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Minutes no. _____

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Comrat State University

Quality Management and Educational Process Department

Governing documents

QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (QMS)

Registered: QMS № _____ , dated _____

INCENTIVES POLICIES

for promoting research internationalization
at Comrat State University
2030

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List of abbreviations

| | |
|------|--|
| CSU | Comrat State University |
| ERA | European Research Area |
| GII | Global Innovation Index |
| HE | Higher Education |
| HEIs | Higher Education Institutes |
| MECR | Ministry of Education Culture and Research |
| MEI | Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure |
| NARD | National Agency for Research and Development |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| RDI | Research, Development and Innovation |
| R&I | Research and Innovation |
| PTS | Professorial- teaching staff |
| PSF | Policy Support Facility |

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Introduction

Internationalization of research activity generates value for Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) and Higher Education (HE) in general and aims to enhance quality and improve the dissemination of results¹.

The European Research Area (ERA) is the basis of Europe's emerging "knowledge society", which mobilizes science, education, training and innovation to achieve the EU's economic, social and environmental goals. The Republic of Moldova became the first Eastern Partnership country to receive the status of a state associated with the seventh EU Framework Program for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (2007-2013)², and subsequently with the EU Framework Program for Research and Innovation (2014- 2020) "Horizon 2020" and Horizon Europe.

This has significantly expanded the opportunities for domestic actors to have access to European research projects. In view of this, the entry of higher education institutions of the Republic of Moldova is not just a necessity, but one of the key conditions for the internationalization of all higher education. This document serves as the basis for developing a policy for Incentives policies for promoting Research internationalization at Comrat State University (CSU), as well as assisting researchers and research groups, heads of departments and university administration in developing this type of activity on the documents (Table 3).

Principles of international collaborations:

- *Transparency:* openness, integrity and ethics as the basis for international cooperation
- *Effectiveness:* mutual benefits (short-term and long-term) from cooperation
- *Outreach:* involvement of all academic staff and stakeholders in RDI processes

1. Legislative and Institutional Framework

1.1. Legislative framework

1. Code on Education of the Republic of Moldova (Monitorul Oficial, 2014, No. 319-324, Article No. 634).

This Code establishes the legal basis for relations to the planning, organization, functioning and development of the education system in the Republic of Moldova. This document includes Chapter IV. Scientific research in higher education, article 116. Scientific research, which regulates:

2. Law of the Republic of Moldova of November 17, 2022 No. 315 On approval of the National Development Strategy "European Moldova - 2030".

¹ Shih, T., Gaunt, A. & Östlund, S. (2020). Responsible internationalisation: Guidelines for reflection on international academic collaboration. Stockholm: STINT, 2020.

² Seventh framework programme of the European Community for research and technological development including demonstration activities(FP7). URL: <https://cordis.europa.eu/programme/id/FP7>

The National Development Strategy “European Moldova – 2030” is a long-term strategic vision document that defines the directions of development of the country and society and adapts to the national context the priorities, goals, indicators and objectives of the international obligations assumed by the Republic of Moldova.

3. Resolution on approval of the Development Strategy “Education 2030” and the Program for its implementation for 2023-2025 (No. 114 of March 7, 2023).

The Development Strategy “Education 2030” includes Section 8 “Current scientific research for introducing innovation and improving the quality of education”, Main Goal 8. Promoting innovation and transformation in education through the development of scientific research.

1.2. Institutional Framework

The main legal act governing the sector – the Code on Science and Innovation, in force from 2004, was modified by the Law no. 190 adopted in 2017, and MECR became the body responsible for elaborating the state policy in the fields of R&I³. One year later, the Government of the Republic of Moldova established the National Agency for Research and Development (NARD), as the main public funder of research and innovation activities.

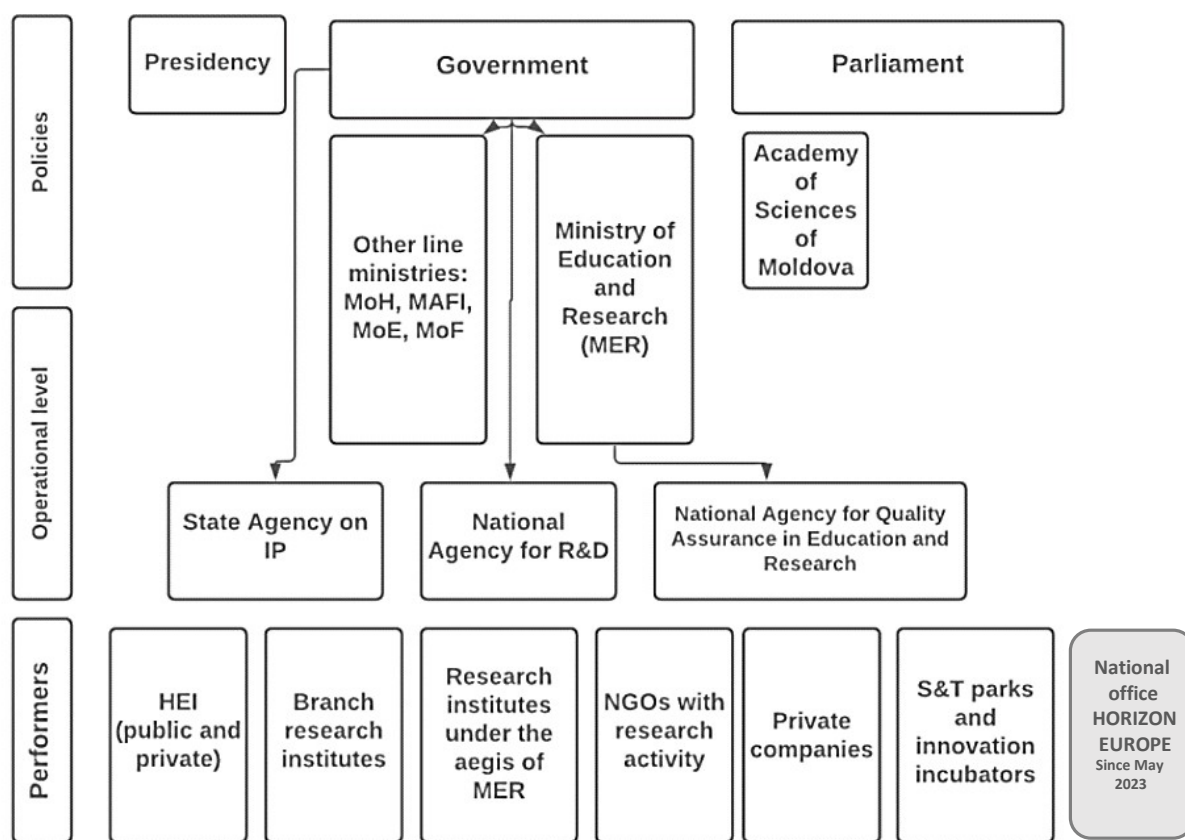


Figure 1. Levels of R&D activity management.

The reform of the Moldovan R&I system is still on-going and the new PSF activity is expected to feed into the design of future R&I policies. The next R&I National Programme is planned to cover the 2024-2027 period. It will outline a complex set of activities designed to address the deficiencies identified and provide the conditions needed to increase the effectiveness, relevance and international

³ The Law No. 190 from 21 September 2017, https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=101618&lang=ro

⁴ Support to Moldova on reforms in the public R&D sector. Background report. URL: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d493e387-7e5e-11ec-8c4001aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-250629061>

competitiveness of Moldovan R&I⁴. Table 1 presents existing strategic documents of KSU that contain or reflect policies in the field of internationalization of research activities.

Table 1. Strategic documents in the field of internationalization of R&D activities.

| Document | Description |
|---|---|
| 1. Strategic development program of Comrat State University 2023-2027 (Approved by the decision of the CSU Senate dated June 22, 2023) | The strategic development priorities reflected in this document include goal No. 6: "Internationalization of scientific, educational and innovative activities," which regulates the development of academic mobility programs; attracting foreign scientific and pedagogical workers to carry out teaching activities at CSU; internationalization of scientific and innovative activities of the University. |
| 2. Internationalization strategy of Comrat State University for 2020-2025. Approved by the decision of the CSU Senate dated 07/09/2020 | Approved by the decision of the CSU Senate dated July 09, 2020, the CSU internationalization strategy is aimed at using the best international experience to improve the quality of educational and research activities, and increase competitiveness in the international scientific and educational spaces. Priority 3 "Professional development of teaching staff": 1. Increasing the number of teaching staff through the "Visiting Professor" mobility system 2. Encouraging employees to conduct joint research 3. Encouraging employee participation in international conferences, symposia, seminars and other events. 4. Organization of international scientific conferences and seminars 5. Growth of scientific publications in rating journals SCOPUS, Web of Science. 6. Increasing the number of joint publications with foreign university scientists. |
| 3. Regulations on the management of research activities and support of talents (Approved by the decision of the CSU Senate dated February 18, 2020) | The Regulations determine the procedure for planning, organizing, conducting and financing fundamental, applied research, development work and research services by structural divisions of CSU. Chapter VII. "International cooperation in the field of research activities": - joint research and development of projects; - supply and sale in foreign markets on the basis of contracts of its scientific and technical products; - sale of licenses, know-how and other intellectual property in accordance with the established procedure; - attracting foreign investment in the implementation of scientific and innovative projects; - mutual exchange, training and internship of scientific personnel; - holding joint international conferences, seminars, business meetings; - joint publications based on research results. |

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| 4. Guide to attracting foreign teachers and researchers to Comrat State University (Approved by the decision of the Senate of CSU dated 02/18/2020) | <p>The main goal is to attract foreign researchers to develop new directions and methodological approaches, improve the effectiveness of scientific and publication activities, and increase the recognition and image of CSU.</p> <p>Chapter II. "Teaching and/or research activities of foreign specialists, 2.2. The status is "Research" activity, which corresponds to the following types of activities of foreign specialists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting scientific research at the request of CSU, including the preparation of joint publications in specialized journals in the Republic of Moldova and abroad. - Implementation of fundamental and (or) applied research projects; - Participation in conferences, seminars, symposiums, round tables, etc. as a speaker. |
| 5. Action plan of Comrat State University for integration in the European Research Area (ERA) (Approved by the decision of the CSU Senate dated 02/18/2020) | <p>University for integration in the European Research Area (ERA)</p> <p>The priority of this plan is to permanently strengthen the research potential of the university, adapt to changing external and internal conditions, maintain and increase the competitive advantages of the university.</p> <p>1 priority regulates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diversification of access to international and national databases for researchers 2. Modernization of infrastructure and equipment affecting research and scientific processes at CSU, including remote collaboration through research networks. 3. Expanding joint research partnerships, supporting and promoting the mobility of researchers, strengthening relations with foreign research centers. Identification of potential partners in the development of international projects. 4. Ensuring standards and labor protection, social protection in accordance with national legislation. 5. Providing links between education, research, media and the labor market. 6. Stimulating the participation of CSU researchers in projects funded by the EU or other international, national and regional organizations. 7. Signing new agreements on the mobility of researchers, research internships with universities, research institutions. 8. Stimulating the participation of scientific researchers in educational programs, including distance learning. 9. Organization of regular seminars, round tables for sustainable development of research skills. |
| 6. Code of University Ethics of KSU (Approved by the decision of the KSU Senate dated January 26, 2012) | <p>Defines universal ethical values and principles for CSU employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom through knowledge, • Dignity as the elevation of oneself through the elevation of others, • Personal development as a goal and a unique ability of a person. |

2. The survey of academic staff

The survey of academic staff on the identified problem was carried out through an anonymous online survey, subsequent processing of personal data, and drawing conclusions on the study. The

distribution of the questionnaire and the survey process took place between October 1 and October 10, 2023. Of the 120 full-time employees, 40% responded, of which 23% were male and 77% were female. The main number of respondents were 35% representatives of the Faculty of National Culture, 33% - Faculty of Economics, 19% - Faculty of Law and 13% - Faculty of Agricultural Technology; 50% of respondents have work experience of 21 or more years, 16-20 years - 19% of respondents, 9-15 years - about 17%, the rest have work experience of up to 8 years.

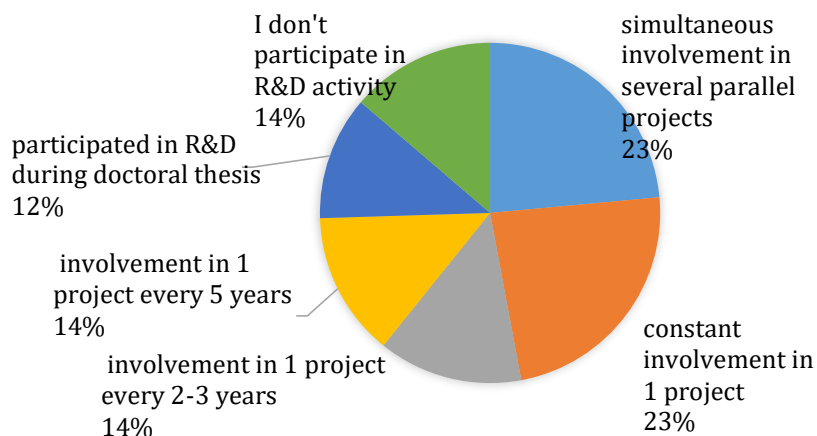


Figure 82. Level of personal involvement in international research projects

From 12 to 15% of respondents are not engaged in research activities, 10-12% conducted research during the development and defense of their doctoral work. Thus, a quarter of teaching staff are not engaged in educational activities on a permanent basis. From 20 to 26% of teaching staff are simultaneously involved in several projects at the regional, national and international levels. From 20 to 23% teaching staff permanently included 1 project; from 11 to 16% of teaching staff are involved in at least 1 project every 2-3 years; 11-16% of teaching staff are included in project activities once every 5 years.

□ Rate the overall degree of participation of CSU employees in international research projects (1-low level, 10- high level)

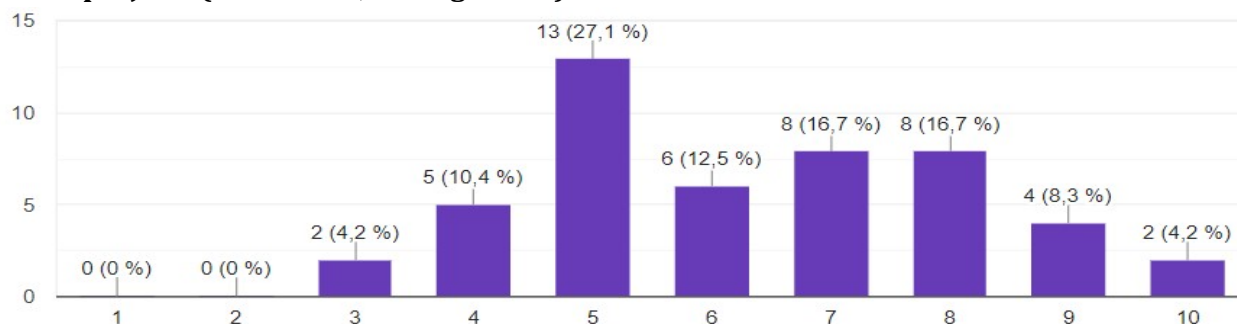


Figure 3. Overall degree of participation of CSU employees in R&D

The level of participation of CSU employees in international research projects is rated at an average of 6.3 points.

□ What are the limitations to the participation of CSU employees (faculty) in international research activities exist?

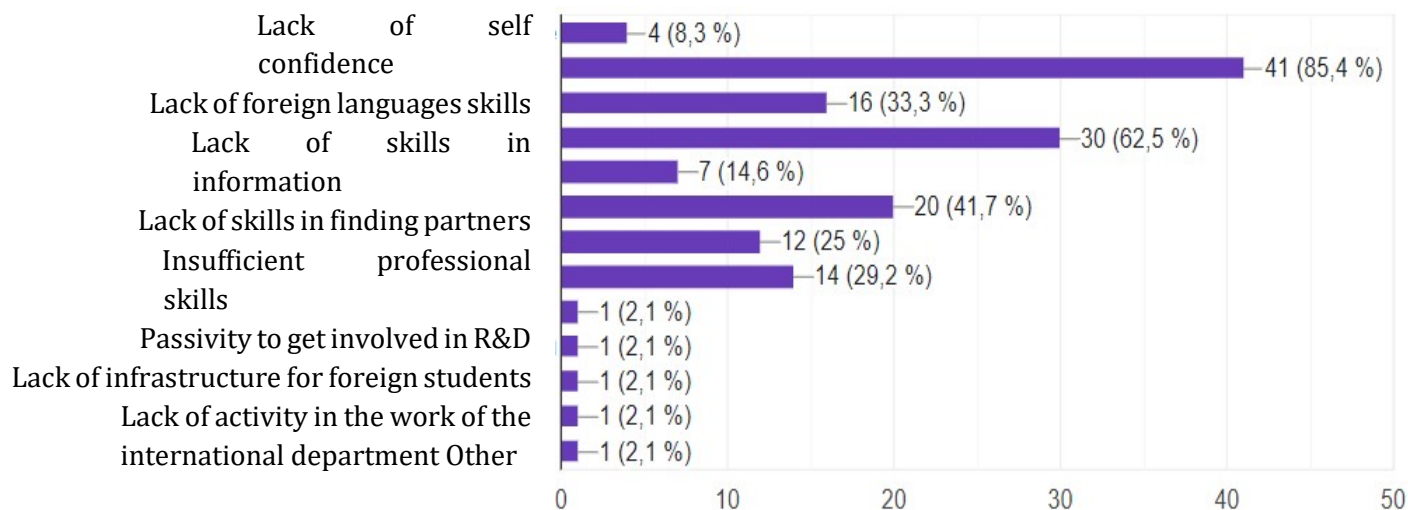


Figure 4. limitations to the participation of CSU employees in R&D

85% of respondents noted a low level of knowledge of foreign languages (here it is necessary to note the specifics of the region, namely that there are officially 3 languages in the region: Gagauz, Romanian and Russian, plus about 20% of the population also know Bulgarian). This fact in itself is a high language load. 62% noted a low level of skills in attracting partners at the international level, 42% noted the passivity of the teaching staff in the area of activity, about 40% noted the passivity of the work of the international department.

The following are also listed as reasons limiting the research activities of teachers:

- ✓ Teachers are overloaded with lecture hours (800-900 hours per year), lack of payment for scientific activities (except for the hours allocated to work with graduate students).
- ✓ For the most part, teachers with an academic degree write articles, monographs, and rarely conduct research due to their workload with other activities.
- ✓ More time is devoted to the work of various types of accreditation commissions, which are bureaucratic in nature and do not leave time for research work.
- ✓ Also, not everyone can do science; there are people who can do it, but there are practitioners whose contribution may be different. You shouldn't expect everyone to do science.
- ✓ Universities cannot provide the same level of scientific development as research institutes (previously subordinate to the Academy of Sciences) do.
- ✓ Research staff are engaged only in science, and we also engage in academic lecture activities, hence the low rates of involvement in science.

□ **What factors, in your opinion, contribute to the development and promotion of research activities of university staff at the international level?**

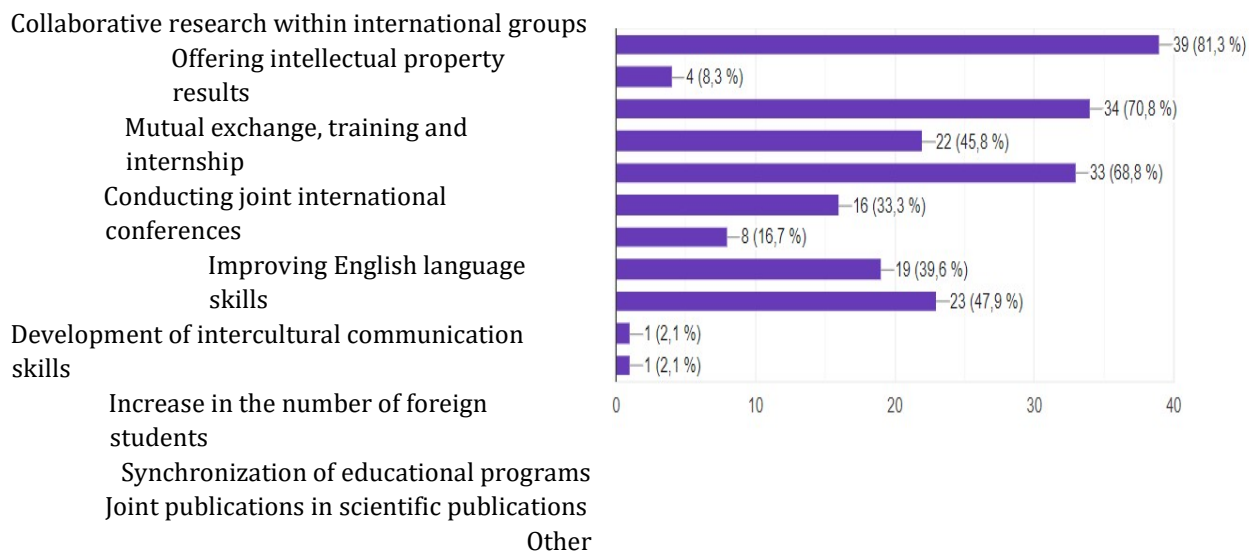


Figure 5. Factors contribute to the development of research activities at the international level

The main factors that contribute to the development and promotion of research activities of university staff at the international level: 82% - collaborative research within international groups; 71% - mutual exchange, training and internship; 69% - Improving English language skills

3. SWOT analysis

Based on a survey of opinions of KSU teachers, analyses are tools were used: SWOT analysis and Force Field analysis. The purpose of SWOT analysis is to formulate the main directions of development of a university through systematization of available information about the strengths and weaknesses of the university, as well as potential opportunities and threats.

Table 2. SWOT analysis of opportunities for the development of internationalization of education at the university

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
|-----------|------------|
|-----------|------------|

| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Experience of university participation in the implementation of academic mobility projects and within the framework of cooperation agreements ➤ - Implementation of the academic mobility program for teachers and students ➤ - University experience in implementing international projects ➤ - Training at the university for foreign students ➤ - Availability of educational programs that are implemented in English ➤ - Availability of international accreditation for the specialty "Law" ➤ - Active involvement of students in the process of university management and decisionmaking. ➤ Increasing the recognition of KSU at the national and international levels. ➤ Linguistic closeness with Turkic-speaking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Small proportion of university staff who speak English ✓ Lack of joint educational programs, doublediploma education programs, programs taught in English with the involvement of foreign specialists ✓ Low number of foreign students ✓ Limited financial capabilities of the university when implementing academic mobility and international projects ✓ Lack of a system for recording participation in scientific events, publication activity of teaching staff abroad ✓ Weak cooperation in the field of research activities with foreign universities ✓ Weak use of social networking channels to shape the image of the university, especially in English and Romanian languages ✓ Weak motivation of teaching staff to participate in international projects |
|--|--|
| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Status of a candidate country for accession to the EU ➤ Development of cross-border cooperation programs with universities in Romania and Ukraine ➤ Possibility of flexible formation and updating of educational programs ➤ Financial accessibility of educational programs at KSU for foreign citizens ➤ Increasing image and status through updating content on the KSU website, active activity in social networks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of an established system for adapting academic mobility programs Globalization of education and increased competition between universities at the national and international levels Declining birth rate and increasing outflow of young people Demotivation to study among young people due to the deterioration of the economic and political situation in the region and in the Republic of Moldova in general Outflow of qualified teachers and specialists outside the RM |

4. Force Field analysis

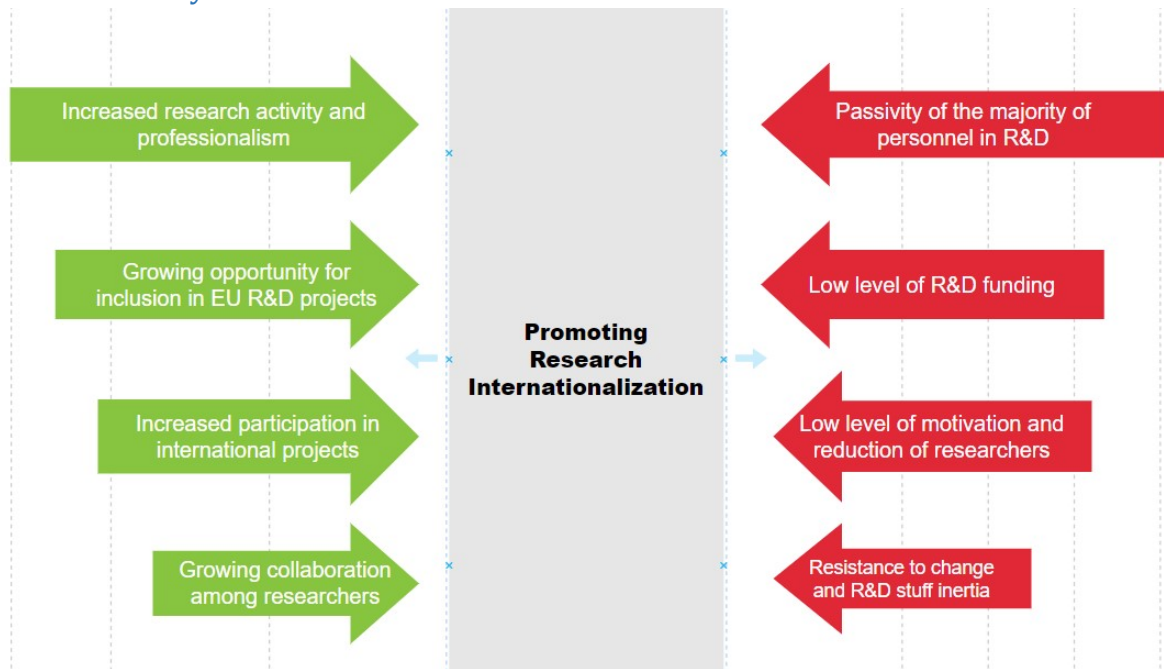


Figure 6. Helping and hindering forces.

5. Priorities for promoting RDI internationalization

SWOT analysis allows us to identify 3 priority areas for promoting the internationalization of CSU:

PRIORITY 1. Formation of a friendly and open environment for the development and promotion of internationalization.

Measure 1. Promotion of R&D activity of academic staff

Measure 2. Modernization of R&D infrastructure

PRIORITY 2. Development of transferable skills and research ethics.

Measure 1. Development of professional skills

Measure 2. Increasing international RDI activities

PRIORITY 3. Development of cooperation and networking.

Measure 1. Development of cooperation between CSU and organisations from different sectors

Measure 2. Stimulating of CSU researchers in international R&D projects

6. Operational Plan

| No | Activities | Implementation period | Responsible parties Partners | Progress indicators |
|---|--|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| PRIORITY 1. FORMATION OF A FRIENDLY AND OPEN ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONALIZATION | | | | |
| Measure 1. Promotion of R&D activity of academic (educator and research) staff | | | | |
| 1 | Conducting needs assessment for the development of research activities on each faculties | 2024 | Departments Science committees (DSC), CSU Science Department (SD) | Constantly |
| 2 | Expanding access to electronic research databases | 2024-2030 | Library, ITC Center, CSU SD | Constantly |
| 3 | Creation of a university database of available research in thematic areas (faculties) | 2024 | DSC, CSU SD | Constantly |
| 4 | Start publishing a scientific journal of KSU BUGEAC REVIEW (Economic, Cultural, Legal, Agricultural) | 2024 | CSU SD | 1 thematic part once a year |
| | | | | |
| Measure 2. Modernization of infrastructure and equipment affecting research and scientific processes at CSU | | | | |
| 1 | Create working groups at the faculty to develop scientific partnership projects | 2024 | DSC, SD | Constantly |
| 2 | Creation of a separate page on the KSU website with the publication of announcements of research projects and publications | 2024-2030 | Library, ITC Center, CSU SD | Constantly |
| 3 | Creation of a webpage with a brief presentation of research results by academic staff | 2024 | ITC Center, CSU SD | Constantly |

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|---|--|------------|---------|------------|
| 4 | Intensify the work of existing laboratories to attract research orders | All period | DSC, SD | Constantly |
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| PRIORITY 2. DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSFERABLE SKILLS AND RESEARCH ETHICS OF ACADEMIC STAFF | | | | |
| Measure 1. Development of professional skills | | | | |
| 1 | Providing ongoing online English courses at each faculty | 2024-2030 | Department of foreign languages | 1 project per year |
| 2 | Organization of regular seminars, round tables for sustainable development of research skills. | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 project per year |
| 3 | Conducting advanced training for transferable skills and research ethics | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 project per year |
| 4 | Development of double and joint degree programs | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 /per Faculty |
| | | | | |
| Measure 2. Active involvement in international RDI activities | | | | |
| 1 | Increasing the number of publications in cited publications | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 seminar per semester |
| 2 | Signing new agreements on the mobility of researchers, research internships with universities, research institutions. | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | Constantly |
| 3 | Stimulating the participation of scientific researchers in educational programs, including distance learning. | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | Constantly |
| 4 | Motivation of staff for published articles in Scopus (article payment plus bonus) | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 seminar per year |
| | | | | |

| PRIORITY 3. DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION AND NETWORKING | | | | |
|--|---|------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Measure 1. Development of cooperation between CSU and organisations from different sectors | | | | |
| 1 | Conducting needs assessment and planning of RD activities through public- private partnership | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 project per year |
| 2 | Developing a plan to develop cooperation with partners from Industry | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 project per year |
| 3 | Development of cooperation with the Research Center named Marunevich on thematic areas of research based on the regions needs | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 project per year |
| 4 | Strengthen partnerships with Executive Committee to carry out thematic regional studies | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 project per year |
| 5 | Development of cooperation with civil society organizations on the implementation of RD projects | All period | DSC, SD | 1 project per year |
| | | | | |
| Measure 2. Stimulating the participation of CSU researchers in projects funded by the EU | | | | |
| 1 | Updating current partnership agreements, update contacts, resume correspondence with partners | 2024-2025 | Research groups, DSC, SD | Constantly |
| 2 | Assignment of work with partners to relevant R&D groups by faculties and support of direct contact | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | Constantly |
| 3 | Actively participate in the development of projects within the Horizon Europe program | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | Constantly |
| 4 | Develop contacts with the National Offices of the National Agency for Research and Development (NARD) and Horizon Europe. | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 seminar per semester |
| 5 | Conducting advanced training courses for writing projects and finding partners | 2024-2030 | DSC, SD | 1 seminar per semester |
| | | | | |