

Action Plan

Case number:

Name Organisation under review: University of Banja Luka

Organisation's contact details: University City,
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1. Organisational Information

Please provide a limited number of key figures for your organisation. Figures marked * are compulsory.

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	1047
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	148
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	9
Of whom are women *	525
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	570
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	225
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	316
Total number of students (if relevant) *	15000
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	1682

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	31 857 072,40

Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	6 772 184,72
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	2 047 669,28
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)

The University of Banja Luka, founded in 1975, has been integrated since 2007, with the faculties as members. The University is the leading higher education and scientific institution in the Republic of Srpska and the second largest university in BH. The University comprises 18 members: 16 faculties, the Academy of Arts and the Institute of Genetic Resources. There are around 15 000 students from all parts of the Republic of Srpska and from abroad. The faculties of the University are located in two university campuses in the City of Banja Luka, and one faculty in the City of Prijedor.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please provide an overview of the organisation in terms of the current strengths and weaknesses of the current practice under the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code at your organization.

Ethical and professional aspects *

Strengths:

- The University of Banja Luka has adopted the Code of Professional Ethics, as well as a set of other rules and procedures that cover ethical issues
- In addition to the University bodies and members of the University who, within their competence, are in charge of implementing the Code of Professional Ethics, the Committee for Ethical Issues of the University of Banja Luka was also appointed, a body responsible for handling requests for determining violations of the Code of Professional Ethics
- Ethics committees have been appointed for individual scientific fields, such as the Ethics Committee for Research on Humans and Biological Material, and the Ethics Committee for the Protection and Welfare of Experimental Animals in Biomedical Research at the Faculty of Medicine of the University.
- The University has the latest version of the licensed plagiarism detection software, which is used to detect plagiarism in theses and publications. Activities have been started to establish the Community for Academic Integrity at the University, which will actively work on setting up guidelines and conducting training for employees and students on different aspects of academic integrity.

Weaknesses:

- There is not enough training for employees at the University or courses for students that address and process specific aspects of ethics in research, or aspects of academic and research integrity (note: they exist in specific subjects such as "Research Methodology" or "Academic Skills" at certain faculties).

Recruitment and selection *

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths:

Recruitment and selection of researches is regulated by the Rulebook on the Procedure and Conditions for the Selection of Professors and Teaching Assistants at the University of Banja Luka (hereinafter referred to as the Rulebook), adopted by the Senate. The possibility of promotion is clearly and precisely defined by the Rulebook, which prescribes an open and transparent recruitment procedure. Recruitment is carried out by announcing open positions through vacancies for professors and teaching assistants at the University, in public newspapers and on the University's website. In order to achieve greater visibility, in addition to the above, the vacancies are often published on the EURAXESS website.

The Rulebook, among other issues, prescribes the following:

- The Council of University Members appoints a committee to prepare a report on the registered candidates/applicants (hereinafter: Committee);
- Any bias of the members of the Committee is prohibited - at least one member of the Committee must be employed at another higher education institution,
- The conditions for the selection of candidates are defined by the Law on Higher Education and the Rulebook and include the academic and professional achievements of the candidates, alike,
- An introductory lecture in the chosen field is prescribed for a candidate who does not have teaching experience,
- The best candidate is selected on the basis of the number of points obtained according to the set criteria, whereby each member of the Committee is given the opportunity to have a dissenting opinion.

In addition, the University adopted the Decision on Implementation of the Internship Programme for the Best Students, Winners of the University Golden Badge, adopted in 2016, which obligated the deans of the faculties to provide the best students with a paid internship at the faculty.

Weaknesses:

- Only citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina can get employed at the University, and in accordance with positive legal regulations.
- The entire recruitment and selection procedure is only available in one of the local languages (no English translation), only job advertisements are published in English
- In addition to gender balance, the selection of candidates for professor and teaching assistant positions (for their appointment to a particular academic title) should also include other selection procedures, apart from academic and professional excellence. External professional evaluations and interviews with candidates are not represented, nor are pedagogical abilities sufficiently valued in the selection for professor and teaching assistant positions.
- Lack of interviews with candidates, lack of a basis for regulating the gender structure, international selection committee / promotion committee, etc.
- The selection criteria for professor and teaching assistant positions are not published with the public vacancies, but are publicly available on the University's website.

Working conditions *

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths:

To create a favourable environment for scientific research at the University, with the financial support of the RS Government and the relevant Ministry for Scientific and Technological Development, Higher Education and Information Society, good conditions for work are continuously provided, which includes the procurement of necessary equipment, and creating opportunities for professional development and advanced training. The faculties of the University have the necessary space for teaching and research, laboratory equipment and information systems, they also have access to electronic databases. Investing in science, research and innovation at the University is the only way to establish quality teaching and a sustainable economy and society as a whole. 8 Institutes and 11 research institutes that were established as part of the members/faculties, as well as the Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer Centre, which was established as part of the University Rectorate, provide, along with existing resources, good conditions for the scientific research of researchers employed at the University of Banja Luka. The members allocate more and more funds for their libraries, which also contributes to the improvement of working conditions of researchers in terms of the availability of modern scientific and professional literature from renowned world publishers. The software for recognizing plagiarism (content similarity) in scientific and teaching publications and papers published at the University, as well as for recognizing plagiarism in doctoral and master's dissertations, enables professors and teaching assistants to have professional working conditions in scientific research, as well as to fulfil their mentoring obligations towards young researchers and doctoral students and master's students at the University of Banja Luka.

The University of Banja Luka bodies, in accordance with the applicable regulations, have adopted bylaws which improve the working conditions of the academic staff as well as the quality of their scientific research. The bylaws of the University are as follows:

Rulebook on the Work of the University of Banja Luka, Rulebook on Internal Organisation and Job Systematisation at the University of Banja Luka, Rulebook on the Procedure for Giving Consent for the Work of Academic Staff of the University of Banja Luka at Another Higher Education Institution, Rulebook on the Use of a Free Study Year, Rulebook on Awarding Commendations and Prizes of the University of Banja Luka, Rulebook on the Recognition of Foreign Educational Qualifications for the Purposes of Continuing Education at the University of Banja Luka and the Procedure for Equivalency of Previously Attained Academic Degrees at the University of Banja Luka, Rulebook on the Procedure for Concluding Agreements on Academic, Business-Technical and Professional Cooperation, Rulebook on International Exchange of Students and Staff, Rulebook on the Fund for the Encouragement and Promotion of Scientific Research and Artistic Work at the University of Banja Luka, etc.

Weaknesses:

There is a lack of financial support that would provide a stimulating research environment. The researchers are also of the opinion that the financial resources allocated by the Ministry of Scientific and Technological Development, Higher Education and Information Society of the Republic of Srpska and the Government of the Republic of Srpska are not sufficient for conducting research, which directly affects the stimulating research environment.

The University concludes open-ended employment contracts with its academic staff. However, employment contracts are terminated if the researcher or professor and teaching assistant fails to meet the requirements for selection/appointment to the same or higher title.

The exception are professors who are full professors, whose appointment is for an indefinite period.

The academic staff believe that they are overburdened with their teaching obligations. Senior researchers would be more motivated if their mentoring with candidates was evaluated (e.g., by regulating the teaching load during the week). Legislation recognizes mentoring, but the obligations of mentors are not sufficiently regulated (obligations of mentors should be more precise and binding, but they should also be rewarded for their god work).

After attaining the title of full professor, professors are not obliged to further develop professionally, nor are they supervised in their further work. Except of full professors, other professors and teaching assistants are obliged to continuous professional development.

Training and development *

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths:

The Code of Professional Ethics of the University of Banja Luka adopted by the Senate in 2017 defines, among other things, the principle of academic freedom as well as the autonomy of scientific research and artistic work, but it also defines the prohibition of inventing, falsifying results, false authorship, plagiarism and self-plagiarism, and the prevention of any form of discrimination.

The 2017-2025 University Development Strategy adopted in 2017 defines, among other things, as one of the specific goals: provision of a more favourable stimulating environment for scientific research and innovative work, as well as the creation of a model for the improvement and stimulation of scientific research and innovative work;

Info-days and workshops are organized at the level of the Unviersity for all its employees on preparation of project applications for the new European Union's research and innovation programme - Horizon Europe.

Instructions for the application and implementation of Erasmus+ projects were adopted in 2015, which introduced researchers to the procedure of application, notification and reporting to the relevant authorities.

The University's Annual Work Programme also includes a scientific research programme, which defines the tasks, perons in charge and deadlines for the execution of activities, which contribute to the transparency of the planning and reporting process in the research process.

An integrated information system has been set up at the University, which enables day-to-day communication and exchange of information between researchers and the University's Office for Scientific Research.

A database of all research results has been set up.

The Rulebook on the Procedure for Giving Consent for the Work of Academic Staff at Another Higher Education Institution in the Republic of Srpska, BH or abroad encourages the scientific research and professional career of employees at the University.

The Rulebook on the Use of a Free Study Year enables academic staff to exclusively use that year for scientific, artistic and professional work (writing scientific and teaching publications, for academic exchange, i.e., staying at another university or institute for the purpose of teaching or scientific research, etc.) or scientific, artistic or professional training.

The Rulebook on Awarding Commendations and Prizes of the University of Banja Luka sets out the criteria, the procedure for proposing and awarding

commendations and prizes, among other things, for outstanding work and accomplishments of researchers in the teaching, scientific, artistic, cultural, sports and other activities of the University.

The Rulebook on the Fund for the Encouragement and Promotion of Scientific Research and Artistic Work at the University of Banja Luka (adopted in 2019) regulates the method of establishing the fund, as well as the management and use of finances of the fund for the promotion and encouragement of scientific research at members of the University of Banja Luka.

Weaknesses:

Currently, forms of support from national authorities to scientific research and innovative are reduced to a minimum, and researchers rely almost exclusively on the EU funds. The degree of cooperation with the business sector differs from one scientific field to another, but overall, it is at a low level.

The popularization of scientific research and its results is not sufficiently represented in the media, nor are there enough social activities to promote it.

Not enough funds are allocated at the level of the relevant ministry, university and member/faculty for subscription to bibliographic and citation databases (Web of Science, Scopus, Ebsco...).

Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed?

max 500 words

Short-term and medium-term priorities have not changed.

Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates, changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy?

max 500 words

Changes were made at the University by the election of a new management, so there was a change in the members of the working groups responsible for monitoring and implementing the Charter and the Code at the University. At the 79th Senate session held on 28 April 2022, new members were appointed of both the Committee and the Working Group for the Implementation of the Charter and the Code. In addition to the rector and vice-rectors, the members of the Committee are the general secretary, the financial director, the minister for scientific and technological development, higher education and information society and a member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Srpska who is a member of the parliamentary committee for higher education. In addition to the vice-rector for scientific research, the members of the Working Group are the vice-deans for scientific research of all University members (18), a student representative, a legal expert on behalf of the Union and the head of the University Computer Centre.

In addition, after every 4 years, there are changes in the members of the University Senate, who are strategic decision-makers, as well as the members of the Steering Board.

All in all, there were no changes that had a negative impact on the strategy. The changes are at the organizational level - which resulted in a change in the frequency of implementing processes, personnel decisions and strategy improvement – and they are based on the experience of new members of the Working Group and Committee.

Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan?

max 500 words

Given that the new Law on Higher Education has been adopted, the University is currently in the process of harmonizing the Statute of the University with the Law. After harmonizing the Statute of the University and its adoption by the Senate, other bylaws will be adopted, including the Rulebook on the Procedure and Conditions for the Selection of Professors and Teaching Assistants the University of Banja Luka.

In addition, activities are being undertaken to establish a Community for Academic Integrity at the University, which will contribute to the improvement of the implementation of the already adopted Action Plan.

3. Actions

The Action Plan and HRS4R strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the organization's Action Plan/HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s):

<http://www.yoursite.com>

Please fill in the list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HRS4R to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap- Analysis. The listed actions should be concise, but detailed enough for the assessors to evaluate the level of ambition, engagement and the expected implementation process. The institution should strive to provide a detailed plan, not just an enumeration of actions.

Note: *Choose one or more of the principles retrieved from the GAP Analysis.*

Proposed ACTIONS

Principles:

- () 1. Research freedom () 2. Ethical principles () 3. Professional responsibility () 4. Professional attitude () 5. Contractual and legal obligations ()*
- 6. Accountability () 7. Good practice in research () 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results () 9. Public engagement () 10. Non discrimination ()*
- 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems () 12. Recruitment () 13. Recruitment (Code) () 14. Selection (Code) () 15. Transparency (Code)*
- () 16. Judging merit (Code) () 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) () 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)*

- () 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) () 20. Seniority (Code) () 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code) () 22. Recognition of the profession ()*
- 23. Research environment () 24. Working conditions () 25. Stability and permanence of employment () 26. Funding and salaries*
- () 27. Gender balance () 28. Career development () 29. Value of mobility () 30. Access to career advice () 31. Intellectual Property Rights*

- () 32. Co-authorship () 33. Teaching () 34. Complaints/ appeals () 35. Participation in decision-making bodies () 36. Relation with supervisors*

- () 37. Supervision and managerial duties () 38. Continuing Professional Development () 39. Access to research training and continuous development ()*
- 40. Supervision*

Action	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)
Carrying out activities for the implementation of the 2022-2026 Action Plan for Gender Equality at the University of Banja Luka	2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 20, 23, 24, 27, 28, 35, 38	Continuously until 2026	Decision makers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rector • Senate Steering Board Implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-Rector for Material and Human Resources • Advisory Board for Gender Equality 	Indicators: Annual reports on gender equality at the University of Banja Luka. Institutional guidelines for gender-sensitive language developed by 2026. On an annual basis, 3 workshops and 4 educations/trainings on gender-relevant topics were held for the University of Banja Luka employees. By 2026, at least 50% of employees and the majority of students will have participated in workshops. By 2024, at least 1 psychologist will have been permanently engaged as support for victims of sexual and gender-based violence. Annual campaign to raise awareness during 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. Objectives: Improving the status of gender equality at the University of Banja Luka.
Activities to ensure ethics in research.	2, 3, 4, 7. 8, 31	By 2025	Vice-Rector for Scientific Research and Development / Office for Scientific Research Vice-deans for scientific research at the University	Indicators: An interdisciplinary course at the University level 'Academic Skills and Ethics in Research' was started as mandatory for all students. Rules set for master's and doctoral research and all other research at the University of Banja Luka on mandatory submission of research applications to the

			<p>members</p> <p>Ethics Committee at the University of Banja Luka</p>	<p>Ethics Committee in order to ensure <i>ethics clearance</i>.</p> <p>On a regular basis, the Ethics Committee reviews and gives an opinion (ethics clearance) for master's and doctoral research, as well as for research conducted by employees of University of Banja Luka members.</p> <p>Objectives: Improvement of the situation in the field of application of ethical standards in research at the University of Banja Luka.</p>
<p>Ensuring greater financial support for scientific research and innovation from the University of Banja Luka budget funds</p>	<p>1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 18, 23, 26, 28, 29</p>	<p>Continuously. Overview of what was implemented until 2025 in accordance with the 2017-2025 University of Banja Luka Development Strategy</p>	<p>Steering Board of the University of Banja Luka, Senate, Councils of University members</p> <p>Implementation: University members</p>	<p>Indicators:</p> <p>The number of managers, coordinators, that is, participants from among the academic staff in the RS, regional and international scientific research projects has increased.</p> <p>The number of awarded students and academic staff has increased based on the notable results achieved in scientific research.</p> <p>The number of academic staff who are participants in prominent international conferences where they give lectures by invitation has increased.</p> <p>Objectives: Increase in the scope of scientific research and innovative activities at the University of Banja Luka.</p>
<p>Intensification of the University of Banja Luka's cooperation with the business sector</p>	<p>6, 18, 29, 38, 39</p>	<p>Continuously. A review of what was implemented until 2025 based on the 2017-2025 University of Banja</p>	<p>Decision-makers: Rector and vice-rectors, Senate of the University of Banja Luka, deans and vice-deans of the University</p>	<p>Indicators:</p> <p>The number of joint projects with the business sector as a result of mutual cooperation has increased.</p> <p>An increase in financial income in the budget as a</p>

		Luka Development Strategy	<p>members, the business sector representatives</p> <p>Implementation: academic staff and business sector representatives</p> <p>Support: Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer Centre</p>	<p>result of the mutual cooperation of members. i.e., researchers from the University with certain business industries.</p> <p>Objectives: The University has a continuous successful cooperation with the business sector on research, development and innovative ventures.</p>
Popularization of scientific research and its results through mass media and social networks and events such as science festivals	8, 9, 32	Cotinuously	<p>Decision-makers: Rector and vice-rectors, Senate, University member bodies</p> <p>Implementation: Public Relations of the Rectorate and the University members, Office of the Vice-Rector for Scientific Research and Development</p>	<p>Indicators:</p> <p>The University of Banja Luka is largely present in the mass media of the region and promotes and popularizes scientific research and its results through the profiles of popular social networks (You Tube, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.).</p> <p>Publishing ‘Exemplary Stories’ on the University’s website on a regular basis.</p> <p>Monthly guest appearances by researchers from the University in shows and podcasts dedicated to the promotion of their research.</p> <p>The University takes active part once a year in the Science Festival and the European Reseachers’ Night.</p> <p>Objectives: The University and scientific research at the University is recognized and visible to the wider academic, professional and general public.</p>

<p>Holding a large number of trainings, info-days and educations at the University members</p>	<p>7, 23, 38, 39, 40</p>	<p>Continuously</p>	<p>Decision-makers: Rector's Team, Academic Councils of the University members</p> <p>Implementation: Rector's Team, Office of the Vice-Rector for Scientific Research and Development, deans and vice-deans of the University members</p>	<p>Indicators: A great number of academic and administrative staff was trained to prepare and implement national and international scientific research and professional projects (such as Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, IPA Cross-Border Programmes, Danube Transnational Programme, etc).</p> <p>Objectives: Increase the University's participation in national and international scientific research and professional projects (such as Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, IPA Cross-Border Programmes, Danube Transnational Programme, etc).</p>
<p>Activities on introducing notifications of all candidates who applied for the vacancy about the results of the vacancy</p>	<p>12, 13, 14, 15</p>	<p>End of 2023</p>	<p>Vice-Rector for Scientific Research and Development / Office of the Vice-Rector for Scientific Research and Development</p> <p>Secretariat of the University</p>	<p>Indicators: An initiative was filed with the University Secretariat that the report of the committee, the proposed decision of the Council of members and the decision of the Senate on the selection/appointment be delivered to all the applicants.</p> <p>The procedure of notifying the candidates is in place.</p> <p>Objectives: A more transparent recruitment process at the University.</p>
<p>Amendments to the Rulebook on the Procedure and Conditions for the Selection of Professors and Teaching Assistants at the University of Banja Luka</p>	<p>12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 29, 39</p>	<p>End of 2023</p>	<p>Rector's Team</p> <p>Secretariat of the University</p> <p>Senate of the University</p>	<p>Indicators: Decision on Appointment of the Working Group Members for Amendments to the Rulebook.</p> <p>A minimum of 3 working group meetings were held due to the amendments to the Rulebook.</p>

				<p>A new Rulebook on the Procedure and Conditions for the Selection of Professors and Teaching Assistants at the University of Banja Luka was adopted.</p> <p>Objectives: A more transparent and better recruitment process at the University of Banja Luka.</p>
Procurement of a new software for monitoring plagiarism of scientific papers	2, 3, 8	End of 2023	<p>University Material and Finance Division</p> <p>University Computer Centre</p>	<p>Indicators: Public procurement procedure was carried out.</p> <p>The software has been installed.</p> <p>Objectives: Decrease in plagiarism cases at the University.</p>
Setting up a bilingual digital repository of scientific papers	8, 31, 32	End of 2022	<p>University Material and Finance Division</p> <p>Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer Centre</p> <p>University Computer Centre</p>	<p>Indikator: Public procurement procedure was carried out.</p> <p>The digital repository has been installed.</p> <p>Scientific papers were entered, a minimum of 10 per member of the University</p> <p>Objectives: Enabling open access to scientific papers at the University of Banja Luka.</p>
Amendments to the Rulebook on the Procedure and Conditions for the Selection of Professors and Teaching Assistants at the University in accordance with the new Law on Higher Education	5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 28	End of 2022	<p>Rectorate of the University of Banja Luka</p> <p>Senate of the University</p>	<p>Indicators: Decision on Appointment of the Working Group Members for Amendments to the Rulebook.</p> <p>A minimum of two working group meetings were held.</p>

				<p>The Rulebook was adopted at the Senate meeting.</p> <p>The Rulebook was published on the University's web page.</p> <p>Objectives: Improvement of procedures for the selection of professors and teaching assistants at the University.</p>
Adoption of the Rules for the Preparation, Application and Implementation of Projects at the University of Banja Luka	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 23	The third quarter of 2022	<p>Rectorate of the University of Banja Luka</p> <p>Steering Board of the University</p>	<p>Indicators: A minimum of two working group meetings were held.</p> <p>The Rules were adopted at the Steering Board meeting.</p> <p>The Rules were published on the University's web page.</p> <p>Objectives: Improvement of procedures and practices for the preparation, application and implementation of projects at the University of Banja Luka.</p> <p>Increase in the number of projects being implemented at the University of Banja Luka.</p>
Establishment of the Preschool Education Centre including kindergarten (day care centre)	7, 9, 23, 24, 33, 38, 39	By the end of 2026	<p>Steering Board of the University</p> <p>Rectorate of the University of Banja Luka</p> <p>Faculty of Philosophy</p>	<p>Indicators: The Education Centre building was constructed.</p> <p>The Education Centre will have started operating by the end of 2026.</p> <p>Objectives: Improvement of working conditions with children for</p>

				University of Banja Luka employees. Enabling internships/traineeships for students of the Faculty of Philosophy.
Adoption of an instruction that enables remote work of professors, teaching assistants and students. Adoption of an instruction enabling remote work of administrative staff.	1, 24, 33, 38, 39	Continuously	Decision-makers: Ministry of Scientific and Technological Development, Higher Education and Information Society of the Republic of Srpska Rectorate of the University Implementation: Rectorate, University members	Indicators: The number of remote lectures held. Objectives: The working conditions of the University employees have been improved and adapted to their needs.
Improvement of conditions and spaces for rest and leisure (indoor and outdoor spaces)	24	Continuously	Decision-makers: Rector's Team, University Steering Board, University members Implementation: University members	Indicators: Regular maintenance of the University Campus (seasonal improvement of flora). The number of newly formed spaces for leisure. The number of squares available for leisure activities. Objectives: Improvement of working conditions for employees and students.
Cooperation with existing and new European partners with the aim of increasing the	1, 18, 19, 24, 25, 29, 32, 33	Continuously	Decision-makers: Office of the Vice-Rector for	Indicators: The number of outgoing and incoming mobilities of

<p>mobility of students and employees in both directions, creating joint project proposals, exchanging knowledge.</p>			<p>International Cooperation, Councils of the University members</p> <p>Implementation: University members</p>	<p>students and employees on an annual basis has increased.</p> <p>The number of joint project proposals on an annual basis has increased.</p> <p>The number of guest lectures by the University employees at partner institutions, and vice versa, on an annual basis has increased.</p> <p>The number of events organized in cooperation with European partners on an annual basis has increased.</p> <p>Objectives: Improving the level of cooperation with European partners.</p> <p>Increasing participation of the University in partner projects and exchanges.</p>
<p>Cooperation with the Chinese universities (existing partners and new ones) with the aim of exchange of students and employees in both directions, preparation of joint project proposals and exchange of knowledge.</p>	<p>1, 18, 24, 25, 29, 32, 33, 38</p>	<p>Continuously</p>	<p>Decision-makers: Office of the Vice-Rector for International Cooperation, Councils of the University members</p> <p>Implementation: University members, Confucius Institute</p>	<p>Indicators:</p> <p>The number of outgoing and incoming mobilities of students and employees on an annual basis has increased.</p> <p>The number of joint project proposals on an annual basis has increased.</p> <p>The number of guest lectures by the University employees at partner institutions, and vice versa, on an annual basis has increased.</p> <p>The number of events organized in cooperation with the Chinese partners on an annual basis has increased.</p> <p>Improvement of the level of cooperation with the</p>

				<p>Chinese partners.</p> <p>Increase in the University's participation in partner projects and exchanges.</p>
<p>Organizing foreign language courses for the employees and students of the University and Serbian language courses for foreigners</p>	<p>24, 28, 38, 39,</p>	<p>Continuously</p>	<p>Implementation: Faculty of Philology</p>	<p>Indicators:</p> <p>The number of students attending foreign language courses.</p> <p>The number of employed foreign language course students.</p> <p>The number of foreigners attending the Serbian language course.</p> <p>The number of classes held per course.</p> <p>Objectives: Improvement of the skills of employees and students.</p>
<p>Organization of lifelong learning (LLL) courses and IT skills for employees</p>	<p>19, 20, 24, 38, 39,</p>	<p>Continuously</p>	<p>Implementation: University Computer Centre</p>	<p>Indicators:</p> <p>The number of courses held.</p> <p>The number of students per course.</p> <p>Objectives: Improvement of employees' skills.</p>
<p>Improving existing rulebooks and institutional practices for communication between the members' and the University's staff and management</p>	<p>4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 33, 34</p>	<p>Continuously</p>	<p>Decision-makers: Senate Steering Board Rector and vice-rectors</p> <p>Implementation:</p>	<p>Indicators:</p> <p>Existing rulebooks amended and alignment with improved practices.</p> <p>Objectives:</p>

			Rectorate of the University, Public Relations Manager, University members	Communication between the members' and the University's staff and management improved.
Improvement of spatial capacities and working conditions at the University and at individual members	10, 23, 24, 38, 39	By the end of 2026	Decision-members: Steering Board Rector's Team Implementation: University members along with the University Material and Finance Department	Indicators: The construction of the Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy and the Faculty of Forestry has been completed. Reconstruction of the Faculty of Philosophy building has been completed, the aim of which is to increase energy efficiency and ensure better access for students with disabilities. The building of the Preschool Education Centre along with a kindergarten has been constructed. Improvement of the energy efficiency of the Faculty of Economics building has been completed. Improvement of the energy efficiency of the Rectorate and Academy of Arts building has been completed. Equipping of the Student Multimedia Centre and Theatre has been completed. Objectives: Working conditions improved for employees and students at the University of Banja Luka.
Fostering good cooperation with the Union in order to improve labour rights, etc	12, 13, 23, 24, 25, 26	Continuously	Implementation: Rector, deans, Unions at the	Indicators: The number of meetings held between the Ministry of Scientific and Technological Development, Higher

			members, The relevant Union of Education, Science and Culture of the Republic of Srpska	<p>Education and Information Society of the Republic of Srpska, the University of Banja Luka Management Board and the Union.</p> <p>The number of thematic sessions held on the issue of improving labour rights at the University.</p> <p>Percentage increase in salaries of the University employees as a result of the cooperation of the Union, the University Management Board and the Ministry of Scientific and Technological Development, Higher Education and Information Society of the Republic of Srpska.</p> <p>Objectives: Improvement of labour rights and working conditions for employees at the University.</p>
An initiative to establish a Community for Academic Integrity at the University of Banja Luka	2, 3, 4, 7, 10	By the end of 2024	Implementation: Vice-Rector for Scientific Research and Development / Office of the Vice-Rector for Scientific Research and Development/ Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer Centre	<p>Indicators:</p> <p>A minimum of 2 Community meetings per year.</p> <p>A minimum of 6 lectures and training on different aspects of academic integrity was held for students and employees at the University.</p> <p>Student Guidelines on Academic Integrity have been developed.</p> <p>Objectives: The Community for Academic Integrity at the University of Banja Luka was established.</p>
Creation of a base of research equipment and infrastructure	8, 23, 24	The second quarter of 2023	Implementation: Rector's Team, Computer Centre	<p>Indicators:</p> <p>Base set up Subjects entered (equipment and infrastructure)</p>

				<p>Objectives:</p> <p>More transparent use and disposal of equipment within the University</p> <p>Entering the real sector market and establishing cross-sectoral cooperation</p>
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Note: Add as many actions as needed.

If your organisation has already filled in the OTM-R checklist in the Initial Phase, indicate how your organisation is working toward/has developed an Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Policy. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above in the action plan (as emerged from the Gap Analysis), please provide a short commentary demonstrating the progress of the implementation versus the initial phase.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal review for Award Renewal)

Compared to the previous period related to the initial phase, there were certain changes that improved the OTM-R system, namely:

- a new Law on Mining was adopted (June 2018), which enabled employees at the University to participate in projects related to mining for their research;
- the procurement of software for detecting plagiarism was started, which, by the decision of the Senate, in addition to checking the plagiarism of final theses of students of the second and third study-cycles, was extended to all papers in publications/proceedings and journals, as well as teaching and scientific monographs published or co-published by a member of the University;
- cooperation with the business sector has been intensified, where private companies have requests for professional services of both academic staff and final year students possessing the required competences;
- the Rulebook on the Fund for the Encouragement and Promotion of Scientific Research and Artistic Work at the University of Banja Luka dated 2019 was adopted, which governs in more detail the method of establishment of the Fund as well as the management and use of its funds, the goal of which is to encourage and promote scientific research and artistic work at the University members. The Rulebook defines the organized promotion of science, research, innovation, scientific excellence and artistic work through financial support for their implementation, as well as the promotion of the best researchers and research achievements.
- new Study Rules for the third cycle were adopted, which define the conditions for mentoring in more detail.

- the 2022-2026 Action Plan for Gender Equality at the University was adopted.

4. Implementation

General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan: (max. 1000 words)

The University meets the European standards and contributes to the overall development of knowledge, and through science, research, internationalization and innovation, improves the teaching process and encourages the economic development of society. In all scientific fields, the University educates internationally competent human resources, capable of coping professionally and qualitatively with the demands of the modern regional business sector.

Keypoints:

- Continuous promotion of the highest international quality standards in science, research and education as the ground for a successful teaching process and self-sustainability.
- Implementation of scientific research that is globally visible, recognized and valued.
- People, good ideas, teamwork and equipment as key elements of international recognition and development of science, research and innovation.
- Every individual, whether an employee or a student, gets opportunities to implement their ideas and creative visions.
- Clear career development paths for academic staff. Promotion to higher scientific and teaching positions/titles and maintenance of the existing level conditioned by excellent and internationally recognized scientific research and artistic contribution.
- The University provides greater support to individuals and research teams whose work promotes the University as a whole, with a special emphasis on the involvement of students.
- Considerably larger and more noticeable joint scientific research activities with reputable foreign institutions, through cooperation with internationally recognized researchers, with the aim of: increasing scientific production, perfecting professors and doctoral students, and protecting intellectual property.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist below, which you will need to describe in detail:

How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The Committee for the Implementation of the Charter and the Code meets at least twice a month and considers issues such as the recruitment process, research and projects, equipment procurement, improvement of working conditions and handling of potential complaints. Most of the members of the Committee are members of the Rector's Collegium - the rector, 4 vice-rectors, the general secretary and the financial director, which meets twice a week - regularly throughout the year. Given that the meetings of the Rector's Collegium are always thematically closely related to issues of the conditions and improvement of the working conditions of researchers, we may freely say that the HRS4R process is deeply integrated into the daily work of committee members. Furthermore, the head of the Working Group for the Implementation of the Charter and the Code is a member of the Committee, which ensures day-to-day communication between all participants in the process and, most importantly, it takes place in two directions.

The Working Group for the Implementation of the Charter and the Code meets at least once in a three-month period, in order to monitor the implementation process of the Action Plan, and to define any new actions depending on the changes that may affect the course of implementation. The Working Group applies both bottom-up and top-bottom approaches, thus creating a synergy between the initiatives of students and employees, that is, the Committee on the other hand, ensuring high efficiency and the meeting of goals.

How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The research community is involved in the implementation process by taking active part in the members' Council, where all strategic documents before being adopted by the Senate of the University are submitted for comments, i.e., for the adoption of new initiatives and the initiation of solutions to new issues and potential problems. In addition, members of the research community are selected to working groups and/or working bodies when drafting proposals for strategic documents. Each researcher has the opportunity to react to possible irregularities detected in the implementation process, either as an individual or as a group. All reported irregularities are considered first by the Rector's Collegium, the Ethics Committee, the Senate and, if necessary, the University Steering Board.

How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy.

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The career development of researchers at the University is monitored through the work programme of the Office of the Vice-Rector for Human and Material Resources. For these purposes, an information system is used that provides insight into the development of each individual researcher, their leaving the University for advance training or researcher mobility, retirement, the need for young staff, etc. The Office of the Vice-Rector relies on each member of the University through cooperation with the secretaries of the members, with whom organizational policies and recruitment policies are coordinated. The leaders of the University are members of the Committee for the Implementation of the Charter and the Code, which ensures that this issue will be covered.

How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Each proposed action has bodies in charge of their implementation, with clearly defined and measurable indicators. The implementation of actions will be continuously monitored and discussed at regular meetings of the Working Group for the Implementation of the Charter and the Code. Those responsible are required to provide data on indicators and their fulfillment, that is, obstacles in their implementation. In case of any objective obstacles in the implementation, where the indicators could not be fully implemented, an explanation will be provided and measures will be proposed to eliminate them.

The Working Group has mechanisms to escalate certain issues, detected when implementing the actions, through the chairperson of the Working Group to higher decision-making instances (Rector's Collegium, Ethics Committee, Senate and Steering Board). This procedure ensures that activities referred to in the Action Plan will be completely implemented.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)?*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Progress in view of the implementation of activities will be monitored in such a way that those responsible for the implementation of the defined actions meet the set indicators in a defined period of time. After the planned activities have been completed, the Working Group for the Implementation of the Charter and the Code will determine the degree of fulfillment of the planned activities and define measures in case they failed to be implemented.

The Action Plan is a 'living' document, which is updated and adapted in tune with the implementation.

How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Progress in the implementation of the adopted actions will be measured by the achievement or non-achievement of indicators determined for each action. If the indicators are measured and implemented, it means that progress has been made and the given action has been achieved. Otherwise, it is necessary to identify the reason why certain indicators were not implemented within the set actions, and to propose measures for its implementation.

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process: (max. 1000 words)

In general, science and scientific research at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina falls within the responsibility of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which annually allocates very small financial resources for the promotion and support of science and scientific research. This Ministry should cooperate much more with the relevant Ministry of Scientific and Technological Development, Higher Education and Information Society of the Republic of Srpska in order to ensure greater allocations at the level of both ministries and thus provide the necessary support for the implementation of all HR principles and at the University of Banja Luka. Through the synergy of both these ministries in support of science and open scientific knowledge, as well as researchers within the academic community in the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the form of a continuous process of creating conditions for the smooth development of scientific research, the University of Banja Luka will be able to implement the HR process and fully carry out the activities set forth in the Action Plan within the set deadline. This is being emphasized as it is important to understand that the University relies largely on its own resources in the process of implementing this plan and, in general, the policies aimed at creating the best possible environment for the work of staff and students, and to the benefit of society in its entirety.