

SUMMARY OF THE SEMINAR 'HOW TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN THE BEST TALENT: OTM-R RECRUITMENT POLICIES' (18/05/2021)

On Tuesday 18th May 2021, the seminar '*How to attract and retain the best talent: OTM-R recruitment policies*', the fifth seminar organised by Universidad Carlos III de Madrid in the framework of the actions to promote and communicate tools and actions related to the **Human Resources Award**, took place from 16.00 hours onwards.

The meeting began, as is now tradition, with a greeting from the Vice-Rector for Faculty, Ignacio Aedo, who gave way to the journalist Alberto Iglesias, deputy director of the supplement Disruptors and Innovators (D+I), who conducted an interview with the Vice-President of the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (CRUE) and former Rector of the University of Vigo, **Salustiano Mato**, focusing on the topic '*Challenges for attracting talent*'. Mato began by talking about the professional career, which in his opinion presents a major problem in Spain: it gives entry to many people and exit to very few, so that this prevents those who fulfil their duties throughout their career to advance along that path, and that the consolidation of researchers depends on the number of places. The "*ideal*", he said, is to clear up all doubts from the start, with pre-doctoral contracts: "*we have to look at the objective from the beginning*".



He also stressed the importance of having the resources to recover and attract talent, a challenge that requires three fundamental elements: a well-assembled scientific career, an attractive project to seduce researchers and an ecosystem that offers quality and the possibility of launching their projects as they wish. On this point, he added, the consolidation of the six-year transfer periods would be of great help.

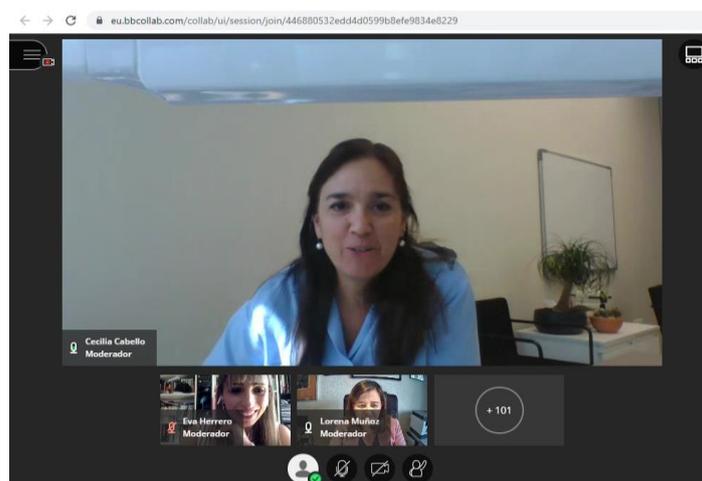
Ignacio Aedo and UC3M's Director of Human Resources and Organization, **Carmen Martín-Romo**, then spoke about the HR Strategy for the UC3M faculty, a scenario in which they recalled the institution's mission and values and the five strategic axes around which the HR Strategy pivots.



In relation to **open, transparent and merit-based recruitment**, Aedo pointed out that the institution is working in this area and has already begun to recognise professional mobility since, in order to attract talent, it is essential to have flexible regulations and flexible recruitment. On the issue of **working conditions and careers**, Martín-Romo called for an attractive, open and viable working environment, for which he advocated planning faculty careers, encouraging faculty mobility, stabilising employment despite barriers such as the replacement rate, maintaining a healthy working environment and facilitating digital transformation. With regard to **training and development**, he explained that UC3M is working on two plans, although they should continue along the lines of creating multidimensional training proposals. They also referred to the axes of **communication and participation** and **ethics and social responsibility**.

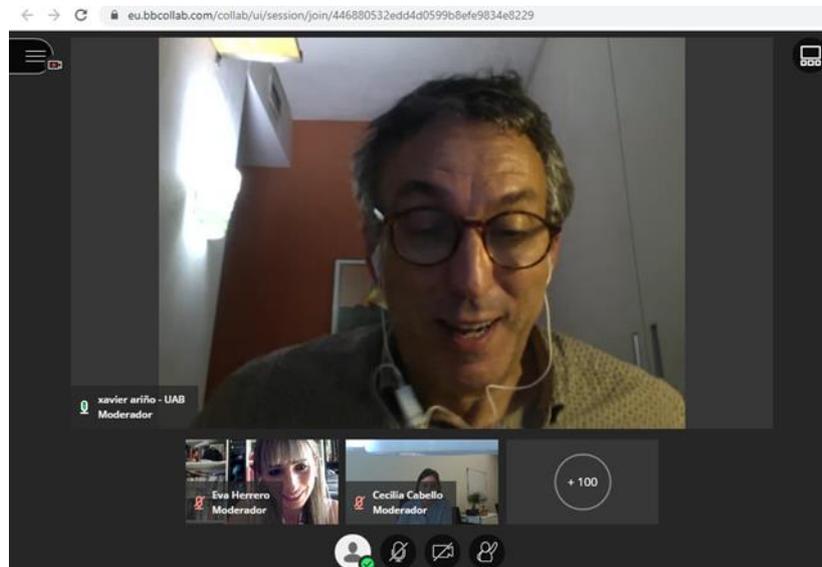
The day also included a round table discussion entitled 'Good practices in OTM-R policies', moderated by UC3M's Deputy Vice Rector for Communication and Culture, **Eva Herrero**, with the participation of the Vice Rector for Faculty Projects at Pompeu Fabra University, **Pablo Pareja**; the Director of Operations of the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology (FECYT), **Cecilia Cabello**, and the Head of the Cabinet of the Rector of the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) and HRS4R-EURAXESS advisor, **Xavier Ariño**.

Cecilia Cabello first presented the context of the OTM-R recruitment policy, which began as an objective in the European framework and has become an implementation procedure backed by documents such as the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The aim of this recruitment policy is clear: to ensure that people are the best people for the position they have applied for, as well as good working conditions and ease of mobility. However, Cabello stressed the importance of the institutions having an additional global HR Strategy that encompasses the OTM-R commitment with other policies. In relation to the difficulties in implementing these recruitment systems, Cabello pointed to the different legislations, although, he said, the EU's OTM-R policy allows for flexibility.



Xavier Ariño explained that the Autonomous University of Barcelona began working in this area by analysing the selection and recruitment processes and then implementing the results in a digital platform (with the consequent reduction of documents for

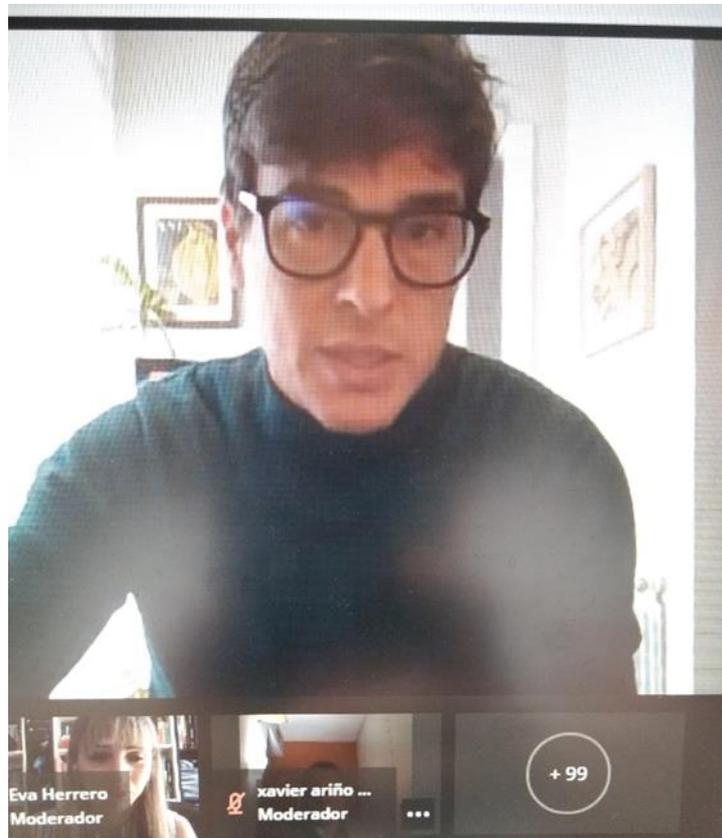
candidates and work for evaluators) that disseminates these calls for applications on international portals.



Pablo Pareja presented the experience of the Pompeu Fabra University, which has been working in this field for more than a decade, taking into account, he said, the particularities of the institution, which has eight "*macro-departments*" with more weight than the faculties themselves. Given that they can only incorporate between 10 and 15 researchers per year, the commitment to the OTM-R was essential and was reflected in several initiatives: each department was equipped with an international advisory committee to define the necessary strategic profiles; support programmes co-financed by companies were set up to give more guarantees to researchers who wanted to apply for positions (development of *spin-offs*, more attractive working conditions...); calls for applications were published through Euraxess, which sometimes leads to 480 candidates applying for a position, and the categories were linked to training programmes which, after passing an evaluation, allow promotion from one category to another (this action has been carried out on an experimental basis for the last eight months).

Among the obstacles to the implementation of this approach, Pareja referred to the "*very rigid*" regulatory frameworks, and also to the prevailing views within universities about their own status, which he called a "*cultural corset*": people who have been at the

university for a long time often understand that they must have a place before those who come from outside.



Among the aspects most valued by the young researchers about the OTM-R are, according to the three experts, the transparency surrounding the process, the predictability and the simplification and streamlining of procedures, as well as the increased dissemination of the calls and the greater possibilities for mobility.

Finally, and when asked about their "*recipes for efficiency*" in the implementation of this recruitment system, Cabello opted for sharing experiences, Ariño advocated adapting it to the different types of recruitment and to the speeds imposed by each one so that the selection process does not exceed the time of the contract itself, Pareja appealed to the Researcher Reception programme, which includes the provision of start-up support, and to "*active listening*" to both the "*new recruits*" and those who have left the selection processes in order to detect possible problems and have the opportunity to resolve them.