

# swissuniversities

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## EURAXESS Switzerland: strategic goals 2025-2028

### EURAXESS - Initiative and context

The promotion and support of researchers plays a central role in the strategic orientation of Switzerland as a centre of higher education and research. Excellent researchers make a significant contribution to international competitiveness and national innovative strength. Switzerland's membership of EURAXESS, a European initiative to strengthen the mobility and career development of researchers, is key in this context.

EURAXESS supports key priorities of the European Research Area (ERA) and thus strengthens collaboration and knowledge exchange within Europe and beyond. The EURAXESS network currently comprises 43 countries and 9 hubs worldwide and contributes to the networking of researchers to tackle global challenges and drive scientific progress.

EURAXESS offers a wide range of information and support services for researchers.

- The national website for Switzerland, the presence on social media and personal advice at 14 Swiss EURAXESS Centres on questions relating to mobility, careers and working and living in Switzerland in general.
- Refugee researchers are supported by the EURAXESS [science4refugees initiative](#) and by [ERA4Ukraine](#).
- EURAXESS maintains a European [database](#) of vacant research positions and research funding opportunities.

EURAXESS is committed to improving the working and career conditions of researchers by means of the [Charter for Researchers](#).

Switzerland has been successfully involved in the Pan-European initiative "EURAXESS - Researchers in Motion" since 2008. In collaboration with EU GrantsAccess at ETH and the University of Zurich, the Rectors' Conference of Swiss Universities established a national network and participated in European activities. Following the closure of EU GrantsAccess, the new Grants Office Go! at ETH is now the EURAXESS Service Centre of ETH and the Research Promotion Department at UZH is the EURAXESS Service Centre of the University of Zurich.

### **Financing**

The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) has granted swissuniversities funding of CHF 140,000 for 2024. This amount will remain constant for the duration of FP9 (Horizon Europe). To ensure continuity of collaboration and planning security, an order valid for three years as of 2025 is issued by SERI.

### **European embedding**

The EURAXESS initiative is part of the Horizon Europe pillar 'Widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area'. This means that Switzerland can participate fully in the initiative. Funding for participation in the European call for projects is financed directly by SERI.

Due to the changing modalities of association with the European Research Framework Programmes, support from EURAXESS is crucial for Swiss researchers and for researchers based in Switzerland. Switzerland's participation in the European calls for proposals of EURAXESS is therefore of key importance.

### **Goals**

In the interests of national continuity, further development and consolidation of the network, as well as European participation, the International Relations Delegation of swissuniversities defines the goals for 2025-2028.

## **1 Participation at European level**

The EURAXESS network will be further consolidated and developed under Horizon Europe. Switzerland, represented by ETH Zurich, is actively and successfully participating in the European projects. This runs from March 2023 to September 2026 with total funding of EUR 4 million. ETH Zurich is leading the HUB 'Researcher Careers in Academia', the 'Community of Practice' on 'Diversity, inclusion and gender issues' and is involved in all 5 work packages. The swissuniversities coordination office is directly involved in a sub-project of the ERA Talent project for the first time as of 2024.

Goal:

swissuniversities and the ETH continue active participation in the European initiatives.

Activities (examples):

- Active participation in the ERA Talent project
- Active participation in the Group on the integration of new members of the EURAXESS network
- Active participation and involvement in projects, e.g. the very successful study visits programme
- Participation in activities of the European network (e.g. regional trainings, expert groups and EURAXESS conferences)

Possible activities could also address developments in areas such as social media, mobility or diversity.

## 2 National network and promotion activities

In Switzerland, there are currently 14 EURAXESS centres in 11 cities. All universities and two universities of applied sciences and arts are members of the Swiss network. Other universities of applied sciences and universities of teacher education have appointed EURAXESS contact persons.

Universities have expanded and diversified their programmes for researchers in recent years. They have campaigned for better career and working conditions as well as equal opportunities for women and men and have also addressed other dimensions of diversity and unequal opportunities.

The EURAXESS Switzerland portal has been continuously updated and developed in many areas in recent years. The portal's performance statistics are positive. Social media has been used to a greater extent with the existing Facebook and LinkedIn channels and the newly created Instagram page.

Goal:

The network is further strengthened through joint activities and regular exchange of information. The pooling of joint resources to achieve a common goal or project is further utilised where possible.

Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts and Universities of Teacher Education will continue to be integrated into the Swiss EURAXESS network.

The promotion and visibility of EURAXESS Switzerland is diversified and increased through the use of social media. The Swiss EURAXESS portal is further developed and consolidated and promoted, especially for job offers. It serves as an important information channel for researchers and universities.

Those responsible for EURAXESS, Swiss-Academic Dual Career Network members, charter supporters and, where available, career development contacts at a higher education institution know each other and exchange information.

Activities (examples):

- Regular EURAXESS network meetings (once a year)
- Promotion of EURAXESS (displaying the logo on the EURAXESS centre pages of the universities)
- Joint activities for and with the European network, e.g. on the topic of diversity at universities or talent promotion (target group postdocs)
- Organisation of national events on specific topics and exchange of good practices in this area

*Measures required on the part of the universities:* If needed, universities of applied sciences and universities of teacher education appoint EURAXESS contact persons.

## 3 Management of the Charter for Researchers

The [European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#) was first adopted by the EU in 2005 and published in a new form in December 2023. The [new European Charter for Researchers](#) provides a framework for researchers, employers, funders and policy makers to act responsibly and professionally in their working environment and to recognise each other as such.

To implement these principles, there is a process that leads to the "HR Excellence in Research" award. Since 2018, a signature of the charter has led to the institution initiating the application for the HR Excellence in Research Award, which requires a long-term commitment.

[30 Swiss universities](#) and other research institutions have initially signed the Declarations of endorsement of Charter & Code. Currently, 1 institution based in Switzerland is proactively pursuing the work. The majority of Swiss universities have appointed contact persons for the Charter (charter supporters).

**Goal:**

The group of charter supporters is reactivated. This includes involvement of the Human Resources, R&D and International Offices within an institution. Operational implementation lies with the institutions.

The Charter and the corresponding HR Excellence in Research process are known in Swiss higher education institutions. Due to the good information situation, each institution decides for itself to what extent it wants to pursue the process.

Those responsible for EURAXESS, Swiss-Academic Dual Career Network members, charter supporters and, where available, career development contacts at a higher education institution know each other and exchange information.

**Activities:**

Regular events provide charter supporters with information / exchange opportunities:

- Wording of the New Charter
- Related HR strategy for researchers
- Implementation of the HR strategy and the resulting award
- Why institutions have abandoned / continue to pursue implementation
- Experience, necessity of implementation
- Information on current activities such as COARA, DORA and HRS4R
- Clarification of the status or planning of such activities within your own higher education institution

The tasks of the charter supporters are redefined as follows:

- The charter supporters are available to the EURAXESS Network Switzerland and their own institution as contact persons in the charter area.
- The EURAXESS coordinator follows developments on the charter and shares them with the charter supporters.
- The charter supporters are informed about the developments at their university in the area of charter (COARA, DORA, etc.) and know the most important contact persons at their institution.

*Measures required on the part of the universities:* University management communicates ongoing commitment to the topic to the positions of the nominated charter supporters, if necessary, re-nomination and communication of their tasks.

#### 4 Services for career development incl. cross-network exchange

The European Commission is anchoring career development services more firmly in the EURAXESS portfolio. Swiss universities already offer numerous and diverse services for the career development of researchers, often on a decentralised basis and not necessarily through the EURAXESS Service Centres.

Career development services at universities represent added value for researchers and for the universities themselves. In this respect, universities can also position themselves as attractive research locations and employers in the competition for the best researchers. On national level, the Swiss Academic Dual Career Network was founded as an official network of swissuniversities in 2019. Its aim is the mutual promotion and reinforcement to support 'Dual Career' couples.

##### Goal:

The topic of 'Career Development' will be anchored and strengthened within the EURAXESS Switzerland network, with the relevant contact persons. Cooperation between existing career development services and projects at universities and EURAXESS Welcome Centres will be further developed and contacts with other networks in this area will be intensified.

##### Possible activities:

- at the annual EURAXESS meeting with the EURAXESS contact persons (after consulting the responsible CD contact person): Exchange on best practices in the area of career development
- Participation of the EURAXESS coordinator from swissuniversities in the S-ADCN meetings and continuation of the coordination function
- Every second year, the Career Development contact persons are invited to the national EURAXESS meeting: Exchange on current career development issues, networking, definition of new activities if necessary
- one dedicated (online) workshop / exchange with the Career Development contact persons in alternating years, optionally together with the EURAXESS contact persons / the S-ADCN persons / the Charter Supporters

*Measures required on the part of the universities:* University management communicates ongoing commitment to the topic to the positions of the nominated career development contact persons, if necessary, re-nomination and clear communication of their tasks as described above. If necessary, the tasks are adapted by the CD contact persons.