISCDI as part of its pilot activities within the SECURE - Sustainable Careers for Researcher Empowerment project. The SECURE project, funded by the European Commission through the Horizon Europe programme, is a project that aims to develop coordination and support measures for the creation, testing, implementation and integration of a common framework for research careers, with the aim of improving research careers and reducing their precariousness.

Disclaimer:

Survey report – Researchers' perspectives on the strenghts & weaknesses of the current research assessment system in Romania – Version 1

Result of a pilot activity implemented as part of the SECURE project

UEFISCDI – Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding

March 2025

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1. Introduction

Background & Context:

This study presents the results of a survey conducted to gather the opinions of Romanian researchers regarding current research assessment practices in Romania, as well as emerging ones at European and international levels, by identifying their strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, the survey sought to engage researchers from various fields and career stages to gather insights into how the national research evaluation system influences research activities, career development, and the functioning of research institutions.

This activity was conducted by UEFISCDI as part of pilot activities within the SECURE project - Sustainable Careers for Researcher Empowerment. The SECURE project is funded by the EU through the Horizon Europe program and is implemented by a consortium of 17 partners from various European countries, aiming to contribute to improving research careers and reducing the career precariousness faced by researchers across Europe.

The research assessment system plays a critical role in shaping research careers and institutional priorities, and understanding the current system's impact is essential to guiding future decisions. Researchers often face challenges within the existing framework, and this survey aims to identify those challenges, explore perceptions of the system's effectiveness, and examine emerging practices that are used at European and at international levels to shape a more holistic and inclusive evaluation process.

The Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI) is the main funder for competitive research in Romania and a policy adviser for science, innovation and higher education policies, under the ultimate authority of the Ministry of Education and Research (MEC). As a funding agency, UEFISCDI supports exploratory and applied research, in all branches of science and the humanities, and it funds research projects on a competitive basis. The Agency's prerogatives in the research area pertain to the implementation of the majority of Programmes under the National Research, Development and Innovation Plan (PNCDI IV), which is the main instrument for implementing the National Strategy on Research, Innovation, and Smart Specialization for 2022–2027.

Objectives:

The survey aimed to achieve several key objectives:

- To gather insights into the most frequently used metrics in research assessment at national level, including their perceived strengths and limitations.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the current system and identify areas where improvements could be made.
- To capture researchers' views on emerging evaluation practices at the European and international levels.
- To capture suggestions for potential improvements in the national research assessment system.

Scope:

The survey was disseminated nationwide, as well as beyond Romania, through various channels, including the official website of UEFISCDI, LinkedIn, and the BrainMap platform—an extensive database with over 65,000 accounts of researchers, technicians, and other professionals from Romania and internationally. This broad dissemination ensured the survey reached a diverse and representative sample of the research community, including those affiliated with research institutes, universities, and other research organizations. The survey was conducted in March 2025 and collected 1,342 responses, providing a robust dataset that reflects the views of a wide range of researchers in Romania.

2. Methodology

Survey Design:

The survey employed a combination of closed and open-ended questions designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from participants. Closed questions primarily included Likert scale items, multiple-choice questions, and predefined options, allowing for the measurement of respondents' opinions on the suitability and effectiveness of various research assessment practices. Likert scale questions were used to assess the extent to which researchers agreed or disagreed with statements about the relevance of certain metrics, emerging practices, and the overall effectiveness of the current research assessment system. Additionally, multiple-choice questions captured the frequency and commonality of specific metrics and challenges encountered in research evaluation.

Open-ended questions were included to allow for more detailed responses, giving researchers the opportunity to elaborate on their experiences with the current system and suggest improvements. These questions focused on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the research assessment system, as well as the specific practices that respondents felt should be continued, enhanced, or changed. Participants were asked to provide insights on how different aspects of the system (individual, project, and institutional levels) impacted their professional development and research outcomes.

The survey covered several key topics, including:

- The effectiveness and appropriateness of commonly used research assessment metrics (e.g., number of publications, citations, impact factors).
- Perceptions of emerging practices in research evaluation, including recognition of new types of research outputs and activities.
- The influence of the current system on researchers' careers.
- Identified strengths of the current system, with a focus on practices that researchers believe should continue.
- The main weaknesses of the current system, with insights into areas that require improvement or reform.

- Suggestions for changes to better support researchers and enhance the overall research evaluation process in Romania.

Data collection tool and distribution:

The survey was administered using **Google Forms**, an online tool that enables data collection. The call for participation was widely disseminated through multiple channels, including UEFISCDI's official website, LinkedIn, and the BrainMap platform, which has a database of over 65,000 accounts of researchers and other professionals. The survey was disseminated through the Open Science community from the respective platform and sent to **45,716 email addresses** of researchers from Romania (registered user from BrainMap who chose to receive news from the platform). This extensive distribution ensured that the survey reached a broad and diverse sample of the research community.

Target population & sampling:

The survey targeted researchers in both the public and private sectors across Romania, including those affiliated with research institutes, universities, and other research organizations. Respondents were drawn from a wide range of academic disciplines and career stages, ensuring that the findings represent a broad spectrum of research activity in Romania. The survey aimed to capture the perspectives of those who had participated in research assessment processes, such as evaluations for career advancement, research project proposals, and institutional assessments.

Response rate:

A total of **1,342 responses** were collected, providing a comprehensive dataset that reflects the views of a diverse group of researchers. The high response rate ensures that the results are reliable and representative to a certain degree for the research community's perspectives.

Reference materials for methodology

The development of Question 7 — *"In your opinion, how can research quality be defined? Which of the following dimensions do you associate with it?"* — was informed by the dimensions explored by the CoARA Working Group on *Improving Practices in the Assessment of Research Proposals*, specifically Work Package 1: Criteria and Processes. These dimensions were drawn from a 2024 survey conducted on the topic *"Research Quality – Understanding and Operationalization Among Funders."* This approach was chosen to allow for comparability with other studies addressing similar topics and to build on relevant work already undertaken at the European level.

Limitations:

While the survey gathered valuable insights from a broad range of researchers in Romania, several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. The sample was predominantly composed of mid-career and senior researchers, with early-career researchers being underrepresented. This may result in a less comprehensive understanding of the specific challenges faced by those at the beginning of their research careers. Additionally, while responses were received from across various scientific disciplines, some fields—such as the social sciences, humanities, and medical sciences—were less represented compared to engineering and natural sciences. As this is the first version of the report, the analysis focuses

primarily on quantitative data and summary interpretations of the open-ended responses; a more in-depth qualitative analysis will be provided in the final version. Finally, the self-selection nature of the survey and its online distribution may introduce a degree of response bias, as participation was voluntary and potentially more appealing to researchers already engaged with research policy or evaluation topics.

3. Respondents' profile

The survey collected a total of 1,342 responses from Romanian researchers, representing a broad spectrum of disciplines, institutions, and career stages. The majority of respondents were affiliated with public universities (51%) and national research institutes (37%), with smaller contributions from private organizations (7%) and other types of institutions (3%). A significant portion of respondents were senior and mid-career researchers, including Professors (203), Associate Professors (178), and Principal Researchers (R4) (167), highlighting a strong representation from well-established research professionals. In contrast, early-career researchers, such as PhD students (51), Postdoctoral researchers (20), and Early Stage Researchers (R1) (85), made up a smaller portion of the sample. The survey also reflected a diverse range of research fields, with the largest groups coming from Engineering and Technology (36%) and Natural Sciences (26%), while disciplines like Social Sciences, Humanities, Medical and Health Sciences, and Agricultural Sciences had comparatively lower representation. Additionally, most respondents had substantial experience in research, with 47% having over 20 years of experience, reflecting a strong voice from seasoned researchers in the study.

3.1. Organizations of affiliation

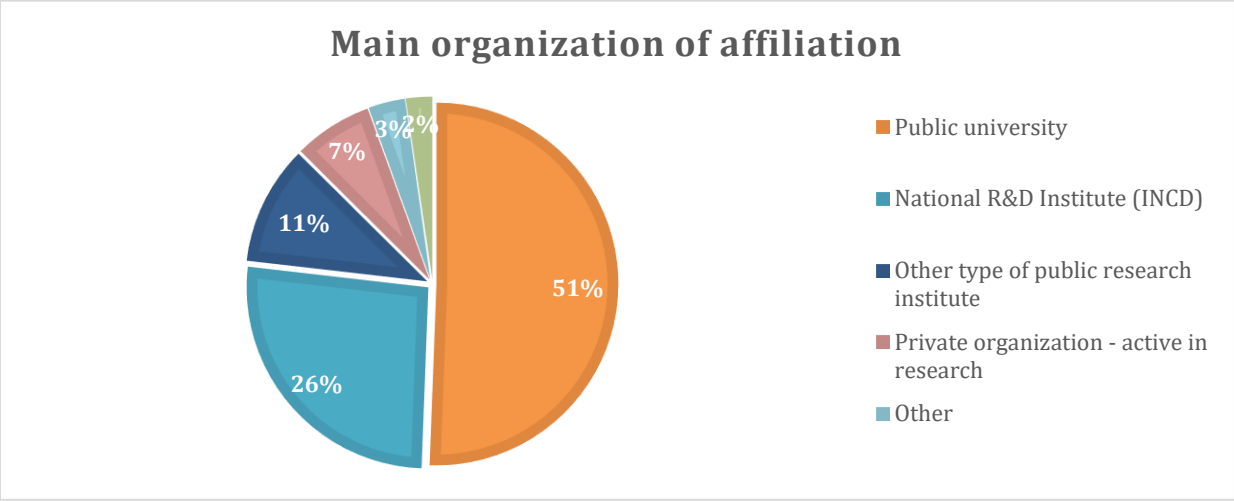


Figure 1. Respondents' organizations of affiliation

A total of 1,342 responses were received from Romanian researchers from across Romania, representing a diverse range of disciplines and career stages. The survey participants included researchers from both public and private institutions, as well as those affiliated with research institutes, higher education institutions, and other research organizations.

According to the respondents' profile, the survey reflects a predominant representation from public universities (51%) and national research institutes (a total of 37%), with some participation from private organizations (7%) and other types of institutions, providing a comprehensive look at the perspectives across various research settings in Romania.

- Public universities represent the largest group of respondents, with 679 individuals (approximately 51% of the total respondents). This indicates that public universities are the primary source of feedback for this survey, reflecting the views and experiences of a substantial segment of the research community in Romania.
- National R&D Institutes (INCD) follow with 352 respondents (about 26%), indicating a significant representation from national research institutes that focus on research and development activities.
- Other types of public research institutes account for 143 respondents (about 11%). This category may include various specialized research organizations that do not fall under the 'INCD' umbrella.
- Private organizations active in research contribute with 94 responses (approximately 7%), highlighting a smaller, but still notable, representation from private-sector research entities involved in scientific activities.
- Other types of organizations contributed 44 responses (about 3%). This could include organizations not categorized elsewhere, offering additional insights from different types of research environments.
- Private universities have the smallest representation, with 30 respondents (about 2%), which may reflect the relatively smaller number of private universities in Romania compared to public ones.

3.2. Positions and grades of respondents

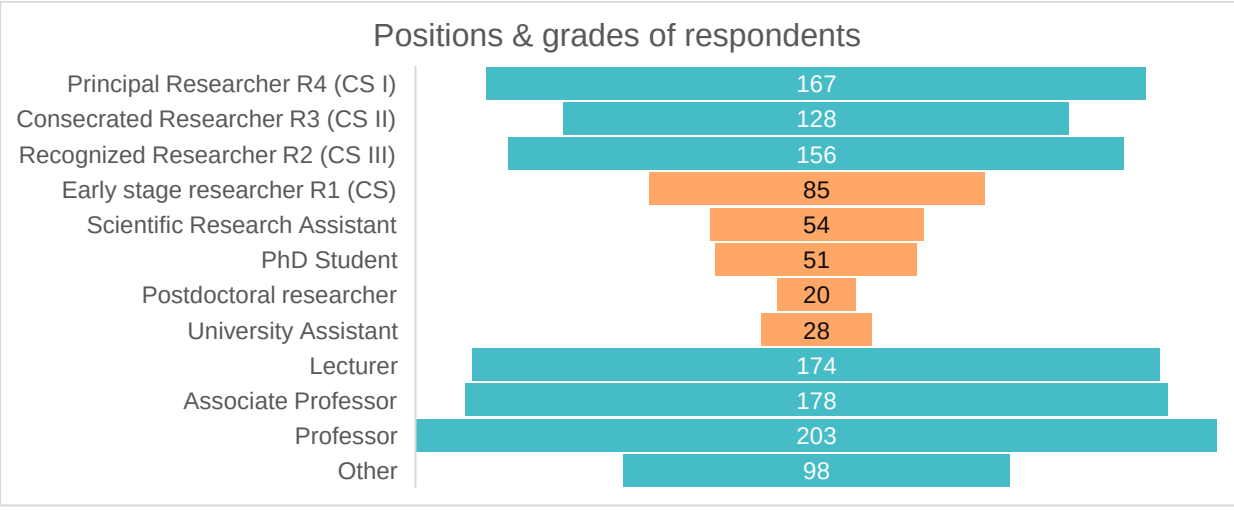


Figure 2. Positions and grades of respondents

The survey gathered responses from a broad range of positions across academia and research, with a strong representation from mid-career and senior researchers, and fewer responses from those in early-career stages.

The largest groups of respondents were Professors (203) and Associate Professors (178), followed by Principal Researchers (R4) (167). Additionally, there were notable responses from Lecturers (174), Consecrated Researchers (R3) (128), and Recognized Researchers (R2) (156). These individuals are well-established in their fields and play key roles in driving research and academic activities. They make up a substantial portion of the survey sample, highlighting a strong representation from mid-career researchers who have already gained recognition but are not yet at the most senior levels.

In contrast, there were fewer responses from early-career researchers, including PhD Students (51), Postdoctoral Researchers (20), and Early-Stage Researchers (R1) (85). These groups, while important, represented a smaller proportion of the survey respondents, indicating that the perspectives of those just starting out in their research careers were less represented.

Overall, the survey respondents were predominantly made up of mid-career and senior researchers, with a notable underrepresentation of early-career researchers. This composition suggests that the findings are more reflective of the views of established researchers, which provides valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the research assessment system from those with more extensive experience.

3.3. Scientific domains

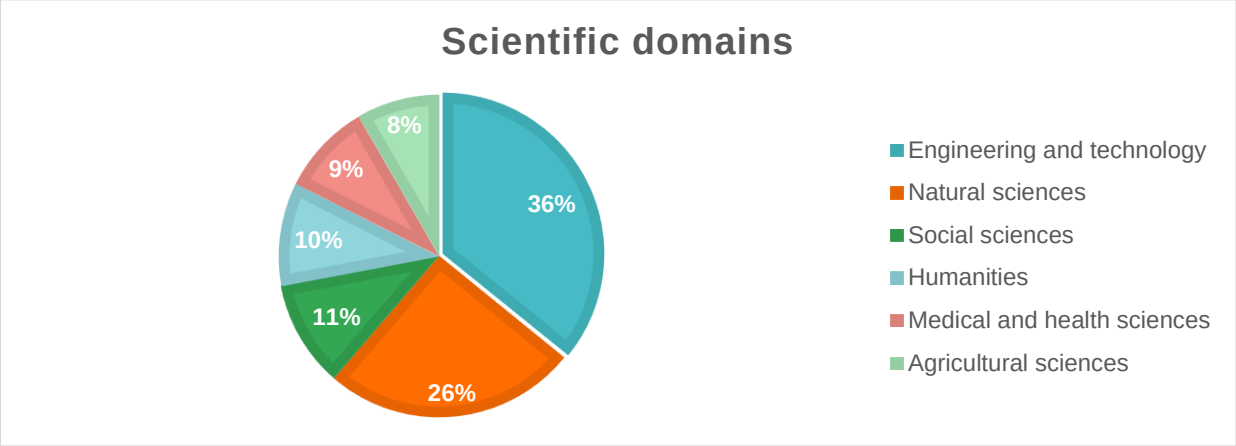
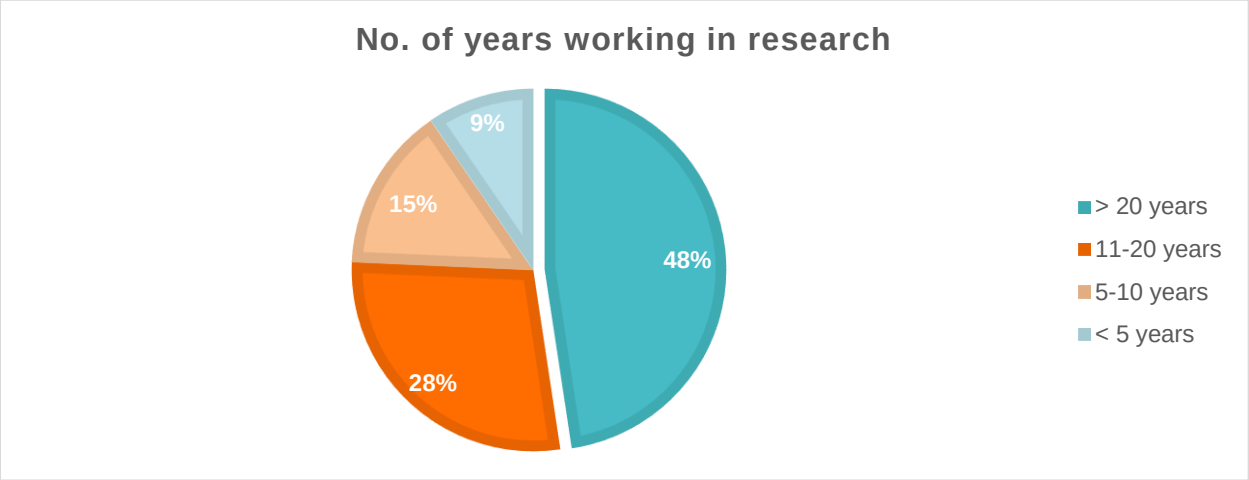


Figure 3. Scientific domains of respondents

The survey categorized responses according to the Frascati Manual scientific domains. The largest group of respondents came from Engineering and Technology (36%, 481 responses), followed by Natural Sciences (26%, 342 responses). Social Sciences (11%, 144 responses) and Humanities (10%, 139 responses) had lower representation, while Medical and Health Sciences (9%, 124 responses) and Agricultural Sciences (8%, 112 responses) had the least participation.

3.4. Level of experience working in the research system



The survey respondents demonstrated a diverse range of experience levels in research. The largest group, with 639 respondents (approximately 47%), has been involved in research for more than 20 years, indicating a strong representation from senior researchers with extensive experience. A significant portion of respondents, 377 individuals (around 28%), have been engaged in research for 11-20 years, reflecting a well-established mid-career group. 198 respondents (about 15%) have been in research for 5-10 years, showing good representation from those who are still building their careers but have substantial experience in research.

Finally, 128 respondents (around 10%) have been involved in research for less than 5 years, representing the early stages of researchers' careers. This distribution highlights a predominant response from more experienced researchers, with a smaller but notable contribution from those in the early to mid-career stages.

4. Survey results

4.1. Current practices in research assessment

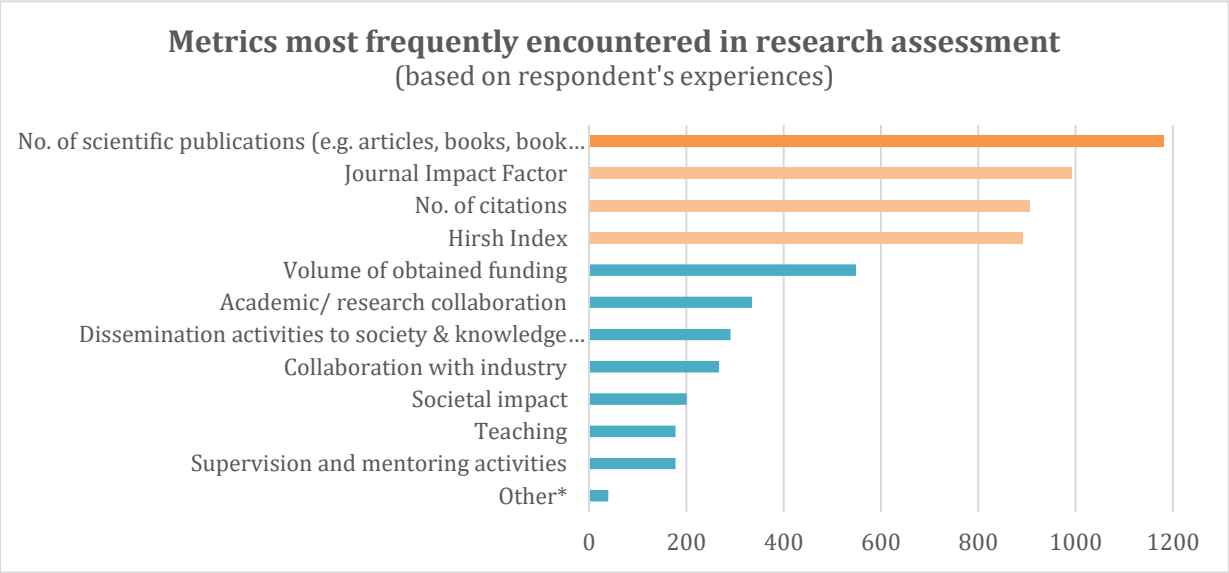


Figure 4. Metrics most frequently encountered in research assessment processes

The survey results on the metrics most commonly used in research assessment reveal that respondents have encountered most frequent in research assessment processes - traditional academic metrics, with a particular emphasis on publications and their impact.

In this context, the most frequently mentioned metric was the number of scientific publications (e.g., articles, books, book chapters), which was specified by 88% of respondents (1181 mentions). This indicates that academic output, in terms of published work, is currently used as the primary measure for research activity and success.

Closely following, Journal Impact Factor (73.8%, 991 mentions) and number of citations (67.5%, 906 mentions) are also perceived as highly emphasized in current research assessment processes in Romania. These metrics are commonly used to evaluate the impact of individual researchers and their work within the academic community.

Other important metrics include the Hirsh Index (66.3%, 890 mentions), which measures the productivity and citation impact of a researcher, and the volume of obtained funding (40.9%, 549 mentions), reflecting the financial support that researchers manage to secure for projects.

In terms of research engagement, academic/research collaboration (25%, 335 mentions) and dissemination activities to society and knowledge transfer (21.7%, 291 mentions) also received significant attention. These metrics indicate a certain emphasis on collaboration and the societal impact of research.

However, metrics related to teaching (13.3%, 178 mentions) and supervision/mentoring activities (13.3%, 178 mentions) appear less frequently in respondents' mentions, suggesting that these contributions are not as strongly prioritized in the current system of research assessment.

Finally, societal impact (15%, 201 mentions) and collaboration with industry (19.9%, 267 mentions) were also mentioned, although, according to the number of mentions, they are still less emphasized compared to traditional academic metrics like publications and citations.

Table 1. Metrics most frequently encountered in research assessment

Metrics	No. of mentions	% of cases in which they are mentioned
No. of scientific publications (e.g. articles, books, book chapters)	1181	88%
Journal Impact Factor	991	73.8%
No. of citations	906	67.5%
Hirsh Index	890	66.3%
Volume of obtained funding	549	40.9
Academic/ research collaboration	335	25.0%
Dissemination activities to society & knowledge transfer	291	21.7%
Collaboration with industry	267	19.9%
Societal impact	201	15.0%
Supervision and mentoring activities	178	13.3%
Teaching	178	13.3%
Other*	40	

Key Insights:

- **Publications** (number of articles, books, etc.) were perceived as the most frequently used metric in research assessments, followed by **citations** and **journal impact factors**.
- **Societal impact**, **collaboration**, and **knowledge transfer** are mentioned but still secondary to traditional academic metrics.
- **Teaching** and **mentoring** activities, while important, are identified by respondents as less frequent encountered in assessment processes, indicating that the current system may not fully value these contributions.

These results suggest that while there is recognition of other types of contributions in research, traditional academic output metrics dominate the evaluation process.

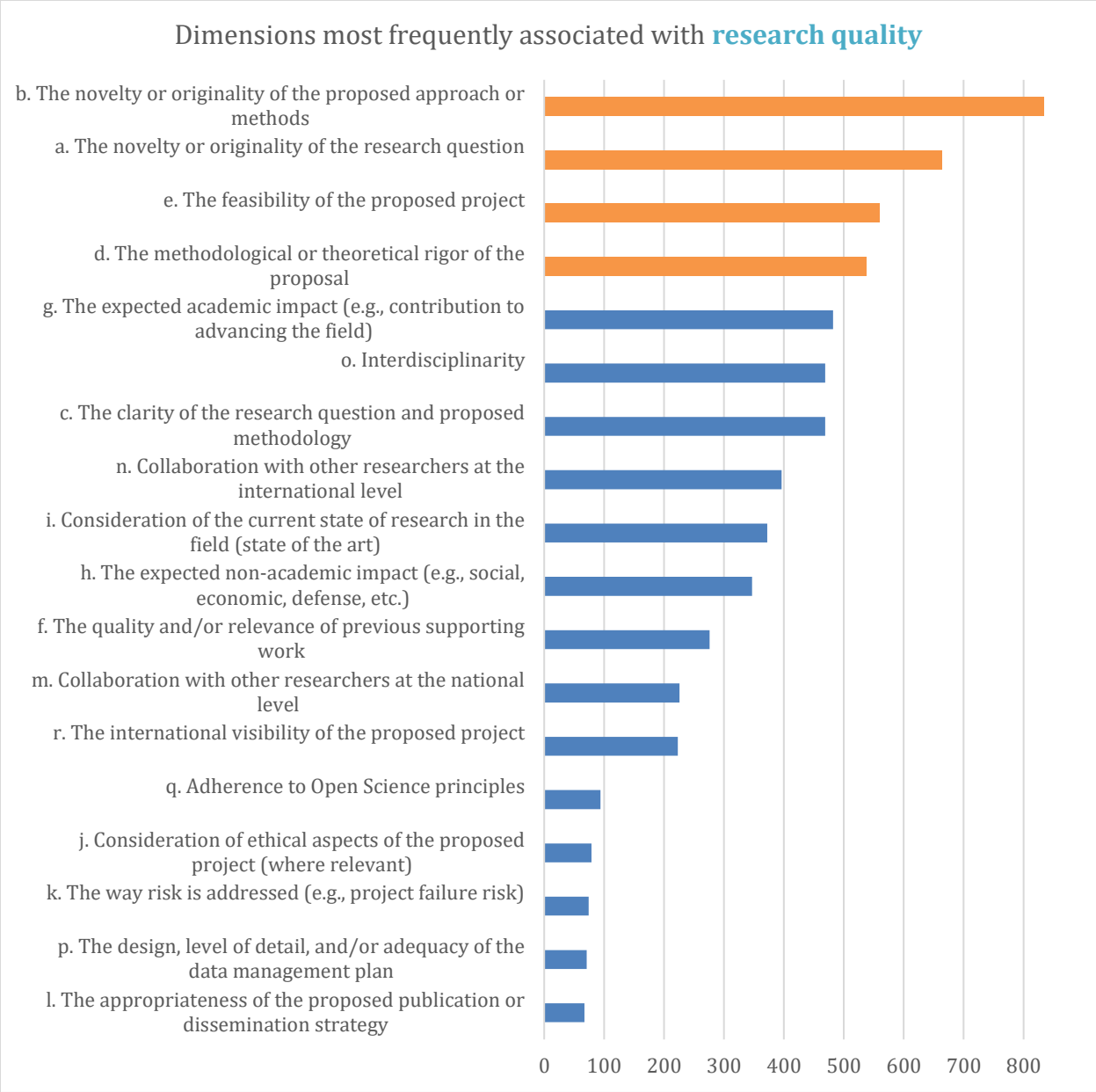


Figure 5. Dimensions most frequently associated with research quality

The survey results on dimensions most frequently associated with research quality reveal key factors that researchers consider important when defining high-quality research.

The novelty and originality of the proposed approach or methods (62.1%, 834 mentions) were overwhelmingly perceived as central to research quality. This emphasizes the importance of innovative thinking and original contributions in shaping research that is deemed high-quality.

Other important dimensions include the novelty and originality of the research question (49.4%, 663 mentions), the feasibility of the proposed project (41.7%, 559 mentions) and the methodological or theoretical rigor of the proposal (40%, 537 mentions). The latter two suggest

that researchers also highly value well-designed and well-structured research proposals that are both practical and methodologically sound.

The expected academic impact, such as a contribution to advancing the field (35.9%, 482 mentions), and the clarity of the research question and proposed methodology (34.9%, 469 mentions) were also frequently associated with research quality. This reflects the significance placed on clear, focused research goals and the potential for advancing knowledge in a particular discipline.

Other notable dimensions included interdisciplinarity (34.9%, 469 mentions) and collaboration with other researchers both at the national (16.8%, 226 mentions) and international levels (29.5%, 396 mentions). These results highlight that collaborative, cross-disciplinary approaches are seen as enhancing the quality of research.

Less frequently mentioned but still relevant were consideration of ethical aspects of the proposed project (5.9%, 79 mentions), adherence to Open Science principles (7.0%, 94 mentions), and the appropriateness of the proposed publication or dissemination strategy (5.0%, 67 mentions). These aspects, while important, were considered less central to the core definition of research quality compared to factors like novelty and feasibility.

Overall, the data reflects a strong focus on the originality and rigor of research, with an increasing recognition of collaboration and broader impacts in defining what constitutes high-quality research.

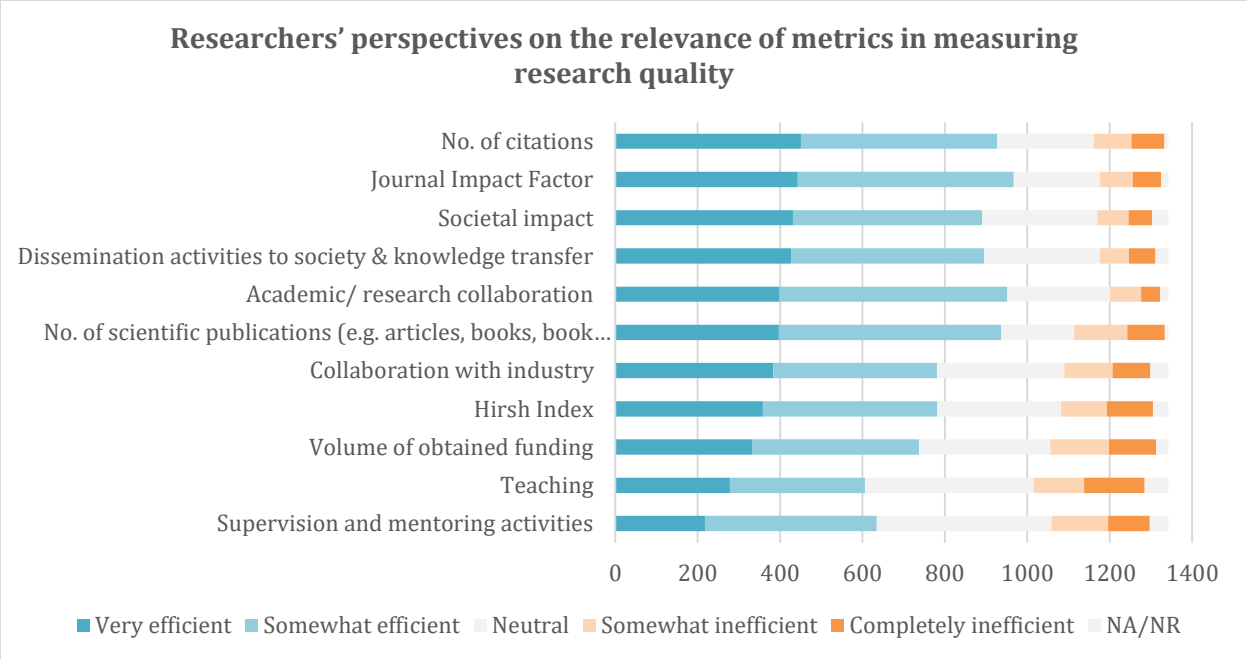


Figure 6. Researchers' perspectives on the relevance of metrics in measuring research quality

The survey results regarding researchers' perceptions on the relevance of metrics in measuring research quality highlight several key insights into how different metrics are viewed in terms of their effectiveness. Thus, traditional academic metrics, such as the **number of citations**, **Journal Impact Factor**, and **number of publications**, are perceived as being the most effective

indicators for research quality, with a significant portion of respondents rating them highly. Additionally, **academic/research collaboration** and **societal impact** were also seen as important, emphasizing the growing recognition of the value of collaboration and the broader societal contributions of research.

On the other hand, **teaching** and **supervision/mentoring activities** were seen as less effective for measuring research quality, though they are still recognized as important. Metrics related to **funding volume attracted** and **industry collaboration** were considered relevant, but they ranked lower compared to the more traditional academic metrics.

Overall, while traditional measures like publications and citations remain dominant, there is an increasing acknowledgment of the importance of collaboration, societal impact, and knowledge dissemination in assessing research quality.

4.2. Emerging practices

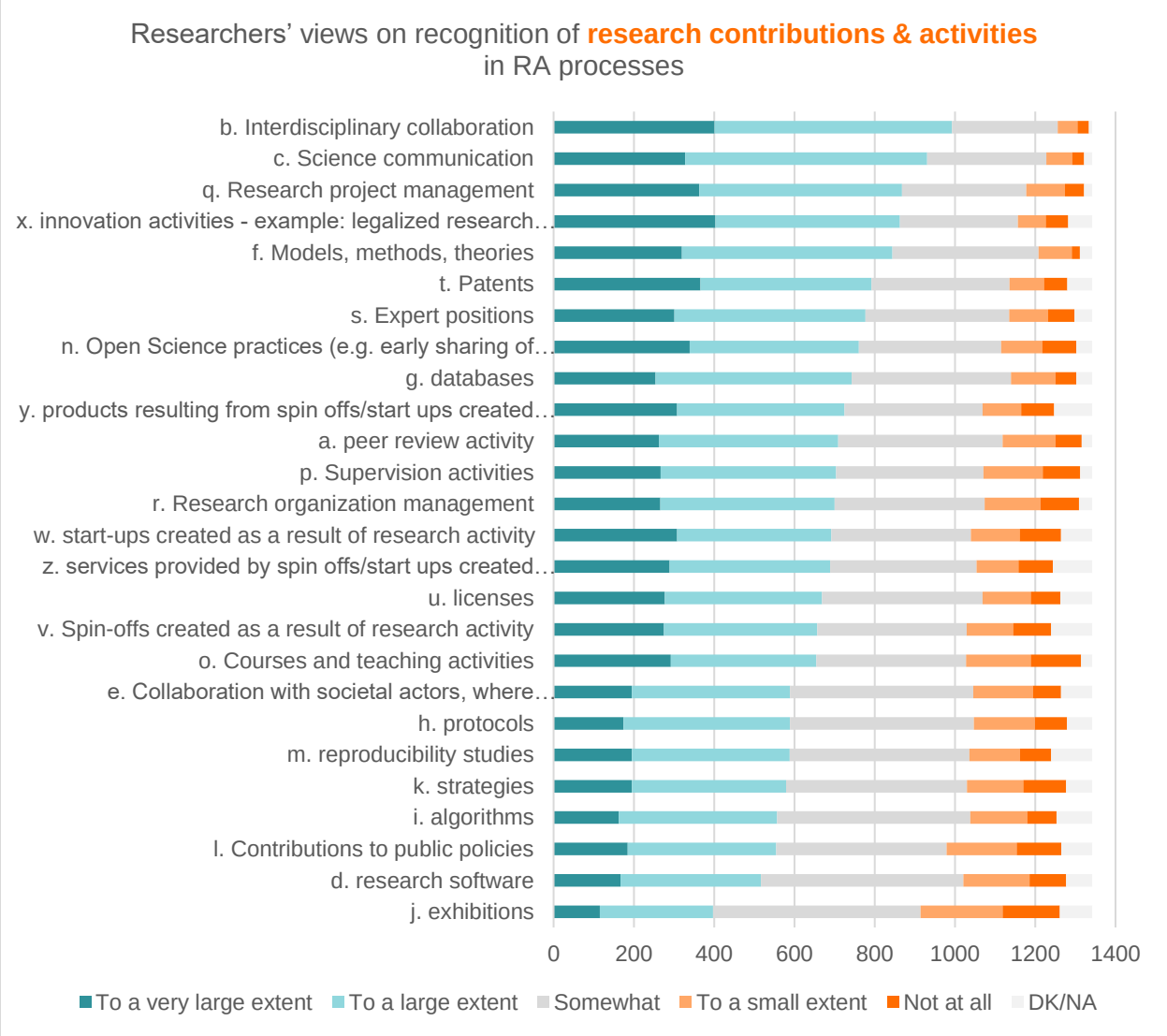


Figure 7. Researchers' perspectives on the recognition of different research contributions and activities in research assessment

The survey results reveal that researchers place a high value on a range of practices that should be recognized in research assessment processes. Interdisciplinary collaboration stands out as the most prioritized activity, reflecting the growing importance of cross-disciplinary research in advancing scientific knowledge. Close behind is science communication, which is increasingly recognized as essential for ensuring that research reaches a broader audience and has a wider societal impact.

Research project management is also viewed as a key factor in assessing research, underlining the significance of effective management in handling complex research projects. Innovation activities, including the transformation of research into legally protected outcomes such as intellectual property rights and patents, are seen as integral to modern research assessment.

Similarly, models, methods, and theories are highly valued for their foundational role in pushing the boundaries of scientific inquiry.

There is also strong recognition of expert positions within the research field, highlighting the value placed on leadership roles in shaping research agendas. The importance of Open Science practices, including early sharing of results and data, is also emphasized, demonstrating the need for greater transparency and collaboration in research. Databases and the products resulting from spin-offs or start-ups are seen as vital, pointing to the growing recognition of the commercialization of research and the creation of practical, real-world applications.

Other practices such as peer review activity, supervision activities, and research organization management were also seen as important, reflecting the necessity of fostering supportive research environments and mentoring emerging researchers. However, teaching activities and protocols were viewed as somewhat less central in the context of research assessment, though still relevant to the broader academic ecosystem. Exhibitions were considered the least relevant practice, and this can be because they are specific only to certain research areas.

In summary, the survey indicates a potential shift towards recognizing a broader range of research contributions, with a particular focus on **interdisciplinary collaboration, science communication, research management, and innovation**. There is a growing emphasis on how research is managed, disseminated, and translated into practical, societal benefits, while traditional metrics such as publications and citations remain important but might need to be complemented by these newer practices.

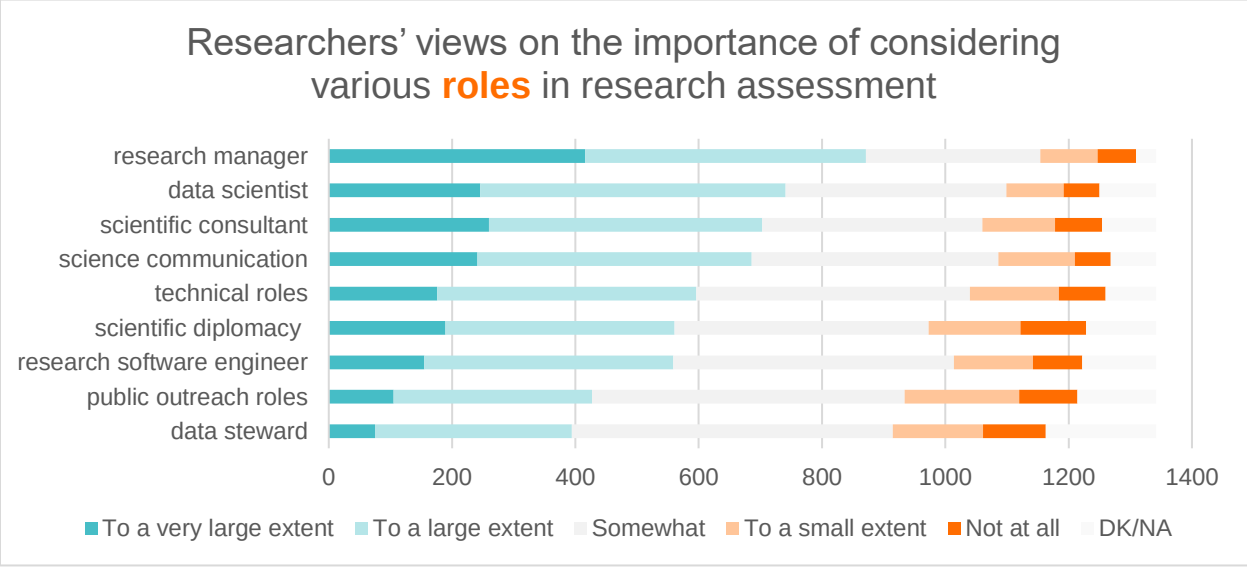


Figure 8. Researchers' perspectives on the relevance of considering various roles in research assessment

When it comes to respondents' percetions about new types of roles that should be considered in research assessment processes, the survey results showed that research managers and data scientists were the most selected. Other roles, such as scientific consultants and science

communication professionals, also received strong support, highlighting the importance of communication and advisory roles in research. Research software engineers and technical roles were viewed as essential as well, reflecting the need for specialized technical expertise. While data stewards and public outreach roles were selected by certain respondents, according to the number of respondents that have chosen them, we can consider that they are perceived as less central.

The survey results show that both science communication and research management received increased attention from respondents in two key areas: first, when considering new types of research contributions and activities that should be recognized in research assessment processes, and second, when evaluating the importance of new research roles. Respondents highlighted science communication as a crucial activity for broader societal engagement and research management as essential for the coordination and success of research projects, reflecting a growing recognition of these roles in the modern research landscape. This indicates a shift towards valuing contributions that go beyond traditional research outputs, acknowledging the importance of effective communication and strong management in the research process.

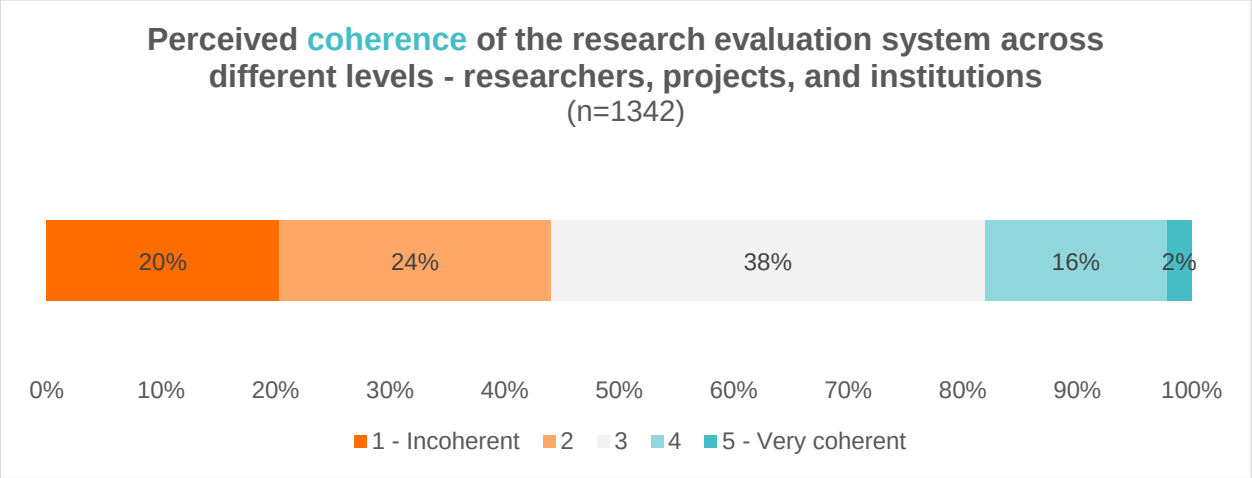


Figure 9. Respondents' perception of the level of coherence within the research assessment system, across different levels - researchers, projects, and institutions

The survey results regarding the perceived coherence of the research evaluation system in Romania across different levels—researchers, projects, and institutions—show a mixed assessment from respondents.

A significant portion of respondents, 38% (509 individuals), perceive the system as somewhat coherent, rating it a 3 on the scale. However, there is also a notable group that views the system as incoherent (20%, or 273 respondents), indicating concerns about the alignment between the evaluation processes for researchers, projects, and institutions. A smaller proportion, 24% (318 respondents), rated the system as somewhat incoherent (2), while 16% (213 respondents) rated it as 4, indicating that they found it to be fairly coherent. Only 2% (29 respondents) rated it as very coherent, showing that a minimal number of respondents believe the system is highly aligned and well-structured across the different levels.

These results suggest that while some of the respondents feel the system has some degree of coherence, **there is a significant portion of respondents who perceive a lack of alignment or clarity between the various evaluation levels (44%)**. This feedback indicates that there may be room for improvement in ensuring a more consistent and cohesive evaluation system for research in Romania.

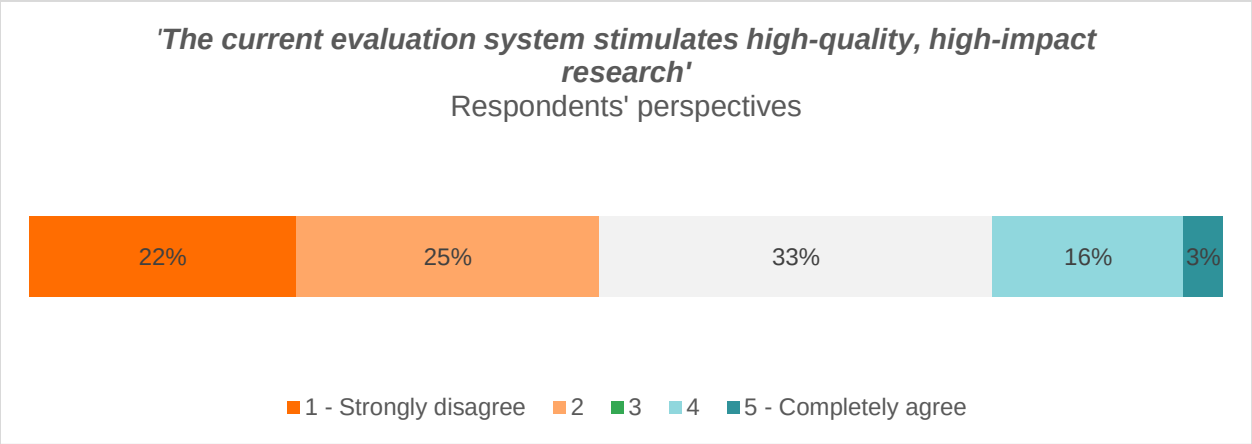


Figure 10. Respondents' perspectives on the degree to which the current evaluation system stimulates high quality and high impact research

4.3. Structural and administrative barriers

The following section summarizes the main structural, administrative, financial, and systemic barriers to reforming the research assessment system in Romania. The findings are based on open-ended survey responses (Q12) collected from the researchers that have participated in the study.

1. Excessive Bureaucracy

Researchers often mention administrative bureaucracy as a recurring challenge. The process of managing projects, submitting documents, and navigating institutional procedures can be time-consuming and sometimes feel disproportionate to the needs of the research. These issues can limit the time available for actual scientific work.

2. Unclear or not fully harmonized evaluation criteria across the different levels of the system (evaluation of researchers, projects, institutions) and across the different domains

Several responses highlight inconsistencies in how evaluation criteria are applied across different levels and instances. This lack of coordination can lead to confusion and reduce confidence in the fairness and transparency of the overall assessment system at the national level.

3. Overemphasis on quantitative metrics

The current system places significant weight on publication metrics, such as the number of articles or journal rankings. While these indicators are useful, respondents feel they are sometimes prioritized over the actual content, relevance, or practical implications of research.

4. Chronic underfunding

Funding scarcity emerged as one of the most significant barriers at all levels. Both individual and institutional research activities are hampered by low budgets, inconsistent calls due to lack of funding, and inadequate support.

5. Infrastructure and capacity gaps

Respondents point out that infrastructure remains a concern in some institutions. Outdated equipment or limited access to facilities can affect research quality and make it harder to engage in international collaboration or attract new projects.

7. Evaluation overlooks broader contributions

Some responses suggest that activities such as teaching, mentoring, or public engagement are not always adequately recognized in evaluations. This may create an imbalance, especially for those working in academic environments with mixed teaching and research responsibilities.

8. Barriers for Early-Career Researchers

Early-career researchers may find it more difficult to succeed under current evaluation frameworks, which often emphasize prior experience or project leadership. This can make it harder for new entrants to gain a foothold or demonstrate their potential.

5. Conclusions

The survey conducted by UEFISCDI as part of the SECURE project provides valuable insights into the current state of the research assessment system in Romania. Based on the perspectives **of 1,342 researchers**, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the system.

First, the results reveal that **traditional academic metrics, such as publications, citations, and journal impact factors, are currently perceived to be the most frequently encountered indicators in research assessment**. These metrics are highly valued but also seen as limiting, as they fail to fully capture the diverse contributions researchers make, such as societal impact, collaboration, and knowledge transfer. Although these emerging practices are increasingly recognized, they still rank below traditional measures in terms of frequency and importance within the current system.

Respondents also expressed **concern about the coherence of the research evaluation system across different levels—researchers, projects, and institutions**. While a significant portion of researchers viewed the system as somewhat coherent, a notable number felt it lacked alignment. This suggests that there is a need for greater consistency and coordination across the various levels of the evaluation process to enhance transparency and fairness.

In terms of emerging practices, the survey highlighted a **growing appreciation for contributions such as interdisciplinary collaboration, science communication, and research**

management in research assessment. These areas are becoming increasingly important as researchers see the value of engaging with diverse fields and communicating their findings to a broader audience. However, teaching and mentoring activities were less emphasized, suggesting that the current system may not fully recognize the broader responsibilities of researchers, especially those involved in academic settings.

Regarding the **roles** involved in research, **research managers and data scientists were identified as essential roles to consider in research evaluation**, underscoring the growing recognition of support roles that enable research to thrive. Conversely, roles such as data stewards and public outreach roles were considered less central.

Finally, respondents identified several structural and administrative barriers to improving the research assessment system, including **excessive bureaucracy, limited clarity or variation in how evaluation criteria are applied across different levels of the system, and chronic underfunding.** These barriers significantly hinder the efficiency of the evaluation process and limit the ability of researchers and institutions to fully realize their potential. The survey also highlighted concerns about the **overemphasis on quantitative metrics**, which may overlook the broader contributions of researchers, particularly in interdisciplinary and societal impact areas. **Although several respondents draw attention on the overemphasis on quantitative metrices in the open ended questions, a significant majority of respondents selected metrics such as the Journal Impact Factor, the number of scientific publications and the number of citations as appropriate for measuring research quality.** Alongside **academic/ research collaboration**, the three were the top choices on this matter.

In conclusion, while the current research assessment system in Romania is largely driven by traditional academic metrics, there is a potential demand for broader recognition of diverse research contributions and roles. Addressing the identifiediers, improving coherence across evaluation levels, and integrating emerging practices will be key steps in creating a more inclusive and effective research assessment system. These changes could help support the development of sustainable research careers, foster innovation, and ensure that the full range of research contributions is valued.

***The final conclusions will be published as part of the second and final version of this report, that will provide an in depth analysis of all open-ended responses and cross-data analysis.

Annex 1 – Survey

Perspective despre sistemul actual de evaluare a cercetării

Stimată
doamnă/ Stimate domn,

Vă mulțumim că veți dedica o parte din timpul dumneavoastră pentru completarea acestui chestionar.

Scopul acestui sondaj este **de a afla opiniile cercetătorilor din România cu privire la practicile actuale de evaluare a cercetării**, **precum și la cele emergente,** punctele tari și punctele slabe aferente acestora. Sperăm ca, prin analiza datelor obținute, să ajungem la o mai bună înțelegere a modului în care sistemul actual de evaluare influențează activitatea de cercetare, dezvoltarea carierei și funcționarea instituțiilor de cercetare. Chestionarul acoperă aspecte precum: experiențele cercetătorilor cu practicile actuale de evaluare, percepția față de noile abordări internaționale, percepția asupra punctelor tari și a provocărilor sistemului existent, precum și sugestii pentru posibile îmbunătățiri.

Acesta este realizat de către echipa UEFISCDI ca parte a activităților pilot derulate în cadrul proiectului SECURE - Sustainable Careers for Researcher Empowerment. Proiectul SECURE este un proiect finanțat de UE prin programul Horizon Europe, implementat de un consorțiu de 18 parteneri din mai multe state europene, cu scopul de a aduce contribuții pentru îmbunătățirea carierelor de cercetare și pentru reducerea precarității în carieră cu care cercetătorii de la nivel european se confruntă.

Cui se adresează acest sondaj?

Chestionarul **este adresat tuturor cercetătorilor din România**, fie din mediul public sau privat, fie afiliați unor institute de cercetare, instituții de învățământ superior, infrastructuri de cercetare sau altor tipuri de organizații care activează în domeniul cercetării, a căror activitate de cercetare a fost/ este supusă unui proces de evaluare a cercetării și care au participat în astfel de procese de evaluare (evaluarea propunerilor de proiecte de cercetare, evaluarea carierei, și evaluarea instituțională).

Cum vor fi utilizate rezultatele obținute?

Rezultatele obținute în urma completării acestui chestionar vor fi analizate și utilizate în vederea elaborării unui studiu cu privire la punctele tari și punctele slabe, inclusiv provocările asociate sistemului de evaluare a cercetării de la nivel național. Acest studiu va identifica tendințele din evaluarea cercetării din România, la diferite niveluri (cercetători, proiecte și instituții), va capta opiniile comunității de cercetare din România privitor la practicile emergente de la nivel European (exemplu - CoARA) și internațional și va evidenția aspectele care necesită potențiale îmbunătățiri.

Ulterior implementării, rezultatele vor fi diseminate atât la nivel național, cât și internațional, pentru a contribui la îmbunătățirea sistemelor de evaluare a cercetării.

Pentru orice întrebări privitoare la acest chestionar, puteți scrie la adresa de email ioana.spanache@uefiscdi.ro

Declarație de confidențialitate

În mod implicit, răspunsurile furnizate în acest sondaj vor fi anonimizate prin eliminarea tuturor informațiilor care ar putea duce la identificarea persoanei respondente (informații personale) sau a organizației de afiliere. Datele personale colectate în cursul acestui sondaj vor fi tratate conform politicii GDPR și de confidențialitate a UEFISCDI.

⌛ **Timp estimat pentru completare:** 20 minute

🗓️ Chestionarul poate fi completat până la data de **18 martie 2025.**

Cu mulțumiri,

Echipa proiectului SECURE, UEFISCDI

* Indică o întrebare obligatorie

1. Sunteți de acord cu politica de confidențialitate? *

Marchează un singur oval.

- ◯ Da *Treci la întrebarea 2*
- ◯ Nu *Treci la secțiunea 2 (**Final chestionar**).*

Final chestionar

Vă mulțumim pentru interesul de a completa acest chestionar.
Pentru a continua, vă solicităm acordul cu privire la politica noastră de confidențialitate, care asigură gestionarea responsabilă și sigură a răspunsurilor dumneavoastră.
Din păcate, deoarece nu ați fost de acord cu politica de confidențialitate, nu vom putea înregistra sau lua în considerare răspunsurile dumneavoastră. Dacă vă răzgândiți, puteți reporni chestionarul și vă puteți oferi consimțământul.
Vă mulțumim pentru timpul acordat!

Informații introductive

2. 1. În cadrul cărui tip de **organizație** vă desfășurați cel mai mult activitatea de cercetare? *

Marchează un singur oval.

- a. Instituție publică de învățământ superior
- b. Instituție privată de învățământ superior
- c. Institut național de cercetare dezvoltare
- d. Alt tip de institut public de cercetare
- e. Organizație privată activă în domeniul cercetării
- Altele: _____

3. 2. Care este **poziția** dumneavoastră actuală?

Marchează un singur oval.

- a. Asistent de cercetare
- b. Cercetător științific III
- c. Cercetător științific II
- d. Cercetător științific I
- e. Cercetător științific
- f. Student doctorand
- g. Cercetător postdoctoral
- h. Asistent universitar
- i. Lector
- j. Conferențiar
- k. Profesor
- Altele: _____

4. 2. Care este **domeniul de cercetare** principal în care activați? *

Marchează un singur oval.

- a. Științe ale naturii
- b. Inginerie și tehnologie
- c. Științe Medicale și Sănătate
- d. Științe Agricole
- e. Științe sociale
- f. Științe umaniste
- Altele: _____

5. 4. De câți ani lucrați în domeniul cercetării? *

Marchează un singur oval.

- a. mai puțin de 5 ani
- b. între 5 și 10 ani
- c. între 11 și 20 ani
- d. mai mult de 20 de ani

Practici actuale de evaluare a cercetării

6. 5. Pe care dintre următoarele **metrici** le-ați întâlnit **utilizate cel mai frecvent** în procesele de evaluare a cercetării la care ați participat? *

(evaluare pentru avansarea în carieră, evaluare propuneri proiecte de cercetare, evaluare instituții de cercetare)

Bifează toate variantele aplicabile.

- [ ] a. numărul publicațiilor științifice (exemplu: articole, cărți, capitole în cărți)
- [ ] b. factorul de impact al jurnalului
- [ ] c. numărul citărilor
- [ ] d. indicele Hirsch
- [ ] e. volumul finanțărilor atrase
- [ ] f. colaborarea cu mediul academic și de cercetare
- [ ] g. colaborarea cu industria
- [ ] h. impactul societal al cercetării
- [ ] i. activitățile de supervizare și mentorat
- [ ] j. activitățile de predare
- [ ] k. activitățile de diseminare către societate și transferul de cunoștințe
- [ ] Altele: _____

7. 6. În ce măsură considerați următoarele metrici ca fiind potrivite în a **reflecta calitatea cercetării** pe care o derulați? *

Marchează un singur oval pentru fiecare rând.

	foarte eficient	oarecum eficient	neutru	oarecum ineficient	complet ineficient	Nu știu/ Nu răspund
a. numărul publicațiilor științifice (exemplu: articole, cărți, capitole în cărți)						
b. factorul de impact al jurnalului						
c. numărul citărilor						
d. indicele Hirsch						
e. volumul finanțărilor atrase						
f. colaborarea cu mediul academic și de cercetare						
g. colaborarea cu industria						
h. impactul societal al cercetării						
i. activitățile de supervizare și mentorat						
j. activitățile						

activitățile de predare						
activitățile de predare						
activitățile de diseminare și transferul de cunoștințe						

8. 7. În opinia dumneavoastră, cum poate fi **definită calitatea cercetării**? Pe care dintre următoarele dimensiuni le asociați acesteia? *

(selectați maxim 5 elemente)

Bifează toate variantele aplicabile.

- [ ] a. Noutatea sau originalitatea întrebării științifice
- [ ] b. Noutatea sau originalitatea abordării sau metodelor propuse
- [ ] c. Claritatea întrebării științifice și a metodologiei propuse
- [ ] d. Rigoarea metodologică sau teoretică a propunerii
- [ ] e. Fezabilitatea proiectului propus
- [ ] f. Calitatea și/sau relevanța lucrărilor suport realizate anterior
- [ ] g. Impactul academic așteptat (contribuția așteptată la dezvoltarea domeniului în cauză)
- [ ] h. Impactul non-academic așteptat (de exemplu, social, economic, de apărare etc.).
- [ ] i. Luarea în considerare a stadiului actual al cercetării realizate deja în domeniu (state of the art)
- [ ] j. Luarea în considerare a aspectelor etice ale proiectului propus (acolo unde este relevant)
- [ ] k. Modul în care este abordat riscul (de eșec al proiectului)
- [ ] l. Nivelul de adecvare a strategiei de publicare sau diseminare a proiectului propus
- [ ] m. Colaborarea cu alți cercetători la nivel național
- [ ] n. Colaborarea cu alți cercetători la nivel internațional
- [ ] o. Interdisciplinaritatea
- [ ] p. Proiectarea, gradul de elaborare și/sau adecvarea planului de management al datelor
- [ ] q. Aderarea la principiile Științei Deschise
- [ ] r. Vizibilitatea internațională a proiectului propus
- [ ] Altele: _____

Practici emergente

Exemple: precum cele descrise în cadrul Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (https://coara.eu/) și San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (https://sfdora.org/)

9. 8. În ce măsură considerați că următoarele tipuri de **contribuții și activități de cercetare ar trebui recunoscute** în procesele de evaluare a cercetării? *

Marchează un singur oval pentru fiecare rând.

	În foarte mare măsură	În mare măsură	Oarecum	În mică măsură	Deloc	Nu știu/ Nu răspund
a. activitatea de peer review						
b. colaborarea interdisciplinară						
c. comunicarea științei						
d. software-ul de cercetare						
e. colaborarea cu actori societali, acolo unde este cazul						
f. modele, metode, teorii,						
g. baze de date						
h. protocoale						
i. algoritmi						
j. expoziții						
k. strategii						
l. contribuții aduse politicilor publice						
m. studii de reproductibilitate						
n. practicile Open Science (de exemplu: partajarea timpurie a rezultatelor și datelor de						

cercetare, colaborarea deschisă, publicarea în regim Open Access, citizen science ș.a.)						
o. cursuri și activitățile de predare						
p. activități de supervizare (studenți sau membri ai personalului) și mentorat						
q. managementul proiectelor de cercetare						
r. managementul organizațiilor de cercetare						
s. poziţiile de expertiză						
t. brevete						
u. licențe						
v. spin-offs create ca urmare a activității de cercetare						
w. start-ups create ca urmare a activității de cercetare						
x. activitățile de inovare - exemplu: rezultate ale cercetării legalizate, rezultate ale cercetării pentru care au fost obținute drepturi						

de proprietate intelectuală de proprietate intelectuală de proprietate intelectuală						
y. produse y. produse y. produse						
z. servicii oferite z. servicii oferite z. servicii oferite						

10. 8.i Alte tipuri de contribuții despre care considerați că ar trebui luate în considerare în procesele de evaluare a cercetării (altele decât cele de mai sus, dacă este cazul) - opțional:

11. 9. În ce măsură considerați că următoarele **roluri** ar trebui luate în considerare în procesele de evaluare a cercetării? *

Marchează un singur oval pentru fiecare rând.

	În foarte mare măsură	În mare măsură	Oarecum	În mică măsură	Deloc	Nu știu/ Nu răspund
a. manager cercetare						
b. data steward						
c. inginer software de cercetare (research software engineer)						
d. data scientist						
e. roluri tehnice						
f. roluri de public outreach						
g. science communication						
h. diplomație științifică						
i. consiliere științifică						

12. 9.i Alte roluri despre care considerați că ar trebui luate în considerare (ce nu au fost menționate mai sus, dacă este cazul) - opțional:

Puncte tari ale sistemului actual

13. 10. Care considerați că sunt **punctele tari** ale sistemelor actuale de evaluare a cercetării din România? (Care sunt practicile care ar trebui continuate?)

    Vă rugăm, specificați (acolo unde este posibil) diferențiat pe următoarele categorii:

    10.1 la nivel de persoană – pentru evoluție în carieră

    10.2 la nivel de proiecte

    10.3 la nivel de instituții

14. 11. Care elemente/ aspecte ale sistemului actual de evaluare v-au influențat pozitiv dezvoltarea profesională cel mai mult?

Puncte slabe și provocări

15. 12. Care considerați ca fiind **punctele slabe** principale ale sistemelor și practicilor de evaluare a cercetării din România la acest moment?
Vă rugăm, specificați punctele slabe (acolo unde este posibil) diferențiat pe următoarele categorii:

12.1 la nivel de persoană – pentru evoluție în carieră

12.2 la nivel de proiecte

12.3 la nivel de instituții

16. 13. V-ați confruntat cu vreuna din următoarele tipuri de **provocări** în ceea ce privește sistemul și practicile actuale de evaluare a cercetării?

(selecție multiplă)

Bifează toate variantele aplicabile.

- [ ] a. Presiunea de a publica în jurnale cu factor mare de impact
- [ ] b. Presiunea de a publica pe subiecte ce sunt de interes mai mare la nivel internațional și cu potențial de a atrage un număr mai mare de citări
- [ ] c. O recunoaștere limitată a rezultatelor și contribuțiilor în cercetare non-tradiționale - exemple: software, policy briefs, spin-offs, strategii ș.a.
- [ ] d. O recunoaștere limitată a cercetării interdisciplinare
- [ ] Altele: _____

17. 14. Cât de **coerent** considerați că este sistemul de evaluare a cercetării din România între diferite niveluri – cercetători, proiecte și instituții? *

Marchează un singur oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Inco	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Foarte coerent. Criteriile de evaluare sunt bine aliniate la toate nivelurile

Reflexii și recomandări

18. 15. În ce măsură sunteți de **acord** cu următoarea afirmație: *

Sistemul actual de evaluare stimulează cercetarea de înaltă calitate și cu impact ridicat.

Marchează un singur oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Pute	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Complet de acord

19. 16. Ce **schimbări** ați dori să vedeți în sistemul actual de evaluare a cercetării pentru a sprijini mai bine cercetătorii?

Dacă ați putea schimba un singur lucru în ceea ce privește sistemul de evaluare a cercetării din România, care ar fi acela și de ce?

20. 17. Ce **practici și politici** privind evaluarea cercetării **din alte state** considerați că ar fi utile și ar putea fi implementate cu succes în România?

(dacă cunoașteți astfel de exemple, vă rugăm să menționați țara, o scurtă descriere și link.)

21. **Mulțumim pentru timpul acordat!** Contribuția dumneavoastră este foarte importantă.

    Dacă doriți să vă ținem la curent cu informații despre acest studiu și rezultatele obținute, puteți adăuga în continuare adresa dumneavoastră de email, iar noi vă vom trimite actualizări pe acest subiect.

    Aceasta nu va fi folosită în alte scopuri, iar răspunsurile oferite vor fi în continuare anonime, conform politicii de confidențialitate.