

**UNIVERSITY OF BANJA LUKA**

**INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGY  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BANJA LUKA**

Banja Luka, January 2018

Pursuant to Article 33(12) of the Statute of the University of Banja Luka, the Senate of the University of Banja Luka, at their 19th session, held on 25/01/2018, adopted the following:

## **INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BANJA LUKA**

### **I – DEFINITION OF INTERNATIONALIZATION**

At the University of Banja Luka (hereinafter: University) internationalization is a process of implementing international elements into university education, research and support system, aiming to put the University on the map of regional, European and global trends in science, teaching and support system.

### **II – VISION AND MISSION**

#### ***Vision***

The University is a place where the internationalization of science, teaching and support system connects people, ideas and cultures by contributing to the development of society, and a place which has an active and productive influence on development of the country, region, Europe and beyond.

#### ***Mission***

The University has been recognized as an attractive and creative partner in the region, in Europe and beyond, which employs and educates internationally competent staff, which respond timely and professionally to the challenges of global trends.

### **III – STRATEGIC GOALS OF THE UNIVERSITY**

“In accordance with the RS Strategy for the Development of Education for 2016-2021, it is necessary to implement a series of activities at the University to strengthen staff and infrastructure capacities, increase student and staff mobility, achieve internationalization of the teaching and scientific research processes and increase the visibility of the University primarily in the regional and European, but also the global academic community.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> RS Strategy for the Development of Education for 2016-2021, <http://www.vladars.net/sr-SP-Cyrl/Vlada/Ministarstva/mpk/PAO/Documents>, 15/01/2018

The following four strategic goals of the internationalization of the University have been defined:

1. internationalization policies
2. internationalization of science
3. internationalization of teaching
4. internationalization of the support system.

### ***1. Internationalization policies***

One of the five strategic goals of the University in the 2017-2025 Development Strategy of the University of Banja Luka<sup>2</sup> (hereinafter: Strategy) is the creation of dynamic international cooperation. In order for this goal to be implemented, the University Internationalization Strategy sets out broader and more detailed measures.

Measures for the internationalization of the University and the Faculties/Academy/Institute (hereinafter: Members) are:

- 1.1. Bringing and/or amending legislation relevant to the internationalization of the University in all segments.
- 1.2. Increased funding for activities of international cooperation by organizing an internationalization fund (scientific research and international cooperation) at the level of the University, its Members, the RS Ministry of Education and Culture, the RS Ministry of Science and Technology, the City of Banja Luka, from European and other available funding programmes, in order to:
  - (Co)finance visits to foreign countries by domestic researchers, innovators and research teams, and especially young researchers who have achieved distinguished results in scientific research and international cooperation, mobility, transfer of knowledge etc., and are taking part in exchanges with relevant international institutions.
  - Provide financial support for the publication of scientific papers in international scientific journals which meet the standards for influential citation databases, academic books, course readings and magazines in English or another foreign language, as opportunity allows, and presentation of papers in relevant international scientific conferences.
  - Provide access to international journal libraries and most relevant scientific archives of monographs.

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<sup>2</sup> 2017-2025 Development Strategy of the University of Banja Luka, [http://unibl.org/uploads/files/strane/zakoni\\_i\\_interni\\_propisi/Strategija\\_UNIBL\\_2017-2025.pdf](http://unibl.org/uploads/files/strane/zakoni_i_interni_propisi/Strategija_UNIBL_2017-2025.pdf), 15/01/2018

- (Co)finance the engagement of distinguished scientists, professors, artists and experts from prestigious universities as long or short term visiting lecturers at the University.
  - (Co)finance outgoing mobility abroad for excellent students of all three study cycles at the University, who have achieved significant results in their studies, science, arts, sports or innovation, and (co)finance excellent foreign students of all three study cycles to encourage exchange and increase incoming mobility.
  - (Co)finance international summer schools, seminars, workshops.
- 1.3. Accreditation of more existing study programmes in Serbian and in English.
- 1.4. Membership of the University and its Members in leading international networks of higher education and use of the opportunities and advantages provided by such networks, as well as a more active part in international higher education networks where the University and its Members are already registered.
- 1.5. Increased implementation of activities from signed cooperation agreements and enter into new cooperation agreements through strategic partnerships with distinguished universities and institutes abroad, and increased active participation of University employees in the implementation of these activities.
- 1.6. Implementation of a modern evaluation system for scientific research and teaching, following internationally recognized standards when electing staff into scientific, academic and scientific-academic titles:
- visits of professors and teaching assistants to institutions abroad to do research, teaching or training,
  - the publishing of papers in relevant international scientific publications,
  - citation in relevant scientific publications,
  - teaching in English or some other foreign language at the University,
  - other forms of international contributions such as international projects, the organization of various international events etc.
- 1.7. Additional motivation to professors to give their lectures in English by reducing their class workload in return.
- 1.8. Establishment of internationally recognisable institutes (Confucius Institute, Goethe Institute etc.) to provide opportunities for learning foreign languages and getting to know foreign cultures, as well as to expand the possibilities for international cooperation with scientific research institutions all over the world.
- 1.9. Development and implementation of the concept of "*internationalization at home*" (*internationalisation@home*) in science, teaching and support systems building on the international experiences of staff. Internationalization at home includes, but is not limited to, joint study programmes and double/multiple majors, windows of mobility/global windows, visits from distinguished international experts, study visits, international conferences, seminars, summer schools at one of the University institutions, international

orientation days, foreign language courses for everyone, international training, the “buddy” system, integration of foreign students.

## **2. *Internationalization of science***

A sub-strategic goal of the University in the Strategy is more internationally recognized scientific research activities. The Strategy states that the visibility of the University, development of science, and consequently of the teaching process, greatly depends on international cooperation.

Measures for the internationalization of science are:

- 2.1. Joint scientific research activities with distinguished foreign institutions, through cooperation with internationally recognized researchers to: increase scientific production and improve the quality of the scientific research, improve the competences of professors, PhD students etc.
- 2.2. Implementation of research projects of parts of research projects within PhD study programmes abroad.
- 2.3. Participation in or organization of international scientific conferences with distinguished foreign higher education and scientific institutions, plenary lectures, summer schools, seminars etc.
- 2.4. Publication of international scientific journals which would meet the standards for influential citation databases and/or publishing papers in such journals.
- 2.5. Support to Members to establish multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary scientific research institutes, centres and research groups, which would be a starting point for the development of scientific research, development and professional projects, both international and national.
- 2.6. Alumni networks and connections with the expatriate communities and researchers with ancestry in this region, who are employed at prominent higher education institutions and companies across Europe and the world and the inclusion of the alumni network into scientific research projects and the teaching process at the University.
- 2.7. Participation in the *Marie Skłodowska-Curie* actions.

## **3. *Internationalization of teaching***

A sub-strategic goal of the University in the Strategy is a teaching process funded on scientific research, international cooperation and student traineeships.

Measures for the internationalization of teaching are:

- 3.1. Regionally and internationally recognized study programmes aimed at improving the quality of the study programmes and their internationalization, and increasing incoming mobility and implementing “internationalization at home”.
- Course units in English in already existing study programmes, in accordance with the capacities of individual Members, aimed at providing the possibility for a student to earn a minimum of 30 ECTS credits within a study programme.
  - Introduction of “mobility windows” or “global windows” into curricula.
  - Utilization of open academic resources.
  - Introduction of English language courses in PhD study programmes.
- 3.2. Multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary study programmes at the University level with the possibility of teaching in English, and later in other foreign languages, within available capacities.
- 3.3. Distinguished second and third cycle study programmes (created according to the Salzburg Principles) at the regional and international level, with a focus on joint study programmes and/or double/multiple majors.
- 3.4. Implementation of international standards in thesis supervision for the second and third cycle of studies in the segment of scientific research.
- 3.5. Increased outgoing and incoming mobility of students and staff.
- Organization of student mobility as a mandatory segment of curricula and programmes in the form of attending classes, doing research or traineeship abroad for the first and second cycle of studies, i.e. teaching and research for the third cycle of studies.
  - Increased participation of students and staff of the University in exchange programmes, such as the CEEPUS and Erasmus+ Key Action 1 - international Credit Mobility.
  - Engagement of distinguished scientists, professors and experts from prestigious universities as visiting lecturers.
  - Organization of Serbian language courses for foreign students to create the preconditions for the enrolment of foreign students to existing study programmes at the University, and their introduction to Serb history and tradition.
  - Increased cooperation with higher education institution which offer study programmes of Serbian language and literature.
  - Provide students with foreign language instruction in order to implement “internationalization at home” and increase outgoing mobility.
  - Increase internal mobility by continually educating staff and opening up resources, primarily course units, to all employees of the University.
  - Organization of lifelong learning courses using online platforms to ensure any required qualifications for the staff, but also for the general population, in cooperation with partners abroad.

3.6. Organization of international cultural activities and creating international cultural contents.

#### ***4. Internationalization of the support system***

Measures for the internationalization of the support system are:

4.1. Enlargement of international cooperation staff and training.

- Improvement of international cooperation at the University by strengthening institutional and staff capacities of the international cooperation office at the University level by establishing a functional network of persons responsible for the implementation of all international cooperation activities at all Members of the University, with a focus on students and staff mobility.
- Vice-deans for international cooperation at all Members, who would be tasked with planning and deciding on activities regarding the development of internationalization, as well as coordinating their implementation.
- Establishment of a Centre for Projects, which would provide administrative and technical support in the submission and implementation of international and national projects.
- Organization of staff training for the preparation of international and other projects.
- Continuous training of administrative staff of the University through international projects and visits to universities abroad in order to identify and adopt good practices to be applied at the University.
- Provide staff with foreign language instruction to increase the number of study programmes in English or some other language.

4.2. Promotion and presentation of the University and promotional material:

- Promotion of the University as an integral part of the European academic space, in accordance with the RS Strategy for the development of education 2016-2021 and of the European research space in accordance with the RS Strategy for scientific and technological development 2017-2021.
- Promotion of the “brain circulation” concept as a response to the “brain drain” trends.
- Provision of English language content at the websites of the University and its Members, which are to be regularly updated and which should contain all facts relevant to the teaching process, scientific research (implementation and coordination of projects), information on laboratories and other activities and support services.

- Information packages of Members in Serbian and in English (study programmes, curricula, professors and teaching assistants, relevant regulations and transcripts of records, as well as any certificates required by the mobility process), to facilitate and provide all prerequisites for mobility.
- Information campaigns on the opportunities for student and staff mobility by posting information on the websites of the University and its Members, organization of info days at the University and its Members, as well as other forms of the promotion of mobility, such as workshops with students and staff who have carried out mobility.
- Preparation and distribution of promotional material in Serbian and in English: pamphlets, flyers etc.
- Participation and presentation of the University as an institution at fairs, conferences and other such events as a form of promotion.
- A dedicated Admissions Office at every Member and a Welcome Centre at the University, for the purposes of organizing the arrival and visits of foreign students and staff at the University.
- Increased participation of the University and its Members in social networks.

#### 4.3. Additional support systems:

- Integrated information system with a subsystem for international cooperation to monitor all activities of international cooperation.
- Motivation and support to the preparation of proposals for scientific research, academic, professional and other types of projects in cooperation with international partners and application for existing European funds, i.e. funds of other international organizations.
- Engagement of internationally recognized experts in evaluating and improving the quality assurance system at the University.
- Provision of accommodations capacities for foreign students in cooperation of the University with the RS Ministry of Education and other relevant institutions and bodies.
- Provision of support to student mobility in cooperation with students and development of the “buddy” system.
- Student benefits for all students (discounts for public transport, cinemas, sports events and cultural events).

## **IV – STRATEGIC POSITIONING AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

### ***Regional positioning***

With increased student and staff mobility and with a more active participation in international scientific research, academic, cultural, sports and professional activities, the University should



be one of the leading universities in the region and one of its strategic goals should be to remain in that position continually.

Further, the University should organize more high-profile international conferences and run internationally recognized publications, participate in scientific research projects with relevant international institutions, and establish magazines in accordance with the highest international standards and promote patents within international frameworks.

The University should become a centre of regional networking, because all the preconditions are in place: good quality staff, size convenient for more flexibility, and an excellent geographical position.

### ***Positioning in Europe***

The University, and in particular a significant number of the staff, are recognized and appreciated across Europe. The available resources need to be optimized and the ascertained deficiencies to be corrected or underdeveloped segments to be improved, which would increase the visibility of the University in Europe.

It is necessary to provide support to multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary joint study programmes and/or double/multiple majors with partners in Europe, significantly increase student and staff mobility between the University and European higher education institutions, as well as to organize more international conferences and increase the number of joint publications and projects with partners in Europe.

### ***Global positioning***

There are outstanding members of the academic community at the University, recognized and acclaimed globally, who need to be provided with strategic guidance and systematic (organizational and financial) support in order to direct their activities towards bettering the global position of the University. Students and staff of the University should take more part in international scientific conferences, summer schools and workshops outside Europe.

The University should give its contribution to a balanced development globally, as much as possible within its capacities.

### ***Strategic partnerships***

The formation of strategic partnerships with distinguished foreign institutions, primarily from the region, but also from Europe, based on common interests, in order to carry out joint activities in teaching, science, transfer of technologies and innovations, are an important aspect of the internationalization of the University. Strategic partnerships will result in the strengthening of capacities of the partner institutions in various segments (teaching, science,

transfer of technologies and innovations) and in more relevant results, visibility and positioning of the partners in regional, European and global frameworks.

#### **V – ACTION PLAN FOR THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE UNIVERSITY**

The steps towards achieving the strategic goals set out in this Strategy will be defined in an action plan for the internationalization of the University, which will ascertain the priorities, measures, activities, persons in charge, time frames and budget.

#### **VI – COUNCIL FOR THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE UNIVERSITY**

In order to achieve the strategic goals more efficiently and effectively, and to continually monitor the process of internationalization and provide recommendations to improve the process, it is recommended to form the Council for the Internationalization of the University of Banja Luka.

The Council would also be in charge of preparing analytical and other documents necessary to make decisions on internationalization.

The composition, competence, and decision-making procedures of the Council will be regulated by a decision of the Senate.

## **Indicators of internationalization**

### **1. Internationalization of science**

- 1.1. International projects
- 1.2. International publications
- 1.3. International conferences

### **2. Internationalization of teaching**

- 2.1. Completed outgoing student mobility
- 2.2. Completed incoming student mobility
- 2.3. Completed outgoing staff mobility
- 2.4. Completed incoming staff mobility
- 2.5. Recognition of the period of exchange carried out abroad
- 2.6. Internationalization at home

### **3. Internationalization of services**

- 3.1. Dissemination of relevant information about internationalization