



INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY

Internationalisation strategy

Challenges

- The processes of internationalisation and globalisation of the economy, the creation of a unified economic area, the formation of a common market and the technological revolution make internationalisation a dominant trend in the modern educational process and one of the most important indicators of modernisation, quality, efficiency and sustainable development of universities. The exceptional dynamics of the external environment, the changes in the quality and nature of competition and the structure of the demand for educational services impose the need to develop new strategic goals that meet the challenges of modern educational area.
- The internationalisation of education is becoming an object of purposeful policy to solve national political, social and economic problems. It is characterised by new trends, including increased competition in the international market of educational services; development of an international accreditation system as a tool for guaranteeing the quality of education; enhancing international labor mobility; reinforcing the autonomy and independence of universities from state regulation; reduction of state funding of universities; creating opportunities for continuous lifelong learning; change in the social profile of students; more flexible training conditions and methods.

Essence

The strategy aims to create conditions for active development of the internationalisation process in accordance with international standards, improving the quality of education and research, integration into the international educational and scientific area.

The strategy envisages internationalisation of the educational, research, cultural, sports and other areas of mutual interest.

The University develops cooperation with foreign universities and other scientific, educational and cultural institutions in order to disseminate the achievements of Bulgarian education, science and culture and use foreign experience in the activities of the University.

Overall internationalisation is possible only through the systematic use of all forms of international academic exchange.

The process of internationalisation of the university educational area aims at achieving the following goals:

- Expansion of the scope of Plovdiv University outside the Bulgarian educational system;
- Diversification and growth of financial revenues by attracting foreign students;
- Large-scope and balanced mobility of students, teachers, researchers and non-teaching staff to foreign partner universities;
- Partnerships in the field of research and participation in joint research projects.

Specific objectives of the Strategy:

- Improving access to education in foreign universities;
- Taking an equal position in the European educational area;
- Professional development of teaching staff;
- Introducing a system of international standards in education - certification and recognition of documents;
- Priority improvement of the recognition of PU as a leading educational and research institution on international scale.

Tasks:

- Analysis of the conditions and development of joint programmes (with foreign HEIs) for admission, training and obtaining double degrees;
- Building multidisciplinary and inter-institutional research partnerships;
- Financial support (by faculties) of the publishing activity in publications from international scientometric databases;
- Promotion of scientific achievements on a European and international scale;
- A new look of the university site and its transformation into a user-friendly and attractive portal to the faculty sites and the sites of all units of the University of Plovdiv.

Activities:

- Reinforcing and expanding the network of active partnerships into new areas;
- Establishing new partnerships with prestigious universities in Europe and the world, offering quality education;
- Opening to new international university communities, priority regions / countries for establishing / expanding international contacts and cooperation;
- Participation in international university alliances;
- Expanding the scope of international activities through the active participation of teaching staff, scientists, students and PhD students in joint events and initiatives with foreign universities and organizations;

- Stimulating the mobility of students for training and traineeships in order to increase their competitiveness on the labor market;
- Encouraging staff mobility for teaching and training so that they get acquainted with innovative methods and best practice in the field of higher education and their subsequent application at the University;
- Encouraging the participation of teaching staff in international events - conferences, symposia, etc.;
- Motivating young assistant professors and PhD students to participate in mobilities in order to establish contacts and create and exchange best practice;
- Harmonisation of the educational activity with the criteria of the European educational area;
- Creating common learning platforms for shared resources;
- Exchange of students on the basis of interstate and interinstitutional agreements;
- Exchange of teaching staff;
- Implementation of joint educational programmes;
- Conducting joint research and implementation of joint projects;
- Training of multilingual staff as a factor for integration into the global educational system. Increasing foreign language training in the University of Plovdiv at all levels: students, teaching staff and administrative staff and encouraging intercultural communication;
- Participation of the non-academic /administrative/ staff in trainings for improving linguistic and professional skills;
- Attracting more foreign students for full or partial term of studies;
- Offering joint B.A./B.Sc., M.A./M.Sc. and PhD degrees in English or other foreign languages, including in distance learning mode, in the most sought-after fields with the issuance of double degrees or two diplomas from each of the partner universities in the programme;
- Activation of the incoming teaching mobility;
- Attracting foreign lecturers and researchers;
- Encouraging and stimulating participation in international research projects;
- Development of a programme for increasing the foreign language training of the teaching staff;
- Promotion and advertising the University abroad - preparation of advertising materials, participation in educational exhibitions and fairs. Construction of a specialized information portal by priority regions outside the EU;
- Building an Alumni Network and using its potential;
- Organization of summer schools, language and scientific practices by faculties;
- Active participation of the institution in various types of academic mobilities and research and educational projects along the Erasmus+. Offering more internships to incoming students in specialized centres and laboratories;
- Introduction of new courses offered in foreign languages to attract more foreign Erasmus students;
- Creation of an online platform for administration of outgoing and incoming student and teaching mobilities along the Erasmus+ programme. The application, evaluation and ranking should be done entirely electronically;

- Enhancing the links between secondary and higher education, promoting the university abroad; establishing contacts with the Bulgarian diaspora and with the Bulgarian secondary schools abroad;
- Facilitating access to education for students with SEN and disadvantaged students through the inclusion of interactive forms of teaching, development of distance learning, development of e-learning aids;
- Creation of electronic record keeping and documents archive.