



Report on mapping the research human potential and issues in University of Tirana

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Introduction

..

<put here the short text about your university here, with focus on research>

The objective of this report is to synthesize the outputs from the process of mapping the research human potential and issues in the University of Tirana, that include a desk research and a survey among researchers, with objective to serve as a background document for the development of the HR strategy of the university. Based on the good practices of EU universities - the active partners in this process,

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initial action plan for moving towards an implementation of all principles of the European Charter for researchers and Code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers, is also developed.

Methodology

This report has been developed in three phases.

First phase implemented a desk research, based on the “Questionnaire for mapping the research human potential and issues in WBC universities”, which has been developed in scope of Re@WBC project. The questionnaire covers a range of topics relevant for HR management in research institutions, all of which are highlighted in the European Charter and Code, or The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) process. The completed questionnaire is annexed to this report.

For the purpose of a desk research, a work group was established at the university. The work group was coordinated by dr Elvana Shtepani. Other members of the work group were: <put the names and titles of all people involved in desk research here. The question was related to getting the names of people who did actual research, not who were inquired.>. The desk research involved a review of the different legal documents, reports, procedures and manuals and a data collection, which has been performed with collaboration of the various departments and faculties.

Data sources used were those produced by the database of the Human Resources Department, at the University of Tirana rector office.

In the second phase, the outputs of the desk research were complemented with the data, collected by implementing a “Survey for mapping the research human potential and issues in WBC universities”. The survey has been developed by the Re@WBC project and customized by the university.

The invitations were sent to the researchers, by using the database of the Human Resources department.

149 researchers have participated in the survey, out of which 31.2% were PhD students. All scientific areas were represented among the respondents, with major participation of the researchers from social sciences (40.5%), humanities (27.7%) and natural sciences (22.3%). The remaining 9.5% of respondents were from the area of engineering and technology. Most of the respondents (61.1%) were in age group 25-40, with additional 28.2% in age group 40-55. 9.5% of the respondents were older than 55. All scientific positions were represented in the responses with more respondents with the lecturer title (with PhD) – 43.6% and associate professors (22.8%). 30.9% of the respondents were aware of the European Charter & Code.

Call for action: Increase the awareness on the European Charter&Code by organizing info days

The third phase was focused at the development of the initial action plan for improving the current situation in HR management at the university. The action plan was developed as a result of a gap analysis that concerned the outputs of the desk research and researchers’ survey data, as well as the collection of good practices acquired during the university staff study visits to EU universities.

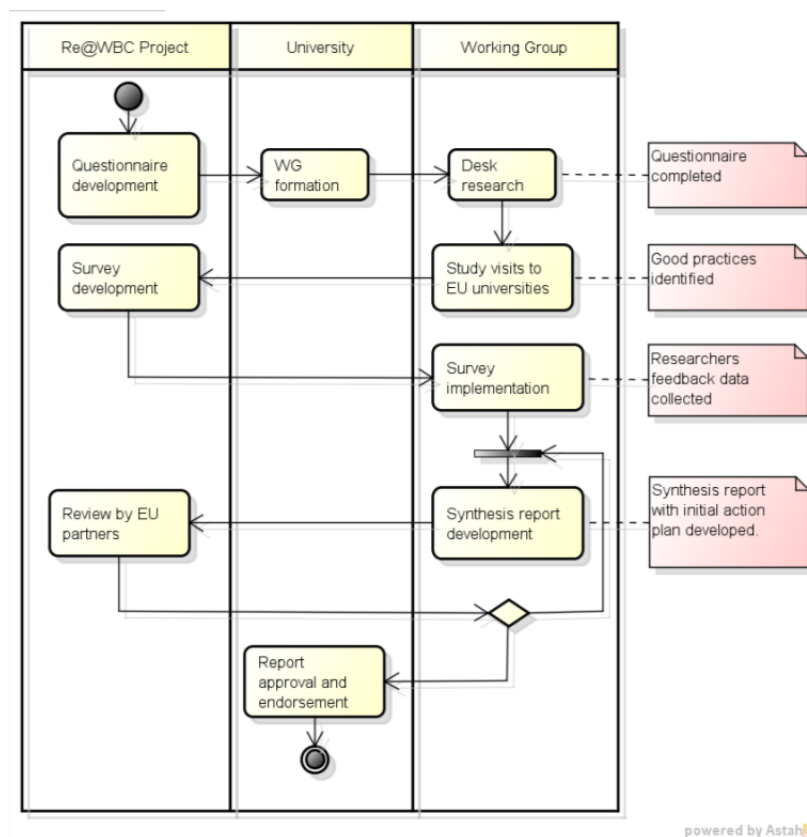


Figure 1. Workflow for developing this report

Information and data sources

The following documents were used in development of this report:

- Law no.80/2015 dated 22.07.2015 “On Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Albania”
- Law no. 136/2015 “On some additions to the Law no. 7961 dated 12.07.1995 “On Labor Code of the Republic of Albania”
- University of Tirana Statute dated 16.12.2009
- University of Tirana Regulation dated 12.04.2010
- University of Tirana Internal Work Regulation dated 18.12.2012
- University of Tirana Ethical Code dated 18.04.2011

Outline of the report

The report covers the most relevant topics, covering the principles of the European Charter and Code, namely, employment and career development, ethics, working conditions, accountability and public responsibility, training and research projects and collaboration.

Research potential in the university

In 2016, the overall number of researchers with employment contract, working at the university was 776. Figures below show the distribution of the number of researchers in scientific areas (OECD Frascati classification) and positions.

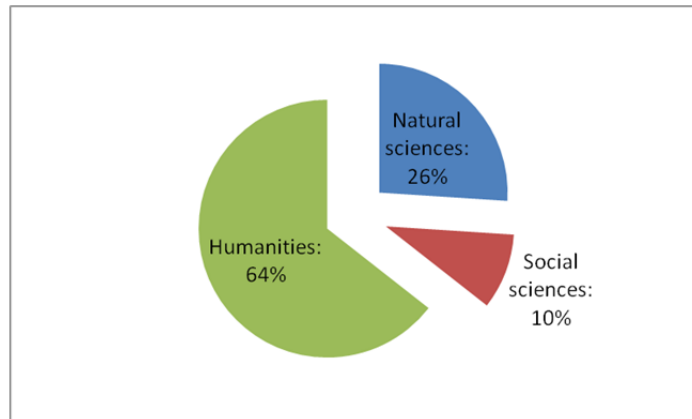


Figure 2. Distribution of number of researchers among scientific areas

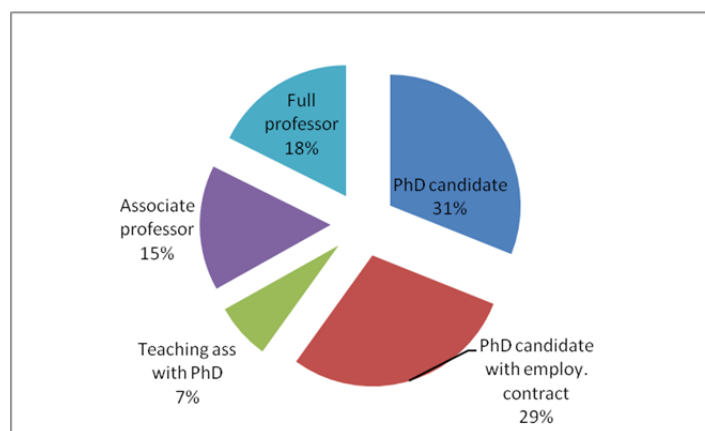


Figure 3. Distribution of number of researchers among positions

University does not have a significant number of researchers from abroad currently working or studying (PhD) at your university (full or temporary contract, visiting professorship, PhD or a research grant). Only 7 researchers are currently temporarily employed (visiting professorships) in social sciences.

Overall number of PhD students in the university is 1742, most of which in humanities, which corresponds to 224% of the overall number of research staff.

In average, associate professors are 40-55 and full professors >55 years old.

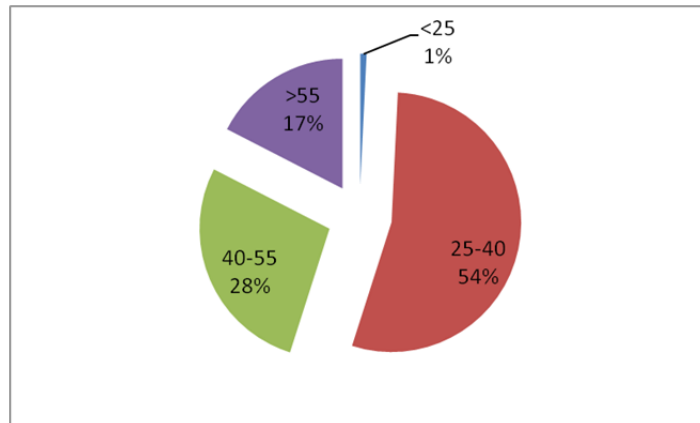


Figure 4. Age structure of the researchers employed in the university

Gender balance

There are a large number of women working in the University of Tirana and they carry out the same duties as men. They participate in projects and they mentor students in their Master and PhD thesis. Some of them act as Head of Departments and others are Deans of faculties. There are 484 females and 295 males working for the University and holding different positions.

In the researchers' survey, the respondents were asked to rate if the principles of gender equality were fully applied at all levels of operations and decision-making. The results show very positive perception and they are illustrated in a graph below:

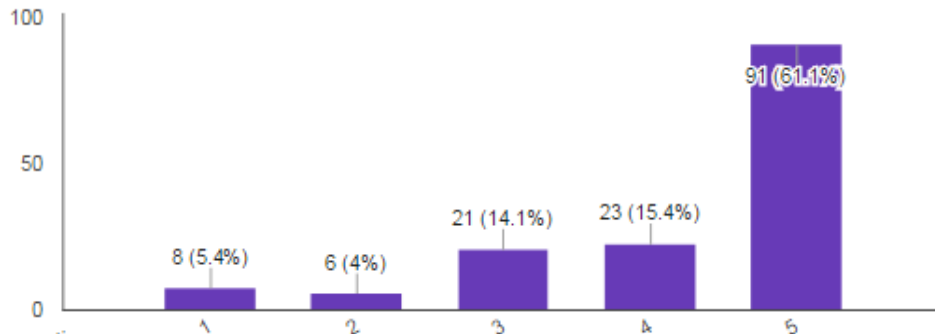


Figure 5. Perception of application of gender equality principles in the university among researchers

Employment and career development

In 2014, university recruited 53 researchers (6.8% of overall number of researchers), out of which only 1 on senior position (level of assistant professor and higher). 9 researchers were retired in the same period. Thus, overall growth of the human capacity was 5.7%.

The overall growth of the human capacity remains high related this to increasing number of the PhD students, and the high number of new recruited researchers too.

All positions are advertised at the website of the Public procurement agency (www.app.gov.al) and university website (www.unitir.edu.al). The positions are advertised only in local language. University does not publish the job ads to EURAXESS Jobs portal.

Call for action: translate website to English. Publish to EURAXESS Jobs.

The duration of the position advertisement is 15 days. Typical duration of the employment contracts for teaching assistant position is one year, associate professors and full professors are employed on a permanent basis.

Call for action: increase the duration of position advertisement

The decision to open the position is made by the faculty deans. The Dean of the faculty is entitled to announce an open position, based on the proposal submitted by the head of the department. The head of the department also needs to submit a list of criteria to be fulfilled for the position. Then, the Dean of the Faculty approves the criteria or introduces his/ her own proposal and makes a decision on announcing an open position. The decision depends on different factors such as short term needs and participation in ongoing programs/projects.

The selection of candidates is carried out by the members of the evaluation committee. They are nominated based on the Article 66 of the Statute of the University of Tirana. This committee is made up of: head of the department; a representative elected by the head of the department; two members elected by the Dean, one of which should be a representative of the Department; and a representative elected by the Rector. The majority of the committee is made up by representatives of the respective department.

The selection of open position candidates in the University of Tirana is done through public competition procedures. The members of the committee decide on the points to be awarded to each of the candidates, according to the general and special criteria established for the position. The candidate needs to prepare a file with all necessary documents (diploma, degrees, trainings, teaching experience, participation in conferences, publications etc). The complete file is awarded 60 points. Then, upon reviewing the file and evaluation, the candidate moves on to the interview phase. Candidates moving to the second phase fulfill all general criteria for the position. The interview is evaluated with maximum of 40 points. Then a report is prepared with enclosed evaluation reports and submitted to the Rector's office. Finally, the Rector, as the employer of the institution makes a decision and informs the winning candidate.

Research positions at the University of Tirana are considered as competitive in the fields of social sciences, humanities and law, and not as competitive in the fields of mathematics, physics, chemistry etc. The competitiveness is ensured by setting up the minimum number of applicants. Namely, the call is cancelled if less than 3 candidates have applied. In this case, the procedure needs to start from the beginning and the competition is considered open once again.

For advancing from one position to another, precise criteria factors are defined. For example, for the associate professor title: he/she has taught at least for three years and has good teaching qualities; he/she has participated and presented at 8 conferences and scientific meetings, 5 of which have been

presented in international scientific activities. All these presentations should be published; he/she should have written at least 5 scientific original articles. The researcher has to be first author in at least two of them in an internationally recognized magazine. One of the articles has to be published in a journal with impact factor; he/she should have lectured a subject for more than two years and at the same time have prepared teaching materials such as lectures, exercises etc.

In order for a researcher to get the title of Professor, he/she has to: have taught for at least 5 years (7 years for part time lecturers) after receiving their PhD degree; have good teaching abilities and have actively participated in the institutional and academic development of higher education; have research or teaching experience in an international academic institution for at least one year; have thought in one of the following languages: English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Russian; have prepared and presented 15 presentations in conferences, 8 of which in internationally scientific activities and published in the proceedings; have published 9 original articles or reviews, 4 of which accepted by international scientific magazine, and two articles published in a impact factor magazine. Alternative way to fulfill criteria is to publish a scientific monograph in a foreign language which counts for 6 scientific articles. A scientific monograph published in Albanian counts for 4 published scientific articles. Researchers should have lectured a subject or a module for more than four years and at the same time have prepared teaching materials such as lectures, exercises, programs of different subjects, one of which is taught in graduate level.

Career development services

There is a career development center (CDC) established at the university, but it does not provide services to PhD students, nor researchers.

CDC provided approx. 7000 services to students in 2014. The topics of the most commonly provided services and activities were: partnership, training, employment counseling, providing information about language courses, internship placement, placement into summer/winter schools, volunteering.

CDC continuously organizes trainings /courses to students in the areas of: communication skills, participation in interviews, academic writing and entrepreneurship. Other activities include organization of the Debate Championships and Career Fairs, Workshops and Info Days

CDC has capacity to expand its activities; it employs 6 full-time administrative staff, trained in developing, promoting, managing, coordinating, implementing career services in programmes, supported by Interface project, La Rochelle University, France and USAID.

The structure of the Career Center in Albania is a new concept, and many challenges are faced by CDC. However, the perception of its performance is quite positive. The challenges are:

- Presenting those CDC as a new concept in the Albanian Higher Education
- Promoting the CDC and their services
- The impact of CDC in growing the students potential by promoting to them the importance of those Career Centers
- Creating a network with public and private subjects
- Creating a student volunteer group

- Finding out different possibilities as internships, work practices or employment for students enhancement, to facilitate their transition from the academic to the professional world
- Design a proper database with all students' contacts, in order to send informing e-mails regarding university activities and other important issues.

Call for action: Increase capacity of CDC to deal with researchers, at least with PhD candidates. Provide trainings to CDC staff.

Overview of data from the researchers' survey

Survey data shows that researchers are in general satisfied with the way employment and career development processes are implemented in the university. Majority thinks that evaluation criteria are transparent, but there is only a moderate consensus on the fairness and satisfaction of the best interest of the organization in the above processes.

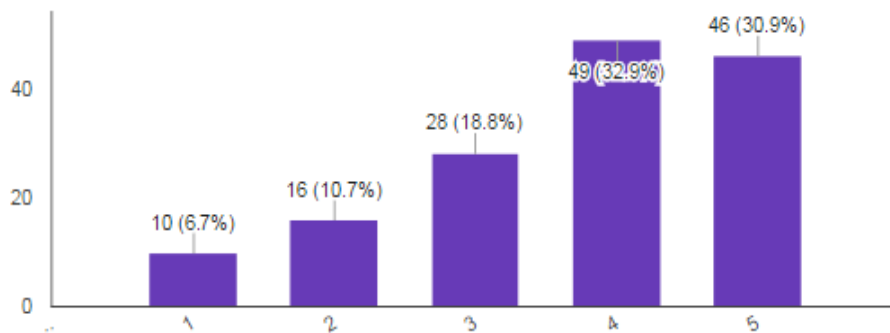


Figure 6. Perception of researchers of the transparency of the criteria for employment or career advancement

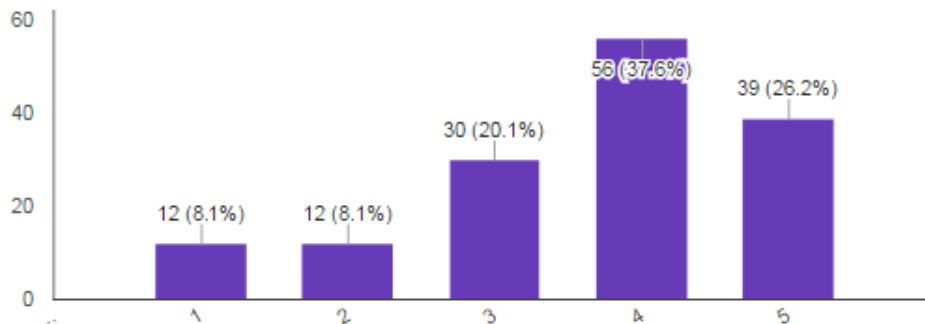


Figure 7. Perception of the fairness and satisfaction of the best interest of the employer in the processes of employment and career development

Although respondents have shown the high level of consensus on the quality of interviewing process during employment, somewhat worrisome results have been acquired regarding the standardization of evaluation reports. As much as 58.4% of the respondents did not know if the reports were standard or not. 31.5% of respondents declared that the reports are standardized and 10.1% that they aren't.

Call for action: investigate the issue of standardized reports among different departments. Introduce standard reports

The most important criteria for employment and career development, as identified by the respondents were: published scientific publications (75.8%), teaching experience (74.5%) and foreign language skills (59.7%). Moderately important factors were: professional skills (48.3%), professional certificates (47%), teaching publications (32.9%) and mobility (32.2%). Factors that have been found as not important were industry (5.4%) and entrepreneurship (4.7%) experiences.

The respondents were also asked to provide general comments regarding the employment and career development in the university. Below, the highlighted comments are listed¹:

- Cilesite e listuara me siper kerkohen, por marrja ne konsiderate e tyre mund te varioje.
- Ka nevojte te permiresohet dhe te vleresohet me drejt. Duhet vendosur standarde te qarta dhe mire te matshme lidhur me cilesine dhe etiken profesionale, edhe ketu ndoshta ne perputhje me Kartën Evropiane për Kërkuesit dhe Kodin e Rekrutimit të kërkuesve shkencorë.
- Punesimi i kerkuesve eshte i rralle ne institucionin ku une punoj.
- Mendoj se kane qene zgjedhje te drejta per personat te cilet kane patur vleresim me te larte nder konkurentet e tjere dhe qe kane plotesuar kriteret e vendosura nga departamentet perkatese
- Pervoje profesionale
- Behet pa vendosur kriteret, bazohet vetem mbi noten mesatare te studimeve te larta, edhe kur kandidatet jane 60 vjec
- Ne ato raste ku une kam qene anetar i grupit perzgjedhës, por edhe ne raste te tjera qe kam dijeni, ajo behet duke u mbeshtetur ne disa kriteret qe jane vendosur paraprakisht nga departamenti dhe qe jane shpallur edhe ne gazeten zyrtare ku pasqyrohet vendi i punes qe kerkohet te zihet. Disa nga kriteret baze jane: Nota mesatare, lloji i diplomes, fusha e ngushte ku kerkohet te punesohet si dhe elemente te tjera qe deshmojne aftesine e kandidatit ne kete fushe, si punime, pervoje mesimdhene, gjuhe e huaj, etj. Per ata qe kane diplome te marre jashte shteti, kriteri eshte qe kjo diplome te jete e njësuar me nje nga diplomat shqiptare nga MAS. Nese nuk eshte bere njësimi, kandidati skualifikohet.
- Zakonisht, zgjidhet kandidati, pastaj gjërat rrjedhin vetëvetiu.
- Te jete transparent
- nuk kam informacion,
- Mendoj qe procesi i rekrutimit te stafit akademik duhet te jete me strikt dhe me disa nivele ne menyre qe te punesohet staf i kualifikuar: 1) te behet testim i njohurive (nuk mjafton vetem mesatarja) Pjese e testit te jene edhe aspekte psikologjike dhe te komunikimit. 2) Intervista
- Kerkimi duhet mbeshtetur konkretisht jo duke denderur me formulare qe hane dite te tera! Kerkimi kerkon fonde dhe kohe!!!
- Nuk jam shume ne dijeni te ketij procesi.
- No comment
- Kriteret nuk kane qene te qendruedhme, pasi njehere per punesimin eshte vene si kriter pasja e bachelorit ne degen perkatese dhe njehere jo, njehere eshte vene kriter pasja e Dr. njehere jo, njehere eshte kerkuar qe te treja ciklet e studimit te jene ne degen perkatese dhe njehere jo.
- Informacioni per kete ceshtje eshte i pamjaftueshem per te dhene nje vleresim.

¹ Number of list items does not correspond to the number of received narrative comments. Some comments were merged, while the others were structured into several items.

- Kriteret per punesim qe duhet te plotesojne kandidatet duhet te diskutohen dhe te miratohen neper Departamente dhe vetem mbas miratimit ne Departamente te publikohen.
- Korrekt
- Kriteret jane, por nuk mendoj se zbatohen me korrektese.
- Nuk kam
- eshte i domosdoshem

Ethics

The Ethical Committee is established and it operates on the basis of article 17, law nr.9741 “For the Higher Education in the Republic of Albania”. According to point 2 of this article, the members of the Ethical Committee are elected by the Senate of the University, after being proposed by the Faculties. The rights, duties, organization and functioning of the Committee are determined in the Statute and Regulation of the University as well as in the regulations of each Faculty.

The members of the Ethical Committee are elected by the Academic Senate from the academic staff, based on the Rector’s proposal. The Ethical Committee has 7 members. Based on University of Tirana Statute dated 16.12.2009 (article 28), each gender (male and female) should have at least 2 representatives at the Ethical Committee. 6 members are elected from the academic personnel of the University and 1 member is from the Rectorate. Each Rectorate unit proposes a respective candidate to the Rector.

The Ethical Committee elects its Chairman and nominates it to the Academic Senate. The Code of Ethics describes the decision making processes, handling of complaints and respective restrictions. The University’s Code of Ethics is a written set of guidelines issued by the Ethical Committee to its workers and students, to help them conduct their actions in accordance with University primary values and ethical standards.

The Committee has the right to request and obtain information from the academic personnel, teaching and administrative staff as well as the member units of the University of Tirana, apart from the Academic Senate, Rector, Council of Administration and parallel structures and student councils, to make sure the ethical principles of their work are in accordance with University primary values and ethics.

In case of concerns regarding the verification of different cases in governing bodies of the university, and also regarding cooperation with individuals, agencies and institutions outside the University of Tirana, the Ethical Committee should get permission from the Academic Senate, and when this is impossible, the Committee should get permission from the Rector. In the end, the Ethical Committee submits the conclusions to the Rector, with the corresponding recommendations.

When verifications are related to academic personnel, and the consent is obtained before this verification, the Rector informs (letting know about this cases) the Academic Senate about the conclusions.

The cases handled by the Ethical Committee are considered transparent since all meetings are open to the public; anyone can participate but without eligibility to vote.

The members of the Ethical Committee are not remunerated for their work.

There are no tools to help members. There is only one secretary who keeps the correspondence, takes down minutes of meetings etc.

Call for action: Increase capacity of the ethical committee. Start an initiative to introduce the tools for plagiarism detection

The possible consequences for established misconduct are: revocation of the scientific degree, unregistering the lecturer and a legal action.

Only one case of misconduct was established in 2014, where the Committee analyzed a case brought into its attention by the Council of professors at the Faculty of Social sciences. They found plagiarism in the dissertation of a lecturer at this Faculty. After reviewing the request, the Ethical Committee decided that the case was an infringement of the Code of Ethics.

The Ethical Committee does not discuss about ethical issues arising from research projects.

Overview of data from the researchers' survey

In general, the respondents were moderately satisfied with the way the different ethical issues are being handled at the university. 39.6% of the researchers were familiar with the cases of the ethical principles breach. When asked if the cases of the ethical principles breach were resolved in a fair way, 15.4% of the respondents were negative and 10.1% positive. 74.5% of the respondents were not familiar with the outcomes of these cases, indicating a lack of transparency in handling with ethical issues.

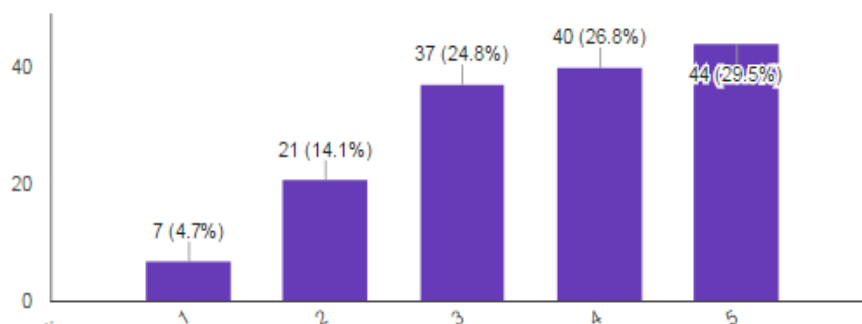


Figure 8. Perception of the satisfaction of the fundamental principles of professional ethics in research

Awareness of the researchers of the contractual and legal obligations arising from the employment contract and other signed acts and agreements is at high level. However, not so positive responses were collected regarding the level of implementation of good practices related to the protection of research results, their confidentiality (before publication), as well as the protection of the personal data which is collected in the research process. The results are even more negative when adequate presentation of the research work in general public is considered, with clear lack of consensus of the respondents.

Call for action: increase the transparency of ethical issues treatment and handling

Call for action: Organize training on the protection of research results, their confidentiality (before publication), as well as the protection of the personal data which is collected in the research process

Call for action: Develop and implement a strategy for communicating the scientific results with the general public

The data related to the perception of the equal and active participation in the work of the decision-making bodies in the university are inconclusive, showing that additional investigation is needed.

Call for action: Reconsider the legal opportunities for researchers of all types to participate in the work of decision making bodies of the university

The highlights of the narrative comments are provided below²:

- Nuk kam
- Ka nevojë të përmiresohet dhe të vlerësohet me drejt, ndoshta duke u njohur dhe aplikuar Kartën Evropiane për Kërkuesit dhe Kodin e Rekrutimit të kërkuesve shkencorë.
- Nisur nga rasti i shkeljes së ndershmerisë akademike në institucionin ku unë punoj, duhet të krijohet një paketë me mekanizma që të parandalojë dhe të ndeshkojë pandershmerinë akademike. Po ashtu nevojitet një politikë nepermjet së cilës të mbështet kërkimi institucional dhe projektet e kërkimit të aplikuar në shërbim të zgjidhjes së problemeve që qendrojnë përparshërisht, psi aktualisht kërkimi është një nisje dhe veprimtari individuale.
- Ka korrektesë për sa i takon anës etike dhe profesionale
- Karriera e kërkuesve në Universitetin e Tiranës pengohet qëllimisht duke mos përdorur asnjë sistem vlerësimi të kërkimit shkencor. Personalitete shkencore pushohen nga puna për arsye krejtësisht joetike.
- Lidhur me piken e fundit, kam parasysh që puna e kërkuesve paraqitet në departament dhe pastaj ajo botohet, kështu që ajo është në dispozicion të një rrethi të gjere kombëtar lexuesish kur është në shqip dhe të një rrethi më të gjere kur është në anglisht. Lidhur me piken e parafundit, aktualisht përveç përfaqësimit në Departament, dhe në organet e zgjedhura si p.sh. Dekanat, Senat, nuk ka ende organizma të tjera ku kategori të ndryshme të përfaqësohen në mënyrë të ekuilibruar. Zgjedhja në të ardhmen e afert e komisioneve për çështje të ndryshme do të jetë pozitive, por nuk do të arrijë një përfaqësim të plotë të asistent-lektoreve ose lektoreve. Kjo për mua nuk është e domosdoshme.
- Në Shqipëri, Etika mungon duke filluar nga Presidenti e deri te qytetari i Konispolit apo Vermoshit. Zero! Shikoni pak vlerësimet e doktoratave, të gjitha mbi 90 pikë, askush nuk është kthyer, apo përjashtuar, të gjithë të shkëlqyer!
- Nuk kam informacion për këtë
- Kodi i etikës duhet të zbatohet në mënyrë të barabartë nga kandidati, udhëheqësi dhe profesorati
- Ka nevojë për procedurë më të rregullta dhe të zbatueshme.
- Duhet përmiresuar

² Number of list items does not correspond to the number of received narrative comments. Some comments were merged, while the others were structured into several items.

- Nuk ka nje program plagjature. Nuk vleresohet cilesia e punes kerkimore. Nuk ofrohet mbeshtetje nga institucioni ne fushen e kerkimit, si ne aspektin e aksesimit te informacionit, ashtu edhe mbeshtetje financiare.
- Pergjithesisht kerkimi shkencore ne FSHS kryhet ne nivel inmdioividual. Per kete arsye, praktikat institucionale te kerkimit shkencor (monitorm, raportim, publikim, etj.)
- Probleme lidhur origjinalitetin e puneve dhe botimin ne revista pseudoshkencore
- Mjaft me me profesore doktore qe sapo marrin titullin nuk shkruajne me asnje rresht, nuk kane piken e vleres as si mesues te fillores e jo me si profesore. Jepuni hapesire te rinjve, atyre qe cdo gje e kane me djerse jo atyre qe kane marre 100 pikesha doktorature kot me kot.
- Mendoj se cdo gje behet ne perputhje me rregullat ne fuqi.
- Mendoj qe ne institucionin ku une jam pjese, ka nje mungese njohurish te aspekteve etike dhe profesionale. Megjithate, njihen raste te shkeljes se saj dhe te mungesave te masave te ndermarra.
- Institucioni yne nuk financon projekte kerkimore dhe karriera kerkimore kryhet permes perpjekjeve individuale te pedagoqeve, te cilet me financimet e veta bejne kerkime dhe i prezantojne ato kryesisht ne konferenca.
- Dizertacionet e UT jane te aksesueshme online, gje qe i le shkak plagjiarizmit nga kushdo qe ka nje access online.
- Niveli mbetet i kenaqshem, por permiresimi i metejshe eshte domosdoshmeri.
- kerkuesit shkencore perpigen te demonstrojne origjinalitet ne grubullimin dhe interpretimin e te dhenave. si dhe trasparance ne drejtim te rezultateve dhe konkuzionevete te arrituara.

Working conditions

EURAXESS Service Centre is not established in the University of Tirana.

Call for action: Establish EURAXESS Local Contact Point in cooperation with Agency

The teaching/research balance in the University of Tirana is considered as good. Annual teaching norms are 200 hours for full professors, 220 for associate professor, 260 for PhD assistants and lecturers and 300 for docents. Typical norm for research and development is 200-300 hours. Some hours are allocated to providing the institutional support.

Each employee should fulfill the requirements as determined by the code, and these requirements imply 192 days of work or 1536 hours per year. A full time employee should spend at least 6 hours teaching per week, whereas part time staff should teach 150 hours a year.

Academic personnel employed in institutes and research centers can teach 20-30% of the norm of the academic staff employed at the faculties, thus providing them with more time for research.

One of the main issues in providing excellent working conditions in University of Tirana is the low level of development of the research infrastructure (laboratories, devices, etc.). As far as facilities are concerned, there have been some improvements in the recent years, though they still cannot be considered in full compliance with international standards. (ratio students/ m2). As a result, the teaching process is carried out in shifts, until the late hours of the evening and during weekends as well.

Call for action: establishment of WGs to investigate availability of infrastructural funds for improving the facilities

The University does not implement a specific award system for extraordinary achievements in science and research.

Call for action: start an initiative to introduce individual award system

The sabbatical opportunity is used in University of Tirana in compliance with article 52, law nr, 9741, date 21.07.2007 “on higher education in the Republic of Albania, as amended. The teaching and research personnel obtaining degrees have the right to work on their academic improvement once in 7 years. During this period, the teaching and research personnel is not required to teach. Researcher can attend trainings and courses in other institutions, during this period. In these cases, there is a special contract that determines duties and responsibilities of parties, thus to be signed by the Rector and the interested party.

Overview of data from the researchers’ survey

In the researchers’ survey, respondents were asked for the opinion on the adequacy of the research infrastructure, quality of the different services provided by the faculty (legal, HR, accounting, student affairs and EURAXESS SC), teaching-research balance and salaries.

Call for action: Establish EURAXESS SC center or at minimum contact person and focus its/his/her services to outgoing mobility

Data shows clear conviction of the respondents that the institutional research infrastructure is not adequate.

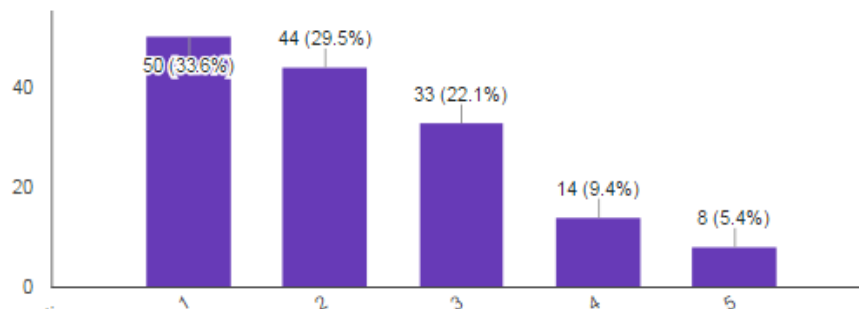


Figure 9. Perception of the adequacy of the institutional research infrastructure, by the respondents

Call for action: Promote funding programmes which involve the infrastructural measures

Call for action: Implement a fund raising strategy and working groups which will continuously work on getting the infrastructural funds

Majority of respondents believe that researchers are overburdened with the teaching engagement. This is clearly supported by the data on the average number of teaching hours per week. 31.5% teach 5-10 hours, the number consistent with the results of the desk research. However, additional 52.3% teach 10-

15 hours and 14.1% even more than 15. This is considered as worrisome since such high engagement can significantly affect the availability of respondents to perform research activities, pursue professional skills development opportunities, etc.

Call for action: Consider the possibilities for reducing the teaching load

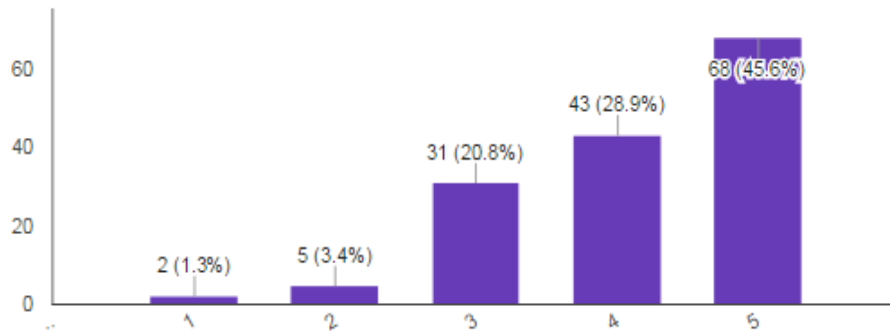


Figure 10. Perception of the overburden of the respondents with the teaching engagement

Large majority of respondents show dissatisfaction with their salaries.

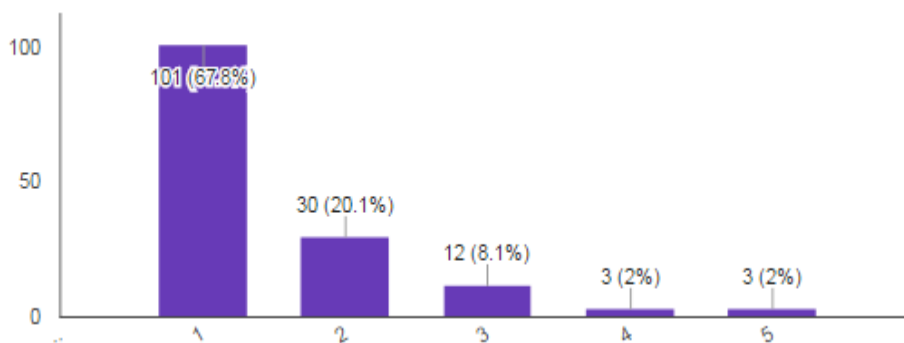


Figure 11. Level of satisfaction of the respondents with the salaries

Finally respondents were asked to provide narrative comments related to working conditions and social security. Some of the highlighted feedbacks are provided below³:

- Nuk kam
- Vleresimi i cilesise se zyrove i referohej fakultetit apo universitetit? Nese te parit, jane dobet. Ne se te dytit, shumica nuk kane kontakt dhe nuk e njohin cilesine e punes se tyre.
- Dobet. Mbeshtetje e dobet
- Pagat jane shume te ulta, me te ultat ne bote!
- Ka nevojte te permiresohet rrenjesisht ne perputhje me standardet, te cilat duhet gjithashtu te jene te qarta dhe te matshme.
- Pozicioni i kerkuesit eshte i njohur prej ligjit, por ne instituionin ku punoj askush nuk ka statusin e punenjesit kerkimor

³ Number of list items does not correspond to the number of received narrative comments. Some comments were merged, while the others were structured into several items.

- Mendoj se puna ime dhe te gjithë kolegeve eshte serioze dhe qe gjithmone eshte e prirur te kete permiresime te vazhdueshme. Po ashtu kushtet e punes ne salla, mjetet dhe pajisjet jane duke u permiresuar vazhdimisht. Ndjejmë nevojën e permiresimit te pagave si dhe vleresimit te disa pjeseve te punes tone te cilat nuk konsiderohen ne ngarkesen mesimore sic jane diplomat dhe korrigjimet e provimeve. Nga ana e institucionit nuk ka pasur pengesa.
- Kerkuesit jane te keqpaguar dhe te pasigurte per shkak te keqmenaxhimit dhe mungeses se plote te lirise akademike.
- Megjithese ka permiresime te dukshme per kushtet e ambientit ku punohet, duhet vazhduar puna per permiresimin e laboratorev dhe kryesorja pagesa e punonjesve mesimore shkencore, e cila krahasuar edhe me vende fqinje, Kosova, Maqedonia, eshte shume me e vogel.
- Laborator i kerkimit cilesor mungon.
- Nuk ka biblioteke online dhe as fizike qe te perballoje nevojat e stafit
- Duhet permiresuar kushtet
- Mungon aksesit pa pagese ne artikujt e revistave te njohura shkencore (si ieee, elsevier, etj.), qe mund te realizohet me marreveshje institucionale. Cdo aksesim online i artikujve shkencor behet duke paguar individualisht dhe cdo publikim apo pjesemarrje ne konferenca shkencore behet po prape duke paguar individualisht dhe jo nga institucioni.
- Nuk plotesohen kushtet minimale te nevojshme per te kryer kerkimin. Cdo gje eshte e siguruar dhe mbuluar nga vete doktoranti. Kerkimi nuk eshte i ndare nga mesimdhenia.
- Kjo pyetje nuk ka lidhje me rrealitetin shqiptar!
- Kushte skandaloze, as ne Kandahar besoj nuk jane te tilla. Duam zyra sipas gruplendeve dhe fushave kerkimore, tre deri kater persona.biblioteke, libra, etj
- Duhet nderhyre urgjentisht sa i takon kushteve te punes.
- Kerkimi shkencor financiarisht i paperballueshem. Institucioni nuk ofron infrastrukturen materiale dhe teknologjike per kerkimin shkencor (psh: mungon aksesit free ne biblioteka dixhitale per pedagoget te cilet jane ne proces te punes per kerkim shkencor; mungojne mundesite per shkembime ekperiencash (fellowships) me kerkues te universiteteve jashte. Edhe nese ka te tilla bashkepunime, procedurat jane te paqarta, etj.
- Pedagoget duhet te paguhen jo vetem si mesues por edhe si punonjes kerkimore, qe do tethote se duhet te lejohen te kryejne kerkim shkencor pergjate nje semestri dhe te paguhen. Por, shefat e departamenteve ju pergjigjen se pedagoget paguhen per ore pune ne auditor, dhe jo per kerkime (qe sigurisht qe nuk kryhen brenda ne auditor), madje edhe kur e plotesojne ngarkesen mesimore per graden qe kane brenda nje semestri, pedagoget detyrohen te jene ne auditor edhe semestrin tjeter. Kjo duket me shume si strategji e mbajtjes se studenteve ne shkollë (qe funksionon si kopesht).
- Hapesira ne dispozicion te pedagoqeve eshte e pamjaftueshme (ne departamentin ku punoj ka vetem nje hapësirë te vogel per 51 pedagoqe dhe ka vetem 2 kompjutere). Gjithashtu, auditoret kane mungese te kondicionimit, cka e ben te veshtire mesimin gjate muajve maj, qershor dhe korrik. Gjithashtu, shume pak prej sallave jane te pajisura me projektore. Biblioteka e Departamentit eshte teper e varfer dhe nuk ofron libra baze per studentet.
- no comment
- Ambientet kane nevojë per riorganizim ne permbushje te kerkesave dhe nevojave te studenteve dhe stafit akademik (m.q.se punohet edhe ne oret e vona te pasdrekes).
- Ne perputhje me rregullat perkatese ligore.

- kushtet jo te pershtatshme per kerkim shkencor
- Kerkuesit shkencor nuk mbeshteten financiarisht. Studime individuale nuk kane asnje lloj financimi. Gjithahstu nuk finanohet pjesemarrja ne konferenca nderkombetare e studjuesve, etj.
- le per te deshruar, ka nevojte te permiresohet

Accountability and public responsibility

The level of awareness of researchers in the university on the ethical issues and standards in research, related to data protection, privacy, confidentiality, plagiarism and others is considered as good, on the scale: very low-low-satisfactory-good-very good.

The level of awareness of researchers in the university on the contractual and legal obligations arising from work contracts, laws and by-laws is considered as good, on the scale: very low-low-satisfactory-good-very good.

The researchers in University of Tirana are obliged to submit the reports on the teaching activities (submitted at the end of the academic year) and on the research work (attended conferences, accepted articles, successful mentoring), once a year. These reports are used for statistical purposes and for reporting to the Ministry of Education and Sports, Institute of statistics etc. They can also be used for short term and long term studies; as an argumentation to open new positions; evaluation of individual performance in cases of contract renewal, etc.

Public engagement

The typical activities in which the scientific results and achievements in the university are presented to the wider public are projects, conferences and round tables.

No science career promotions are organized in high schools.

The University has a PR department. One person works in this department. The typical activities of the PR department are as follows: awarding Honoris Causa, Open Lectures, promotional activities and media notification by phone and email.

Facebook is regularly used for promotional activities.

Overview of data from the researchers' survey

Survey data shows that, in general, the respondents are aware about the contractual and legal obligations arising from the employment contract and other signed acts and agreements. Somewhat less positive data was get when researchers were asked to provide a rate of their satisfaction with institutional implementation of good practices related to the protection of research results, their confidentiality (before publication), as well as the protection of the personal data which is collected in the research process.

Call for action: Organize trainings on the topics of the protection of research results, their confidentiality (before publication), as well as the protection of the personal data which is collected in the research process.

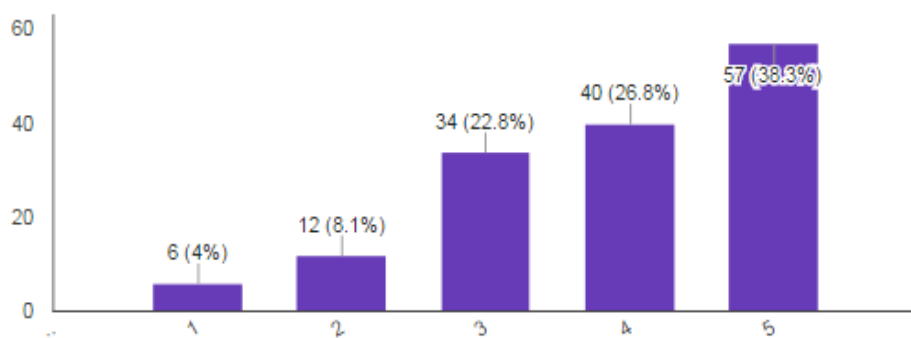


Figure 12. Awareness of the respondents about the contractual and legal obligations arising from the employment contract and other signed acts and agreements

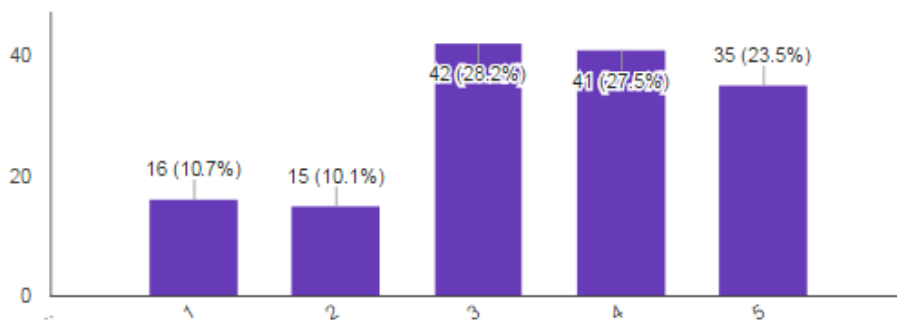


Figure 13. Perception on the institutional level of implementation of good practices related to the protection of research results, their confidentiality (before publication), as well as the protection of the personal data which is collected in the research process

However, respondents were not fully satisfied with the implementation of the reporting system (regarding research activities) in the university and methodology for evaluation of the individual researchers' works.

Call for action: initiate a discussion about introduction of the effective and efficient reporting process

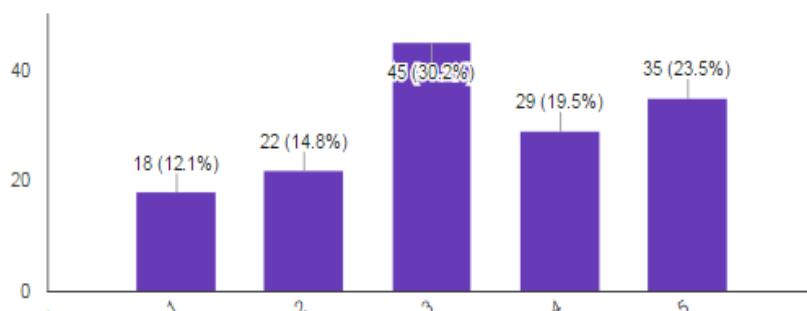


Figure 14. Satisfaction of the respondents with a reporting and assessment/evaluation system on the research of individual researchers

Also, the level of public responsibility of researchers regarding the dissemination of the scientific results in the broader communities is not favorable, according to the respondents' perception.

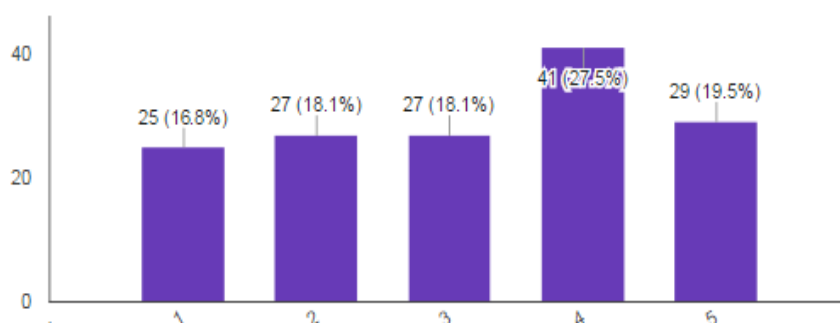


Figure 15. The perception of the respondents of the adequate presentation of the scientific results in the general public

Call for action: Develop and implement a strategy for communicating the scientific results with the general public

Training

Mentoring and supervision

Out of 235 PhD students who were awarded a degree in 2014, 19 were supervised by the associate professors.

A researcher University of Tirana can work as a mentor of a PhD candidate, based on the decision of the Council of Ministers, no. 864, date 05.12.2007, as amended, point 4, if he/she has at least a PhD Degree from an international University. The mentor should be an associate professor or full professor and he/she should have carried research in the field.

The Evaluation Committee is made up of 5 members. Three of them should be full professors. All members need to have national and international academic and scientific experience. The composition of the committee is proposed at the council of professors by the coordinator of the PhD program or head of the department. The Council assigns 2 or 3 opponents, one of whom has to be an external member and within the field of study.

The mentor of a PhD student is selected by the student himself/herself, at the time of application and submission of necessary documents to attend the third cycle of studies. Approval of the Council of professors is needed for the assignment of the Mentor.

According to the PhD Regulation, article 5, the PhD candidate has to submit a report at least once a year. The report shows his/her performance in compliance with his/her program. In cases where student is found unable to continue with his/her studies, he/she can be unregistered upon request of the mentor and approved by the Council of professors.

A PhD candidate can be granted a request to change an assigned mentor after approval of the Council of professors. It usually happens when the mentor resigns or leaves his/her position.

According to instruction no. 20, date 09.05.2008 of the Minister of Science and Education “on the activity of the academic personnel in public institutions of higher education”, the successful mentoring is remunerated with the value of 180 teaching hours. Members of the PhD evaluation committee are not remunerated for their work, except for the opponent, who is remunerated for his/her work and that counts for 20 teaching hours.

PhD training

University of Tirana offers Master courses in English language. Apart from master courses in English at the Department of English Language and Literature (Translation/ Interpretation; Communication and Tourism; Teaching Methodology), there are two master programs at the Faculty of Economic in Finance, Accounting and Auditing and IT Business process Management and one program master in the Faculty of Social Science “Curriculum Development joint European Political Science MA.

University of Tirana does not offer joint PhD degrees, but it offers joint mentorship programmes (cotutelle) in the Faculties of Law, Economics, Foreign languages and History and Philology.

The students have to use their own budget to pay for participation in scientific conferences and summer schools.

Most PhD students in University of Tirana work as lecturers in different faculties, thus it is very easy for them to intertwine skills and use them to their benefit. Some of them work for different institutions, which gives them the opportunity to learn and share at the same time. There are certain criteria that students need to fulfill and training is among them, especially in teaching.

Overview of data from the researchers' survey

The researchers' survey addressed the quality of PhD training, namely the activities of mentorship and supervision; and development of professional skills in the university.

The survey data shows that significant number of respondents perceives the work on mentorship and supervision as superficial and not effectively evaluated. The most often highlighted reasons for that were lack of mentoring and supervision plan (51% of respondents) and lack of procedures for evaluation of those activities (47.7%).

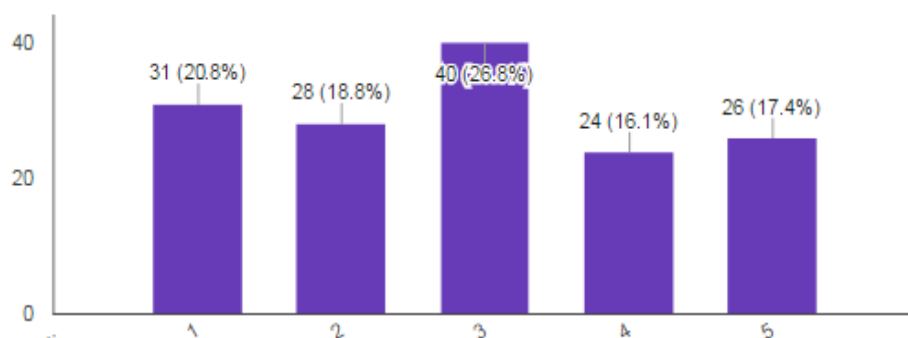


Figure 16. Perception of the misconduct in the activities of mentorship and supervision (superficial manner and lack of effective evaluation)

Call for action: Implement the procedures for evaluation of mentoring and supervision activities

Call for action: Establish system of “contracts” with PhD students, which will highlight a generic plan of the individual work with mentors/supervisors

Respondents show strong conviction that researchers in the university are interested in pursuing professional development opportunities. Significant factors that assumingly negatively contribute to above are lack of availability (overburden) of researchers (51% of respondents) and lack of trainings/courses offers and lack of general institutional plan for individual professional development (45%).

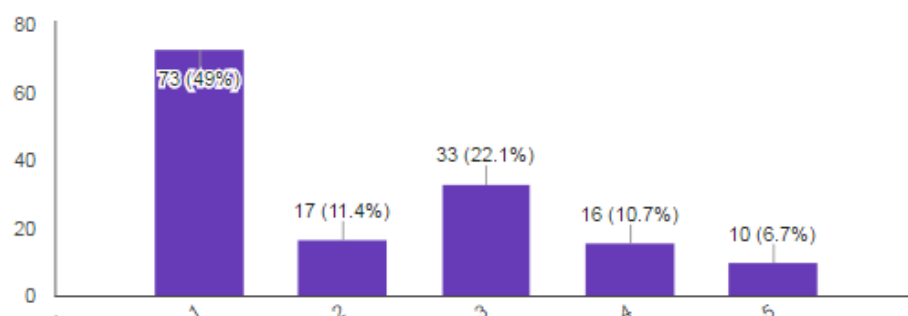


Figure 17. Perception of low interest of researchers to pursue continuing professional development opportunities

Call for action: Develop the professional development strategic agenda, build institutional capacity for implementing that agenda

Some narrative comments regarding training and professional development of researchers are highlighted here⁴:

- Infrastruktura pune brenda standardeve, te cilat duhet te jene te qarta dhe mire te matshme ne shkalle vendi. Po kjo duhet edhe per vleresimin dhe matjen e punes kerkimore. Edhe ketu nevojiten rregulla normimi te qarta, njelloj si per normimin ne mesimdhene. Mbi kriteret te tilla,

⁴ Number of list items does not correspond to the number of received narrative comments. Some comments were merged, while the others were structured into several items.

- duhet te rishihen, apo fuqizohen marrëdhëniet me institucionet shtetërore përgjegjëse, qendrore dhe vendore, për mbështetjen apo për zgjidhjen e çështjeve me interes të përbashkët institucional, apo në shkallë vendi. Këtu nevojitet lehtësim i procedurave për projektet e përbashkëta, jo vetëm në nivel administrativ, por edhe financiar. Në të dy këto aspekte burokracia dhe shkalla e mosbesimit mes palëve ka ardhur duke u rritur në këto 25 vite tranzicion. Kjo si brenda vetë institucionit dhe në marrëdhëniet me palët e treta të interesuara.
- Pa politika mbështetëse për zhvillimin e vazhdueshëm të kërkuesve nuk mund të arrihet zhvillimi i tyre. Por edhe pa fonde të mjaftueshme të kërkimit nuk mund të realizohet zhvillimi i vazhdueshëm i kërkuesve.
 - Mendoj se kërkuesit e rinj dhe të vjetër shpesh kërkojnë në mënyrë individuale të përmirësojnë karrirën e tyre sidomos në bashkëpunime me institucione ndërkombëtare. Do të ishte mirë të kishte planifikime të organizuara të përmirësimit të karrierës të çdo niveli nga Asistent deri në Profesor si në mesimdhënie dhe në fushat e kërkimit respektiv.
 - nuk financohet kërkimi dhe prandaj do të jetë e pamundur të zhvillohet ai në mënyrë të qëndrueshme.
 - Ajo që e mban gjallë kërkimin shkencor është puna individuale e kërkuesve, nën mbikqyrjen e Departamentit, për marrjen e gradave dhe titujve shkencorë. Kjo mendoj do të mbetet edhe në të ardhmen. Ndryshimi i cështjeve mendoj se do të bëhet kur kërkuesit të punojnë në temat e tyre mbi bazën e projekteve kombëtare dhe ndërkombëtare, të cilat, të pakten duhet t'ju sigurojnë kërkuesve shpenzimet e paraqitjes së një punimi në një konferencë jashtë vendit, ose botimin e një punimi në një revistë serioze shkencore në fushën përkatëse. Është pozitiv fakti, që në një nga draft udhëzimet për marrjen e titujve, një arikull ndërkombëtar mund të ekuivalentohet me fitimin e një projekti kombëtar ose ndërkombëtar.
 - Nevojitet bashkërendim të metodistëve cilësorë dhe sasiorë, laborator kërkimi dhe demonstrues që ndihmojnë në aplikimin e paketave statistikore dhe të dhënave cilësore, inkurajim i punës në terren, motivim në pagë gjatë pjesëmarrjes në hulumtime me impakt shoqëror.
 - Ligji nuk ka marrë miratimin e stafit akademik, por vetëm të deputetëve
 - Institucioni ku unë bëj pjesë ka nevojë për projekte shkencore në bashkëpunim me partner të huaj.
 - Duhet detajuar
 - Mbingarkesa e kërkuesve në procese mësimore dhe administrative në institucion, si edhe mungesa e financimit për proceset e ndryshme të kërkimit apo publikimit, pengon zhvillimin e vazhdueshëm të kërkuesve në institucionin tim.
 - Kërkimi shkencor kryhet me tepër si një detyrim në kuadrin të marrjes së titujve dhe gradave, jo si një domosdoshmëri dhe nevojë për zhvillimin e vazhdueshëm të kërkuesve.
 - Duhet kushtëzuar si në hapsira lokale ashtu edhe kohore!! Shtimi i bibliotekave dhe hapsirave të leximit është një nevojë urgjente sepse informacioni sot kushton dhe është 1000 fishuar në çdo 3 deri 4 vjetar... Sot për sot përballemi me shkencën globale dhe jo me atë rajonale!!!!
 - Duke mos u dhënë shumë ngarkesa mësimore si edhe duke u financuar botimet dhe pjesëmarrjet në konferencat studimore shqiptare mund të bëjnë kërkime të jashtëzakonshme.
 - Për sa kohë që universiteti do të qëndrojë larg tregut, duke mos qenë institucioni i parë i preferuar për kërkime, situata aktuale do të vazhdojë.
 - Mendoj se është një aspekt me shumë rëndësi të cilit i duhet kushtuar vëmendja e duhur nga të gjitha instancat përkatëse.

- Edhe ne ligjin e vjeter mbeshtetej kerkimi por nuk u zbatua kurre, pse duhet te besojme se ligji i ri do nxiska kerkimin shkencor, kur pedagogete u thuhet se nuk ka fonde as per pagat e jo me per kerkim shkencor.
- Te kete kriter vleresimi me kredite qofte per pjesemarrje ne trajnime per ngritje profesionale apo per botime apo kumtesa. Per pjesemarrje ne aktivite te tilla nderkombetare shpenzimet te higen nga institucioni
- Ne varesi te menyres sesi di te hartohen aktet nenligjore mund te gjykohet nese do te kete ose jo impakt pozitiv ne zhvillimin e kerkimit shkencor
- no comment
- Rekrutimi i pedagogete te rinj, pa eksperience ne ndermarrje apo ne industri, direkt nfga bankat e shkolles si dhe trajtimi financiar i tyre me paga shume te uleta, nuk e nxit kerkimin shkencor. Pervec kesaj, kerkimi shkencor duhet te kete interes dhe te kerkohen rezultatet e kerkimit shkencor. Qeverite drejtojne ne menyre empirike, me stafe te nivelit medioker, per te cilet nuk ka interes kerkimi shkencor dhe modelet e reja te drejtimit dhe vendimmarrjes.
- Ka profesioniste te interesuar dhe me deshire per angzhime kerkimore, por te pamotivuar financiarisht.
- Rendesi primare ka ngritja e qendrave kerkimore ne rang Fakulteti, dhe rregullimi i statusit te personelit akademik me profil kerkimor- shkencor.
- eshte shume e nevojshme ulja e ngarkeses mesimore per kerkuesit shkencore, krijimi i hapesirave te bashkepunimit me institucionet nderkombetare si dhe rritja e mundesive financiare; ofrimi i mundesive financiare per perballimin e kostove ne pjesemarrje te konferencave nderkombetare, kerkimit shkencor si dhe botimet.
- Duhet tu krijohet hapesire kohore dhe mundesi financimi kerkuesve shkencor.
- Nuk kam
- Zhvillimi i vazhdueshem profesional kerkon permiresimin e infrastruktures dhe rritje te konsiderueshme te te ardhurave te kerkuesve. vet[m em nese ese kerkuesit nuk paguhen sa duhet.

Research projects and collaboration

The research personnel, students of second and third cycle of studies have the right to apply for funding approved by the budget of the University, to pursue their research. The Academic Senate approves the annual financial plan and announces it to the Rectorate, Faculties and respective web pages. The beneficiaries are announced every year in April and informed on full and partial compensation. The beneficiaries of these funds sign a special contract, clearly stating duties and obligations, with the Rectorate.

Sources of funding for research in 2014 were:

- University incomes (funds for conferences, teaching, membership etc) (approx. 50000 Euro)
- Agency for Research in Technology and Innovation (approx. 28000 Euro)
- EU-funded projects (IPA ADRIATIK-CBC, TEMPUS PROGRAM, ERASMUS MUNDUS) (approx. 155000 Euro)

At University of Tirana there is no central database of research projects.

No FP7 or H2020 projects were implemented at the university, so far.

Call for action: Organize info Days on FP7, H2020 and other EU sources of funding

Research collaboration

There has not been so far any uptake of the industry representatives in formal research projects. This is not considered as an issue, due to clear orientation of the university towards humanistic sciences.

University of Tirana frequently organizes activities with Alumni association such as Open Lectures with important guests, Joint Symposiums with students from diaspora, exchanging the best practices on education and research field during workshops and co-hosting events.

The University of Tirana has various bilateral agreements with public administration and NGO-s. The university has also signed agreement with different Ministries, Embassies, Law Courts etc.

Overview of data from the researchers' survey

The survey have found that researchers are not satisfied with the way institution disseminate and share accurate and updated information about research funding opportunities.

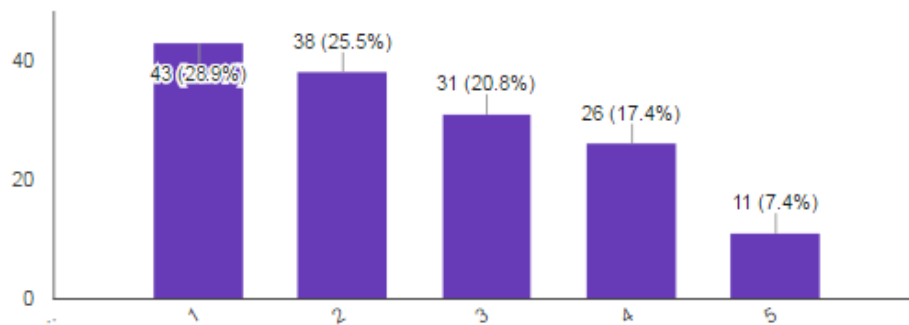


Figure 18. Perception of the respondents on the efforts by the institution to deliver accurate and updated information about the opportunities for research funding

Call for action: Establish a system which would enable a collection of relevant research funding opportunities data and its dissemination among researchers