

***HR STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS – HRS4R***  
**”ȘTEFAN CEL MARE” University of Suceava**  
**2024 – 2026**

*June 2024*

## Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. INTRODUCTION .....  | 3  |
| 2. STAGES OF HRS4R IMPLEMENTATION AT USV LEVEL .....   | 4  |
| 3. ORGANISATION PROFILE AND USV HRS4R MISSION .....  | 6  |
| 4. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF USV IN TERMS OF THE 4 CATEGORIES OF HRS4R PRINCIPLES.....   | 9  |
| 5. GAP ANALYSIS AT USV LEVEL OF THE 40 PRINCIPLES OF THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR RESEARCHERS AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS (C&C) ..... | 17 |
| 6. HRS4R IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS .....  | 34 |
| 7. ENTITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING USV HRS4R .....   | 39 |
| 8. ACTION PLAN.....  | 47 |
| ANNEXES .....  | 60 |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

"Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava (USV) is constantly concerned with improving the quality of research careers and broadening career opportunities for researchers and is willing to contribute to the development of a more attractive and competitive European research area. The University recognises the value of the 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and intends to apply them to enhance the attractiveness of research careers and to increase the quality of scientific research activities. The university's human resources strategy is a basis for quality and continuity of excellence in research and therefore the university aims to adapt its institutional guidelines and procedures to the principles of EU policy in this area.

During last year "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava made a commitment<sup>1</sup> to the implementation and certification process of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R), in the sense of:

- Approval of the statement of commitment of "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava to respect the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.
- Approval of the initiation of the implementation process of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers at University level

"Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava (USV) adhered to the principles contained in the Charter and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers in November 2023 through the Declaration of Commitment to the principles of these strategic documents (06.11.2023).

This document was uploaded on the EURAXESS platform on 16 January 2024 and a date was set for the documents to be completed by the USV (Gap Analysis, OTMR & Action Plan) to be uploaded on the EURAXESS website (16 January 2025).

The EURAXESS local working point of the University "Ștefan cel Mare" of Suceava was also created and the person responsible for the realization of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers at the level of the organization was designated in the person of Mrs. Otilia Cramariuc in order to meet the conditions for obtaining the HR Excellence in Research Award.

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<sup>1</sup> Decision of the Senate of "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava no. 7 of 23 February 2023

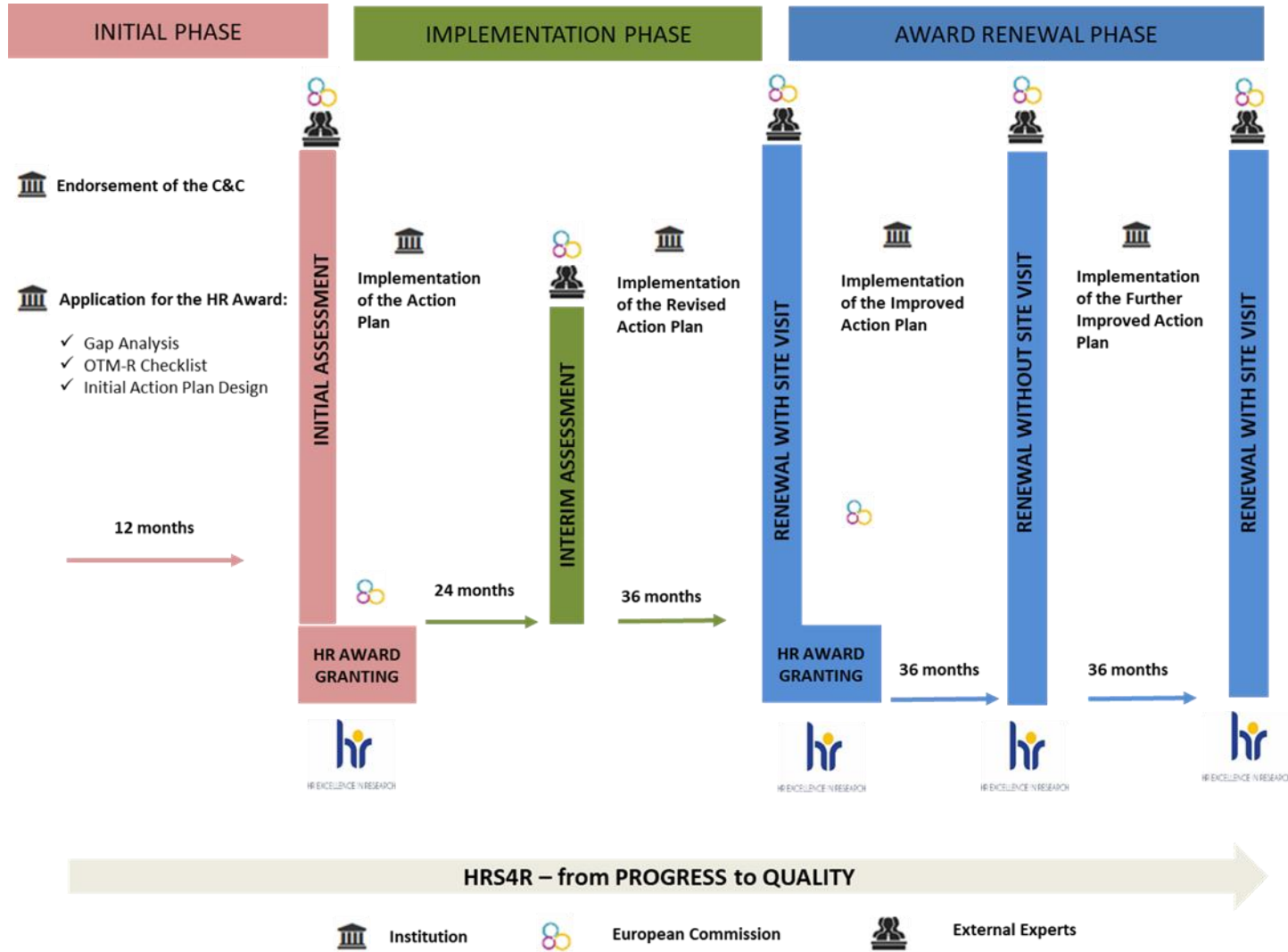
## 2. STAGES OF HRS4R IMPLEMENTATION AT USV LEVEL

The HR Excellence in Research Award is an international recognition of research institutions that have made progress in aligning their human resources policies with the principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, and that their recruitment and evaluation policies and practices are fair and transparent.

In this respect, the following 3 phases will need to be completed in order to successfully implement the 40 principles outlined above:

- **Initial phase:** carried out at the level of the institution concerned. This will consist of the internal analysis of the human resources policy (GAP Analysis), the checklist for an open, transparent and merit-based recruitment process (OTM-R) and the development of the Initial Action Plan. These documents will be submitted for assessment by the European Commission, which is the forum that recognises "HR Excellence in Research" to all institutions that make progress towards aligning their HR policy with the 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. This phase will end with the achievement of the HR AWARD certification
- **Implementation phase:** is supervised by the European Commission. It consists of the implementation of the proposed initial Action Plan, the mid-term evaluation, the revision of the plan and the implementation of the revised Action Plan. This phase will end with an on-site visit and the renewal of the HR AWARD certification.
- **The re-certification phase:** is supervised by external experts and consists of: the implementation of the improved Action Plan following the on-site visit, re-certification without the on-site visit, implementation of the final improved Action Plan taking into account all the comments of the committee, the internal conditionalities of the institution and other aspects, final on-site visit, final HR AWARD certification following the final visit.

Schematically, the phases of obtaining HR AWARD certification are as follows:



### 3. ORGANISATION PROFILE AND USV HRS4R MISSION

With an academic structure consisting of 11 faculties (56 undergraduate degree programmes, 8 professional conversion programmes, 35 master's degree programmes and doctoral studies in 13 fields), over 10. 000 students and over 800 employees (teaching, auxiliary teaching and non-teaching staff)<sup>2</sup> , 16th position in the University Metaranking for the year 2023<sup>3</sup> , USV has a prestigious research activity being a national leader in the invention activity being the first in Romania in the OSIM<sup>4</sup> ranking (both in terms of number of patents granted and of patent applications registered at OSIM in the last decade).

| <b>Sraff&amp;Students</b>   | <b>FTE (ENI)</b> |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. Students either full-time or part-time involved in research</b>               | <b>821</b>       |
| <i>Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)</i>   | <i>50</i>        |
| <i>Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)</i>  | <i>88</i>        |
| <i>Of whom are women</i>  | <i>418</i>       |
| <i>Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.</i> | <i>408</i>       |
| <i>Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level</i>   | <i>33</i>        |
| <i>Stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level</i>   | <i>380</i>       |
| <b>Total number of students (if relevant)</b>   | <b>10315</b>     |
| <b>Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)</b>  | <b>1293</b>      |

| <b>Research funding (for the last fiscal year)</b>   | <b>RON</b>  | <b>EUR</b> |
|--|-------------|------------|
| Total annual organisational budget   | 236.981.757 | 47.638.354 |
| Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)  | 22.469.980  | 4.516.942  |
| Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding) | 39.544.042  | 7.949.190  |
| Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research   | 1.031.831   | 207.420    |

<sup>2</sup> Report on USV current situation 2023

<sup>3</sup> Ranking of Romanian Universities 2023 [Metaranking Universitar 2023 Clasamentul-Universitatilor-Romanesti.pdf \(ubbcluj.ro\)](https://ubbcluj.ro)

<sup>4</sup> OSIM [Cereri-de-brevet-inregistrate-de-universitati-2012-2022.xlsx \(live.com\)](https://live.com)

According to the USV Charter, USV's mission is to:

- harness human potential through the development of study programmes in various fields: natural sciences, engineering sciences, biomedical sciences, social sciences, humanities and arts, sports science and physical education
- promotion of the values and traditions of the culture and civilisation of Bucovina with its multicultural specificity
- supporting fundamental European principles in an area where the credibility and identity of the European Union need to be strengthened and extended
- preserving and promoting cultural diversity and strengthening links with Romanians abroad
- involvement in regional development to recover the existing economic gaps about the other EU member countries, offering services to the community and internationalization of the VHS through real affiliation to EU policies and mechanisms on education
- training and development of qualified and highly qualified human resources in a regional, national and cross-border context
- development of critical thinking, personal and group initiative and creative potential of members of the academic community
- promotion of scientific research, literary and artistic creation and sports performance
- affirm Romanian culture and science in the world circuit of values

To achieve this mission, the USV has followed the University Strategic Plan concretized in annual operational plans whose general strategic objectives are the following:

- to continue the policy of motivating human resources to increase the quality of education and scientific research
- intensification of the investment program in the teaching and research infrastructure of USV
- increase USV's involvement in regional development
- strengthening USV's honorable positions in national and international rankings
- focusing institutional policies on the needs of students and the labor market
- development of USV as a university focused on education and research

**Regarding the research activity carried out by USV, one of the long-term goals of the university is to internationalize the human resources of USV research and the international collaborations of USV research, with the following actions targeted in the 2021-2027 time horizon<sup>5</sup>:**

- attracting teachers, researchers, doctoral students from abroad in the research activity of the USV laboratories

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<sup>5</sup> According to USV Internationalisation Strategy

- increase the number of international research partnerships and research results obtained in international collaboration
- development of international collaborative research projects and attracting international funding of USV research
- increase the number of teaching staff and PhD students benefiting from research placements abroad
- inclusion of specialists, researchers and academics from prestigious universities outside Romania in PhD thesis committees

**The objective is to increase the international visibility of USV research results by:**

- protection of USV's intellectual and industrial property at the international level by increasing the number of patents obtained at the European Patent Office as well as international copyrights
- analysis of the international impact of USV's research areas and promotion of directions of excellence internationally
- assessing the contribution of research activity to USV's rankings and international rankings and stimulating contributions to research indicators in international rankings
- development of an online English-language platform to present USV research results and the production of promotional materials in foreign languages dedicated to USV research

The year 2024 finds USV as a prominent institution in Romania, a fact confirmed both by the various international rankings and by the relatively high level of funding per equivalent student obtained by USV as a result of its academic performance. USV is an institution recognized for excellence in education and research, open to international experience in the global education space by improving the quality of its activities.

#### **USV HRS4R MISSION**

**USV's HRS4R MISSION is to improve the quality and continuity of excellent research and the careers of outstanding researchers and to expand career opportunities, contributing to the development of a more attractive and competitive European research area. By adopting the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, USV recognises their value and commits to the HRS4R Award implementation and certification process. The process of aligning with the principles of the Charter and Code of Conduct will have direct implications on the main operational directions specific to our university: education, research, innovation and technology transfer. This multi-criteria approach, intelligently linking human capital formation with high-quality basic research and the exploitation of research with societal and economic impact, will contribute to strengthening the reputation, and enhancing the performance and influence of USV at national and international level.**



## 4. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF USV IN TERMS OF THE 4 CATEGORIES OF HRS4R PRINCIPLES

### Ethical and professional aspects

#### Strengths

The University's Code of Ethics and Professional Deontology is contained in the Charter of "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava. The Code regulates and promotes moral values which are: academic freedom, personal autonomy, justice and fairness, merit, professionalism, intellectual honesty and fairness, transparency, respect and tolerance, responsibility, kindness and caring. Compliance with its provisions is obligatory for all persons carrying out activities within the USV, regardless of their status. USV also has its own Quality Assurance Code which sets out the principles by which the university is guided in quality assurance to achieve its stated mission, namely: the principles of excellence, accessibility, flexibility, morality, competence, continuity, the principle of linking theory with practice, the principle of motivation, the principle of active and conscious acquisition of knowledge, the principle of efficiency and effectiveness, the principle of ensuring reverse connection. The strategic directions of quality assurance at university level are: quality assurance of study programmes, evaluation of study programmes, monitoring the performance of teaching staff, developing relations with the international university environment, promoting quality in research, and implementing the appropriate management system.

By Resolution of the University Senate no. 7/23.02.2023 USV has declared its agreement to adhere to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

Within the USV the body that supervises the implementation of the ethical principles is the University Ethics Commission whose functioning and attributions are regulated by the Regulation of functioning of the University Ethics Commission approved by the Senate Resolution no. 7 of 16.01.2014. There are also other interne bodies that supervise the research activity of the university, namely: the Research Council, the Scientific Council, the Council for Doctoral Studies, the Evaluation and Quality Assurance Commission. USV organises training sessions on research ethics and academic integrity for master's students, doctoral students and young researchers. The USV also has its own Procedure for informing doctoral students on the rules of scientific ethics, prevention of academic fraud and plagiarism. At USV level, the evaluation of teaching and research staff takes place at department level based on performance criteria established at national level by the National Council for the Accreditation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates and on internal criteria established at USV/department level.

As regards the dissemination of research results, one opportunity that can be exploited by USV in this context is the existence of the ANELIS PLUS project for the payment of open-access

publication fees for scientific papers. At the same time USV has its own policy of supporting the publication of scientific papers in journals with international impact. USV is constantly concerned with the intellectual and industrial protection of the results of its own research, being the national leader both in terms of the number of patent applications filed with OSIM and in terms of patents obtained.

In the Report on the study on the needs of doctoral students for guidance in their research careers (study conducted between September and October 2023), the responses of 67 USV doctoral students were analysed with regard to issues concerning ethics and work within the university. Among the positive aspects identified we mention: 85% of doctoral students are aware of the ethical principles of research; over 70% feel they made the right choice in enrolling for a PhD both in terms of maintaining their interest and in terms of mirroring their own expectations in the doctoral work they undertake; 94% of doctoral students are clear about the doctoral pathway they have committed to; a majority are satisfied and very satisfied (82%) with the academic environment of our university and the research resources they have access to, as well as the opportunities created for collaboration and publication needed in their doctoral work (70%); support from the doctoral coordinator seems to be considered optimal by more than 80% of the doctoral students of our institution; access to mentoring within the doctoral school of our university is highlighted by almost 70% of the respondents. An opportunity that USV has in this respect is that it is the promoter of the only Researcher Guidance and Counselling Centre in the North-East Region - COACH USV and in this sense it will offer training, coaching and mentoring courses for researchers in this region (advanced researcher career guidance series).

## Weaknesses

Although the USV has developed a Strategy to prevent and combat plagiarism and to verify compliance with academic ethics and deontology in the preparation of doctoral theses (approved by Senate Resolution no. 119/22.12.2021), this document needs to be updated in order to align it with the principles of the Charter and Code of Conduct for researchers.

USV has not yet developed a Regulation on the protection of intellectual property rights, i.e. a strategy for the exploitation and dissemination of research results.

There is no USV-wide electronic platform or data repository containing the results and information of the university's research activity. Also the USV does not provide researchers with a backup and storage system for information/data.

Among the less good aspects identified in the Report on the Study on the Research Career Guidance Needs of USV PhD students we mention: among the barriers that PhD students experience in achieving their doctoral goals are bureaucracy, limited access to European projects, workload at the workplace; in terms of doctoral work within the research team the lowest percentage is recorded in terms of encouragement and support from fellow researchers; more

than 60% of those interviewed consider that they need training/advice in terms of data collection and analysis; around 60% of PhD students feel that the issues they face in terms of stress and anxiety management, time management and achieving work-life balance would require access to training and counselling resources to address these issues; only 57% have obtained the approval of the university's research ethics committee for the research they conduct; 75% of respondents have no information on how to obtain a research project and 43% have low levels of financial management skills for such a project.

## Recruitment and selection

### Strengths

The filling of teaching and research positions for an indefinite period is carried out through a public competition organized by USV in accordance with national legislation and internal regulations. In establishing the methodology for filling teaching and research positions, the USV has regulations and procedures such as: Regulations for filling vacant teaching positions, Regulations for filling vacant or temporarily vacant fixed-term teaching and research positions, Operational procedure for organizing the competition for filling auxiliary and non-teaching teaching positions. The aspects contained in these documents regulate: the call for competition for posts, registration for the competition, the constitution of the competition committee, the conduct of the competition, the registration of the results of the competition, the settlement of appeals. For vacancies, recruitment is carried out through transparent public mechanisms, including publication on the USV website (<https://usv.ro/resurse/angajari/>).

For teaching and non-teaching contract positions, the competition notices stipulate the conditions of work experience, seniority in the field, and education and specialisation.

USV has a flexible approach to experience and age. There are also no restrictions related to gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Anyone can apply for the positions advertised. USV has a gender-balanced approach, including for management positions. Furthermore, USV has its own Gender Equality Plan which aims to ensure equal opportunities and treatment between men and women in working relationships at the institution and to promote new perspectives and a more inclusive organisational culture. In terms of gender distribution, analysing all full-time staff employed in the USV, including teaching staff, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff, the proportion of female employees reaches 57% of total staff employed. According to the same analysis, it can also be argued that the gender distribution<sup>6</sup> in the management positions of the USV is balanced, the share of women in management positions being 47%, significantly higher than the national (37%) and European (34%) levels. As regards attracting highly specialized human resources in research, the USV has initiated efforts in this regard and has research

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<sup>6</sup> According to the USV Gender Equality Plan

projects under implementation to attract these specialists - PNRR Investment I8 (AI-PHGL-COVID; CexForD).

## Weaknesses

At present, vacancies at USV are not advertised on platforms that ensure international visibility (e.g. Euraxess).

As regards selection boards, there is no requirement for their members to have prior recognised training in the field of human resources recruitment, nor are there specific provisions on gender balance in determining the composition of boards. The evaluation criteria for researchers/teaching staff should be adapted/updated and linked to the objectives of R&D and innovation activities in terms of socio-economic impact, sustainability, exploitation and open access to results. In this respect, the necessary and mandatory minimum standards for teaching and research posts require revision.

As regards the recruitment and selection process, the results of the interviews are published on the institution's website and the notice board, but there are no provisions for informing candidates in writing about the outcome of the interview and providing written feedback to all candidates.

## Working conditions and social security

### Strengths

USV aims to ensure that each category of employees benefits from adequate conditions for professional development, so that the professional and material satisfaction of each member of the USV community meets both personal expectations and the demands and possibilities of the university, in the desire that belonging to the academic community is an honour for each member.

At USV, working conditions are regulated by strategic documents, regulations and procedures as follows:

- USV Charter: is a framework document regulating issues related to: the academic community, academic autonomy and public accountability, scientific research, organization of the teaching and research process, rights and obligations of the academic community, rights and obligations of teaching and research staff, academic quality management, academic freedom, personal autonomy, types of unacceptable behaviour in the teacher-student relationship, collegial relations of teaching staff and types of

unacceptable behaviour, relations of teaching staff with the community, applicable sanctions

- USV's internal regulations include: employees' rights and obligations, health and safety at work, emergencies, rules on the organisation of working time and rest time, rules on the respect of the principle of non-discrimination and human dignity, rules on work discipline, on the handling of individual requests, proposals, referrals and complaints from employees, disciplinary offences and sanctions applied, other specific legal or contractual provisions. According to the Internal Regulations, staff of all categories employed under employment contracts at USV have the following rights: the right to pay for work done; the right to equal opportunities and treatment; the right to dignity at work; the right to health and safety at work; the right to access to vocational training; the right to consultation and information; the right to protection in the event of dismissal; the right to collective and individual bargaining; the right to form or join a trade union; the right to take part in collective action organised under the law; the right to take part in determining and improving working conditions and the working environment; the right to request transfer to a vacant post offering more favourable working conditions if they have completed their probationary period and have been with the same employer for at least 6 months.

The indicators of the USV human resources motivation policy according to the USV Strategic Plan for 2020-2024 are:

- Ensuring differentiated salaries for teaching staff with an increase of up to 40% of the basic salary
- Increase the rates for hourly paid activities so that they exceed the conventional 100 lei/hour - gross rate
- Maintain, i.e. attract and stimulate young staff (assistants, heads of works/lecturers) to the university, by providing them with at least 33% of the number of merit awards put out to tender and at least 40% of the annual salary increase fund
- Maintaining financial incentives for participation in scientific events, publication of scientific articles and publication of books in prestigious publishing houses
- Financial support from own income for all projects and maintenance of the teaching fee facilities for project leaders
- Attracting young staff with internationally recognised results and retaining experienced and successful teachers and researchers

Research activity at university level is encouraged through access to a research infrastructure of the highest quality standards acquired within the framework of European projects, but also by attracting highly qualified human resources from abroad to jointly develop innovative research projects (PNRR Investment I8). The University is a member of ANELIS. The university's research infrastructure (existing and in the process of being acquired) is state-of-the-art thanks to non-reimbursable funding in projects such as MANSiD, USV Digital, BIO SAFE LAB). USV is constantly

concerned with the intellectual and industrial protection of the results of its own research, being the national leader both in terms of the number of patent applications filed with OSIM and in terms of patents obtained. At the same time there is a real interest in technology transfer activities of university research results to the economic environment through the development of dedicated structures in this regard: Technology Transfer Centre and Spin-off Companies, Technology Transfer Centre in Industry 4.0 and Smart Destinations.

Another favorable aspect is represented by the numerous opportunities that USV membership in consortia, clusters and associations can bring in the context of a sustainable relationship with the business environment, public and NGO at national and even European level (Consortium of 10 European universities NEOLAIa, Regional Innovative Cluster of Bioeconomy Suceava-Botoșani, Regional Innovative Cluster EURONESR IT&C HUB, Cluj IT Association, Science and Technology Park EAST EUROPEAN BORDER Siret).

The resolution of ethical conflicts is the responsibility of the Ethics Committee. Other conflicts can be resolved at the level of the department/faculty councils or, where appropriate, at the level of the USV Board of Directors. Certain issues relating to rights and working conditions may also be resolved at the level of the USV trade union.

## Weaknesses

As many academics and researchers are involved in the implementation of research projects (management and management of research infrastructures) their workload is very high and their efforts are substantial. Also, teaching and research staff are often overwhelmed by the large amount of paperwork they have to do and need to be relieved of this work so that teaching and research do not suffer. At the same time, the still low level of use of digital technologies and artificial intelligence applications in research activities calls for the reconfiguration of specific infrastructure and active measures to familiarise students with the new technology.

There is no clear regulation of remote working conditions for RDI activities. There are also no policy and enforcement mechanisms at the level of the USV for intellectual property rights which should provide for including standard contracts between the USV and employed staff on research results likely to involve IPR and employment contracts for regulating IPR-related activities.

Another relevant issue is the insufficient exploitation of both the USV patent portfolio and the existing opportunities for technology transfer of university research results to the economy.

There is a need to develop a co-authorship procedure at USV level that specifies how the actual contribution of each partner to a research output and the actual contribution as co-author of scientific work should be established. It is also necessary to recalibrate the organisation and

functioning of some of the USV's CDI structures: the USV Scientific Council, the USV Research Centres, the Institute for Advanced Studies.

USV is aware of the need for the university research environment to become more and more attractive to external and foreign researchers in order to attract highly qualified research human resources and increase the quality of research activities carried out at the institution.

## Training and development

### Strengths

In 2023, USV established the only Regional Research Career Guidance Centre in the North East Region (COACH USV), which offers career guidance activities such as counselling, coaching and mentoring for undergraduate, masters and PhD students, postdocs and researchers from all over the region. The centre also promotes research and attracts young people to research careers. USV also has its own Career Counselling and Guidance Centre (CCOC) which provides support services to all students of the university, including PhD students (training for the development of transversal skills, psychological counselling, and career guidance). There is a Regulation for the organisation and conduct of doctoral studies. USV supports the career development of young people through participation in research competitions, professional development in the scientific field concerned, payment of fees for participation in conferences, payment of fees for publication of articles, granting of mobility, and other facilities.

USV has implemented in recent years multiple projects with national or international funding dedicated to research career guidance, promotion of research and attracting young people to research careers, as well as the development of national and international research networks. For example, the USV coordinates the project "Development through entrepreneurial education and innovative doctoral and postdoctoral research" with funding from European funds of 6.1 million lei for the period 2019-2023, through which 96 PhD students and postdoctoral researchers follow an entrepreneurial training program, which also includes personalized practical experience, skills training courses and mentoring and advising sessions. More details at: <http://decide.usv.ro/> . At the same time, USV is a partner in the project "Programme for increasing performance and innovation in doctoral and postdoctoral research of excellence", funded by European funds for 2022 - 2023 under the coordination of the University "Dunărea de Jos" of Galati through which other 115 PhD students and postdoctoral researchers pursue similar objectives.

USV has bilateral protocols with 155 institutions from 50 countries and multilateral consortium collaborations, such as the NEOLAiA Consortium (University of Bielefeld (Germany), University of Tours (France), University of Ostrava (Czech Republic), USV, University of Siauliai (Lithuania), University of Orebro (Sweden), University of Salerno (Italy), University of Jaen (Spain), Collegium

Carpathicum Consortium (University of Warsaw (Poland), Vasyl Stefanyk University of Ivano-Frankivsk (Ukraine), USV, University of Prešov (Slovakia), Pázmány Péter Catholic University (Hungary), East European University of Przemyśl (Poland) and University of Ostrava (Czech Republic)), USV is also an active member of various international university associations, such as the European University Association (EUA) and the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF). Research collaborations with prestigious universities abroad take various forms, ranging from exchanges of best practices in research, research internships and the organization of joint scientific events, to attracting international funding for joint research projects. USV also offers through the ANELIS PLUS project access to a valuable international scientific database for its researchers.

Regarding the survey on the mentoring needs of USV doctoral students: a majority of respondents are satisfied and very satisfied (82%) with the academic environment of our university and the research resources they have access to, as well as with the opportunities created for collaboration and publication necessary for doctoral work (70%); access to mentoring within the doctoral school of our university is highlighted by almost 70% of respondents.

## Weaknesses

There is a need to develop a teaching and research career development policy that systematically and unifiedly presents all existing practices at the institutional level. Although career counseling services are offered to students and doctoral candidates, USV has not extended this practice to all categories of academic staff, and these responsibilities are unevenly assumed by department directors or other senior researchers. There is a need to systematically organize continuous training activities, tailored to the career level and individual needs of academic and administrative staff.

Except for doctoral studies (where there is a supervisory committee), for researchers at the first two career levels, there are no formally designated (senior researchers) supervisors.

Another issue affecting the professional development of academics and researchers is the lack of training and still poor information on research funding opportunities at the USV.

According to data collected from the survey on the mentoring needs of USV PhD students: more than 60% of those interviewed believe that they need training/counseling on data collection and analysis; about 60% of PhD students believe that the problems they face in terms of stress and anxiety management, time management and achieving work-life balance would require access to training and counseling resources that address these issues; 75% of respondents have no information on how to obtain a research project, and 43% have a low level of skills for the financial management of such a project.



## 5. GAP ANALYSIS AT USV LEVEL OF THE 40 PRINCIPLES OF THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR RESEARCHERS AND THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS (C&C)

| Status   |                                    | Ethical and Professional Aspects | Implementation | GAP/Implementation impediments | Initiatives undertaken/new proposals |
|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>Research freedom</b>            |                                  | <b>+/-</b>     |                                |                                      |
| <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b><br/>Teaching and research staff are free to carry out research, to develop and submit research projects, and to choose the competitions in which they participate. However, 75% of the respondents to the survey on the career guidance needs of researchers (USV PhD students) have no information on how to obtain a research project, and 43% have a low level of skills for the financial management of such a project. This is because the management and practices specific to research activity are not brought together in a unified framework and are not widely disseminated to guide young researchers to get comfortable from the beginning of their careers with the correct understanding and approach to research freedom.</p> <p><b>Suggestions for improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct courses/trainings on obtaining research projects (application and implementation of these projects), financial management of these projects</li> <li>• Transition towards open research and open access to publicly funded results, by implementing Open Science, Open Data policies adopted at national and European levels, respecting the principle of "as open as possible, but as closed as necessary", thus also taking into account intellectual property rights, personal data protection and legitimate commercial interests</li> </ul> |                                    |                                  |                |                                |                                      |
| <b>2</b>   | <b>Ethical principles</b>          |                                  | <b>+/-</b>     |                                |                                      |
| <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b><br/>USV researchers respect the ethical principles recognized in the practice of research activity by the University Charter and the Strategy to Prevent and Combat Plagiarism and to Verify the Observance of Ethics and Professional Deontology in the Preparation of PhD Theses. Their application is supervised by the University Ethics Committee. The strategy to prevent and combat plagiarism should be updated/harmonised in line with the principles of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers. The need to improve communication in terms of awareness and understanding of the C&amp;C principles is also noted.</p> <p><b>Suggestions for improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updating the USV Code of Ethics, part of the USV CHARTER to align with the principles of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers</li> <li>• Update the strategy for preventing and combating plagiarism and verifying compliance with academic ethics and deontology in the preparation of doctoral theses to update/harmonise it in line with the principles of the Charter and the Code of Conduct for Researchers.</li> <li>• Promoting ethical behaviour and respect for the law in collaboration with the European Law Student Association (ELSA) and the Centre for Research in Applied Ethics</li> </ul>                                      |                                    |                                  |                |                                |                                      |
| <b>3</b>   | <b>Professional responsibility</b> |                                  | <b>+/-</b>     |                                |                                      |

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| <b>GAP Analysis:</b><br>Plagiarism and self-plagiarism are strictly prohibited by the University Charter. At the USV, specialised software is used to identify plagiarism in the writing of bachelor, master and doctoral works. Information on the respect of intellectual property principles and the use of data and research results should be gathered in a common document that is public and accessible to USV researchers.  |  |            |
| <b>Suggestions of improvement:</b>  |  |            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updating the Strategy for preventing and combating plagiarism and verifying compliance with academic ethics and deontology in the preparation of doctoral theses in order to update/harmonise it in accordance with the principles of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers;</li> <li>Creation of the Ombudsman institution at the USV level</li> <li>Creation of a regulation on intellectual property rights;</li> <li>Creation of institutional mechanisms and strategies to encourage effective training activities and to support research career development;</li> <li>Strengthen support for researchers to develop better relations between academia and industry</li> </ul>   |  |            |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Professional attitude</b>             | <b>+/-</b> |
| <b>GAP Analysis:</b><br>The strategic objectives in terms of USV's human resources (academic and research staff) are set out in both the University Charter and the Strategic Plan for 2020-2024. Regarding the implementation of research projects, the need for continuous information of researchers on their responsibility in the implementation of such a project and how to use the research results for the benefit of society/economy has been identified at the level of the USV. According to a survey on the mentoring needs of USV doctoral students, support from the PhD coordinator is considered optimal by more than 80% of respondents, and access to mentoring within the PhD school is highlighted by almost 70% of respondents. However, the percentages are decreasing when it comes to work within the research team, especially in terms of encouragement and support from fellow researchers. |  |            |
| <b>Suggestions of improvement:</b>  |  |            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving internal communication and information dissemination processes at the doctoral school level and beyond; Creating research groups that bring together researchers interested in similar or complementary topics to better exploit the research results already obtained and create new research results with a strong innovative and multidisciplinary character</li> </ul>   |  |            |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Contractual and legal obligations</b> | <b>+/-</b> |
| <b>GAP Analysis:</b><br>The rights and obligations of each USV teacher/researcher are specified in the Individual Employment Contract, the Collective Employment Contract, the USV Internal Regulations. However, there is no internal guideline on the internal regulations concerning the implications/obligations of the researcher/funder with regard to the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities.  |  |            |
| <b>Suggestions of improvement:</b>  |  |            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an internal guide on internal regulations on the implications/obligations of the researcher on the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities.</li> </ul>  |  |            |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Accountability</b>                    | <b>+/-</b> |

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|   | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b><br/>Regarding access to externally funded projects, the university's doctoral students reported that they had no information about how to obtain such a project and no skills for the financial management of such a project. This issue was also identified with regard to the other categories of researchers at the university. At the same time, it should not be lost sight of the fact that the results of research developed at university level and patented should be transferable to the economic environment. This requires a strong connection with the economic environment, access to networks outside the university environment, which, although this is happening to a certain extent, is still underdeveloped and does not allow for technology transfer of university research results.</p> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop internal guidance on internal regulations on the implications/obligations of the researcher on the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> <li>• Conduct courses/trainings on obtaining research projects and the financial management of these projects</li> <li>• Strengthening the support given to researchers for the development of better relations between academia and industry through the contribution of the university's technology transfer centres and the network of collaborations with industry through science parks, economic agents within the associations and clusters of which the university is part</li> </ul>   |     |
| 7 | <b>Good practice in research</b>   | +/- |
|   | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no IT platform that allows automatic completion of reports with research results indexed in international databases or in existing databases at the USV level, as well as real-time promotion of RDI results on university and faculty websites.</li> <li>• Among doctoral students, issues were identified related to: the need for advice on effective personal management of the challenges of doctoral work, the need for support from senior researchers, the still low level of knowledge of research data collection and analysis methods</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of an IT platform allowing the automatic completion of reports with research results indexed in international databases or existing databases at USV level, as well as the real-time promotion of RDI results on university and faculty websites</li> <li>• Creation of research groups that bring together researchers interested in similar or complementary topics to better exploit the research results already obtained, and to create new research results with a strong innovative and multidisciplinary character</li> <li>• USV has the only Centre for guidance and counselling in research careers in the North-East Region, the COACH USV Centre, and in this sense it will be concerned with offering counselling to doctoral students regarding the effects that doctoral work can have on their personal life, as well as aspects such as time management, stress resistance, development of motivation and perseverance. This centre will provide personalised advice, coaching and mentoring to all categories of researchers at USV and other universities in the region. The centre will be integrated into the European Research Area (ERA) Talent Platform network.</li> <li>• Conduct training courses on research data collection and analysis within the doctoral school</li> <li>• Revitalisation of existing Research Centres within USV and development of at least 5 new research centres in newly established directions at USV</li> </ul> |     |
| 8 | <b>Dissemination, exploitation of</b>  | +/- |

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| <b>results</b> |   |
|                | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The university's research results are not yet satisfactorily exploited in terms of technology transfer to industry</li> <li>• Low visibility for the general public of the university's research activity and the research results developed</li> <li>• Still limited collaboration with prestigious publishers within the ANELIS PLUS project, as well as access to publishers and journals with international impact</li> <li>• Still low level of involvement of the university in the academic associations and networks to which it belongs</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing a strategy to exploit and disseminate the results of university research</li> <li>• Creation of an IT platform that allows the automatic completion of reports with research results indexed in international databases or in existing databases at the USV level, as well as the real-time promotion of RDI results on university and faculty websites</li> <li>• The use of transformative agreements concluded with prestigious collaborating publishers within the ANELIS PLUS project for the payment of open-access publication fees for scientific papers accepted for publication in the journals of the respective publishers</li> <li>• Intensify the activity of USV in international academic associations and networks and join new associations/networks relevant to the university's activity; support academics and researchers in obtaining membership and assuming leadership positions in national and international professional associations</li> </ul> |
| <b>9</b>       | <b>Public engagement</b>  |
|                | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The university's research results are not yet satisfactorily exploited in terms of technology transfer to industry</li> <li>• Low visibility for the general public of the university's research activity and the research results developed</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing a strategy to exploit and disseminate the results of university research</li> <li>• Creation of an IT platform that allows the automatic completion of reports with research results indexed in international databases or in existing databases at USV level, as well as the real-time promotion of RDI results on the web pages of universities and faculties.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>10</b>      | <b>Non discrimination</b>   |
|                | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-discrimination issues are regulated by the University Charter, the Gender Equality Plan, the Regulations for the filling of teaching and non-teaching positions, the USV Internal Regulations</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer support to categories of researchers who have had interruptions of at least 1 year (e.g. medical leave, child raising) by restarting their research career and reducing the teaching norm to the minimum norm established in the USV's own regulations for a maximum period of 2 academic years and awarding internal research grants through competition.</li> <li>• Supporting community integration activities for students from abroad</li> <li>• Elaboration of a strategy and implementation of a phased inclusive USV plan to transform USV campuses into inclusive campuses and to ensure equal study</li> </ul>   |

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|  | opportunities for people with special educational needs  |            |
| <b>11</b>  | <b>Evaluation/appraisal systems</b>  | <b>+/-</b> |
|  | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The evaluation of researchers at USV level is regulated by respecting the National legislation (Labour Code, Law 199/2023) through the following institutional documents: USV Charter, Internal Regulations, Internal Procedure for the Evaluation of Staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update institutional documents regarding the criteria for the evaluation of researchers/teaching staff in order to align them with the principles of the Charter and the Code, and with the objectives of R&amp;D and innovation activities.</li> <li>Applying a system of differentiated pay for teachers and researchers based on performance, according to annual evaluations, internal USV grants won through competition, exceptional achievements and the degree of their involvement in institutional development</li> </ul>  |            |
| <p><b>Recruitment and Selection - please be aware that the items listed here correspond with the Charter and Code. In addition, your organization also needs to complete the checklist on Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment included in a separate section, which focuses on the operationalization of these principles.</b></p> |  |            |
| <b>12</b>  | <b>Recruitment</b>   | <b>+/-</b> |
|  | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment at the USV is carried out in accordance with the legislation in force (Labour Code, Law 199/2023) based on specific documents: the USV Charter, the Internal Regulations, the Equal Opportunities Strategy, the Regulations on the filling of vacant teaching and research posts, the Regulations on the filling of vacant or temporarily vacant teaching and research posts for a fixed period, the Operational Procedure for the organisation of the competition for the filling of auxiliary teaching and non-teaching posts.</li> <li>Vacancies are currently published on the institution's website</li> <li>The need to update the documents concerning the recruitment of researchers and teaching staff to align them with the provisions of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of own policy and an OTM-R procedure - proposed to be carried out in the first 2 years of the Action Plan</li> <li>Conduct specific training on OTM-R for those involved in the training and selection process at the level of USV</li> <li>Inclusion in institutional quality control rules (e.g. Quality Assurance Code) of specific provisions regarding the OTM-R policy</li> <li>Updating of the documents concerning the recruitment of researchers and teaching staff to align them with the provisions of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers</li> <li>Publication of job vacancies on the EURAXESS platform as early as the first year of the Action Plan, as soon as the HRS4R logo is obtained</li> </ul> |            |
| <b>13</b>  | <b>Recruitment (Code)</b>  | <b>+/-</b> |
|  | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to revise the minimum necessary and mandatory standards for teaching and research posts</li> </ul>   |            |

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|           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacancies are currently advertised on the Institution's website</li> <li>• The need to update the documents concerning the recruitment of researchers and teaching staff to align them with the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting new high-performing academics and researchers by reviewing the minimum necessary and mandatory standards for teaching and research posts and awarding internal research grants on a competitive basis</li> <li>• Updating documents for the recruitment of researchers and academic staff to align with the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers</li> <li>• Publication of job vacancies on the EURAXESS platform as early as the first year of the Action Plan, as soon as the HRS4R logo is obtained</li> </ul> |            |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Selection (Code)</b>  | <b>+/-</b> |
|           | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to review the minimum necessary and mandatory standards for teaching and research posts</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting new high-performing academics and researchers by reviewing the minimum necessary and mandatory standards for teaching and research posts and awarding internal research grants on a competitive basis</li> <li>• Include gender balance provisions for interview panels where the field permits</li> </ul>  |            |
| <b>15</b> | <b>Transparency (Code)</b>   | <b>+/-</b> |
|           | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job vacancies are currently published on the institution's website</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of job vacancies on the EURAXESS platform as early as the first year of the Action Plan, as soon as the HRS4R logo is obtained</li> <li>• Inclusion of provisions for candidates after the interview type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Written information for all candidates on the outcome of the interview</li> <li>- Giving appropriate feedback in writing to all candidates</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Similar provisions for handling, resolving and informing about the results of appeals</li> </ul>   |            |
| <b>16</b> | <b>Judging merit (Code)</b>  | <b>+/-</b> |
|           | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The USV methodology for filling teaching and research vacancies uses quantitative evaluation criteria by national legislation, as well as qualitative criteria that address the professional and personal qualities of the candidate.</li> <li>• The evaluation criteria for researchers/teaching staff should be adapted/updated and linked to the objectives of the research, development and innovation activities in terms of socio-economic impact, sustainability, valorisation and open access to their results.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update the institutional documents concerning the evaluation criteria for researchers/teaching staff in order to adapt them to the provisions of the Charter</li> </ul>   |            |

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|    | and the Code  |     |
| 17 | <b>Variations in the chronological order of CV's (Code)</b>   | +   |
|    | Variations in candidates' professional activity are not penalised, as they prove the information in their CV with supporting documents (employment contracts, seniority certificates, current practice: decisions, etc.).   |     |
| 18 | <b>Recognition of mobility experience (Code)</b>  | +/- |
|    | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although there are procedures and initiatives on access to mobility, they are not harmonised in a common framework at the level of the USV to allow staff to access mobility opportunities electronically.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possibility to access mobility opportunities electronically</li> <li>Support the development of teaching and research careers of USV staff through access to academic mobility</li> <li>Ensuring optimal conditions for student mobility by increasing the number of ERASMUS partnerships</li> </ul>  |     |
| 19 | <b>Recognition of qualifications (Code)</b>   | +/- |
|    | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the recruitment of fixed-term research project staff, the employer applies internal procedures, specific to the type of programme/project, which introduce conditions and criteria for recruitment set out in the funding guidelines for those projects/programmes. These temporary/project contracts employ researchers, auxiliary staff required for research activities or management activities specific to the project/programme</li> <li>The need to revise the minimum necessary and mandatory standards for filling teaching and research posts</li> <li>The need for measures to motivate outstanding researchers</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attracting new high-performing academics and researchers by reviewing the minimum necessary and mandatory standards for teaching and research posts and awarding internal research grants on a competitive basis</li> <li>Initiating the Young Researchers Gala, where outstanding young teachers and researchers in R&amp;TD work will be highlighted and rewarded, following a joint evaluation by teachers and employers.</li> </ul> |     |
| 20 | <b>Seniority (Code)</b>   | +   |
|    | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>USV has a flexible approach to experience and age for access to a position. There is no age discrimination. Retired staff can apply for employment</li> </ul>  |     |

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|   | <p>competitions with fixed-term contracts, subject to legal requirements. The retirement age for permanent teaching staff is 65 years, with the possibility of continuing to work, if the person concerned meets the criteria laid down by the field of competence (cf. CNATDCU criteria).</p> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuation of teaching after retirement age for high-performing teachers</li> </ul>   |                       |                                       |  |
| 21  | <b>Postdoctoral appointments (Code)</b>   | +/-                   |                                       |  |
|   | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The employment of post-doctoral students at USV, as at any other University in Romania, can be made based on a fixed-term employment contract on a research project. If the post-doctoral candidate applies for a teaching/research position, he/she will become a USV teaching staff member (assistant, lecturer, etc.) or researcher and will benefit from the rights and obligations of the position according to the regulations in force. Depending on the type of post-doctoral employment contract, post-docs will benefit from the provisions of the regulations in force in the USV for permanent or temporary teaching and research staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop post-doctoral programmes both by attracting grant-funded projects and independently of them, to ensure predictability regarding the continuation of research activity of successful PhD students from USV and other institutions.</li> <li>Involving master, doctoral and post-doctoral students in support activities for teaching staff in the teaching and evaluation process and for students in the learning process, as well as setting up a scholarship programme.</li> </ul>  |                       |                                       |  |
| <b>Working Conditions and Social Security</b> |   | <b>Implementation</b> | <b>GAP/Implementation impediments</b> | <b>Initiatives undertaken/ new proposals</b> |
| 22  | <b>Recognition of the profession</b>  | +                     |                                       |  |
|   | <p><b>Good practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All researchers pursuing a career in this field are recognized by the USV and are treated accordingly. They are an essential part of USV's human resources and a key component of the institution's strategy to develop specific activities and deliver research results worldwide. This recognition must start from the beginning of the career - postgraduate level - and should include all levels, regardless of the classification made at the national level (e.g. employee, graduate, master, doctoral, postdoctoral).</li> <li>USV is constantly concerned with ensuring the best conditions for its researchers both in terms of access to state-of-the-art research infrastructure and in terms of financial support for the publication of scientific papers, mobility and research and innovation internships at prestigious institutions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiating the Young Researchers Gala to highlight and reward young teachers and researchers with outstanding performance in RDI activity</li> <li>Revitalization of the existing Research Centres within USV and development of at least 5 new research centres in directions recently established at USV</li> <li>The use of transformative agreements concluded with prestigious collaborating publishers within the ANELIS PLUS project for the payment of open-access</li> </ul> |                       |                                       |  |



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|           | <p>publication fees for scientific works accepted for publication in the journals of the respective publishers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application of a differentiated salary system for teaching staff and researchers based on performance, according to annual evaluations, internal USV grants won through competition, exceptional achievements and their degree of involvement in institutional development</li> <li>• Create opportunities in collaboration with universities in international networks of which USV is a member: Alliance of European Universities NEOLAIA, European University Association (EUA), Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF).</li> </ul>  |            |
| <b>23</b> | <b>Research environment</b>  | <b>+/-</b> |
|           | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the need to take measures to increase the attractiveness of the USV research environment and to motivate and enhance the value of teaching staff and researchers</li> <li>• the still low involvement of students from all study cycles in RDI activities</li> <li>• the need to expand the space available for R&amp;D laboratories and the work of doctoral and post-doctoral students</li> <li>• Insufficient exploitation of the opportunities for technology transfer offered by association with structures that focus on the idea of collaboration between academia and the economy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiating the Young Researchers Gala to highlight and reward young teachers and researchers with outstanding performance in RDI activity</li> <li>• Increase the involvement of students from all study cycles in RDI activities, including through scholarships, prizes, internal grants</li> <li>• Motivate the development and submission of RDI projects in national and international competitions, including through internal research grants</li> <li>• Development of post-doctoral programmes</li> <li>• Revitalization of existing Research Centres within USV and development of at least 5 new research centres in directions recently established at USV</li> <li>• Development of at least 20 new or upgraded research laboratories equipped with advanced equipment and state-of-the-art software</li> <li>• Continuation of the policy of financial support for the publication of scientific papers and internships</li> <li>• Transition to open research and implementation of Open Science, Open Data policies adopted at the national and European level</li> <li>• Use the transformative agreements concluded with prestigious collaborating publishers in the framework of the ANELIS PLUS project for the payment of open-access publication fees for scientific papers accepted for publication in the journals of those publishers</li> <li>• Supporting RDI activities carried out, through USV, in partnership with economic agents or within new infrastructures for innovation and knowledge and technology transfer, such as the Siret Science and Technology Park, the interdisciplinary research laboratory for the analysis of quality, safety and identification of food adulteration within the Regional Innovative Bioeconomy Cluster Suceava-Botoșani; developing USV structures and training human resources dedicated to these collaborations, such as the Technology Transfer Centre in Industry 4. 0 and Smart Destinations (MCID authorized), Electromagnetic Compatibility Laboratory (RENAR accredited), Centre for Technology Transfer and spin-off companies)</li> </ul> |            |
| <b>24</b> | <b>Working conditions</b>  | <b>+/-</b> |
|           | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the need to update some documents governing working conditions at USV level such as the Internal Regulations</li> </ul>   |            |

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|           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the need to pay attention to special situations of interruption of at least 1 year of the research career (e.g. medical leave, child raising)</li> <li>the need to relieve teachers/researchers of certain administrative tasks</li> <li>still limited use of digital technology in the work carried out at USV</li> <li>Development of USV infrastructure</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer support to categories of researchers who have had interruptions of at least 1 year (e.g. medical leave, child raising) by restarting their research career and reducing the teaching norm to the minimum norm established in the USV's regulations for a maximum period of 2 academic years and awarding internal research grants through competition.</li> <li>Relieving teachers/researchers of certain administrative tasks by simplifying and de-bureaucratising administration</li> <li>Digitisation of all USV processes and documents and school management by completing the implementation of the USV Digital project</li> <li>Improving the working conditions of USV staff by expanding and modernising the spaces dedicated to teaching, CDI and administrative activities, equipping them with state-of-the-art equipment and software, supporting the personalisation of individual workspaces, transforming common spaces into more pleasant and friendly spaces, increasing safety at work, making working hours more flexible, improving collegial relations and communication</li> </ul> |
| <b>25</b> | <p><b>Stability and permanence of employment</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>  |
|           | <p><b>Good practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through the USV Charter, and Internal Regulations, Employment Contracts concluded at the level of the USV institution try to ensure stability and continuity of employment for all its employees. At the same time, USV constantly ensures that its employees have optimal working and research conditions and that the employment framework is predictable and stable.</li> <li>Fixed-term employees are not treated differently from permanent employees in similar positions and no abuses of any kind are allowed.</li> <li>USV aims to improve access to training for employees on fixed-term contracts and it is necessary to ensure that they are aware of the advertisements for permanent posts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The opportunity for career guidance as a researcher through counselling, coaching and mentoring services for undergraduate, masters and PhD students, postdocs and researchers from all over the region - COACH Center USV</li> <li>Transparency regarding vacancies at the USV level (publication of vacancies on the USV website and on the EURAXESS platform from the first year of the Action Plan)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>26</b> | <p><b>Funding and salaries</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">+/-</p>  |
|           | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers and/or funders of researchers should ensure that researchers benefit from fair and attractive funding and/or salary conditions, respecting adequate and equitable social security provisions (including sickness and parental benefits, pension rights and unemployment benefits) in line with national and sectoral legislation on collective bargaining in research. This principle applies to all researchers, irrespective of career stage, including early-stage</li> </ul>  |

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|           | <p>researchers, commensurate with their legal status, performance and level of qualification and/or responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to implement a differentiated pay system for academics and researchers based on performance, based on annual evaluations, internal USV grants, degree of commitment, exceptional achievements</li> <li>• The need for information and transparency regarding funding opportunities for research activity, as well as the need for support in the preparation of funding documents and the implementation of these projects</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applying a system of differentiated pay for teaching and research staff based on performance, based on annual evaluations, internal USV grants won through competition, exceptional achievements and the degree of their involvement in institutional development</li> <li>• Develop a benefits package for USV employees by negotiating facilities provided by shops and service providers, including health services</li> <li>• Continuously informing USV faculty and researchers about funding opportunities for the economic aspects of grant application development, providing logistical support in the implementation of projects won through the Programme and Project Management Service and other administrative services involved</li> </ul> |            |  |
| <b>27</b> | <b>Gender balance</b>  | <b>+</b>   |  |
|           | <p><b>Good practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USV has its own Gender Equality Plan which aims to ensure equal opportunities and treatment between men and women in working relationships at the institution and to promote new perspectives and a more inclusive organizational culture.</li> <li>• In terms of gender distribution, analysing all full-time staff employed in the USV, including teaching staff and auxiliary and non-teaching staff, the proportion of female employees reaches 57% of total staff employed. It can also be argued, according to the same analysis, that the gender distribution in management positions in the USV is balanced, with the share of women in management positions being 47%, significantly higher than the national (37%) and European (34%) levels.</li> <li>• USV's Internal Regulations regulate the rules on compliance with the principle of non-discrimination including gender equality</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update USV's internal regulations, including gender balance provisions for interview committees where the field allows</li> </ul>   |            |  |
| <b>28</b> | <b>Career development</b>  | <b>+/-</b> |  |
|           | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2023, USV established the only Regional Centre for Career Guidance for Researchers in the North East Region (COACH USV). This centre will offer career guidance activities such as counselling, coaching and mentoring for undergraduate, master and doctoral students, postdocs and researchers from all over the region.</li> <li>• There is a need to provide training to researchers in the preparation of funding documents and the implementation of research projects. There is also a need for more transparency and information on funding opportunities in the field of RDI.</li> <li>• USV supports researchers in their career development both through the continuously developing research infrastructure and through support in terms of publication of articles, mobility, participation in internships, and patenting of university research results.</li> <li>• The technology transfer activity of university research results to industry is still low, which leads to the conclusion that researchers need to be better</li> </ul>  |            |  |

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|           | <p>anchored to the economic environment through active involvement in organisations such as science parks and clusters to which the university belongs</p> <p><b>Suggestions of improvements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop internal guidance on internal regulations on the implications/obligations of the researcher on the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> <li>• Conduct courses/trainings on obtaining research projects and the financial management of these projects</li> <li>• Strengthening the support given to researchers for the development of better relations between academia and industry through the contribution of the university's technology transfer centers and the network of collaborations with industry through science parks, economic agents within the associations and clusters of which the university is part</li> <li>• The use of transformative agreements concluded with prestigious collaborating publishers in the framework of the ANELIS PLUS project for the payment of open-access publication fees for scientific papers accepted for publication in the journals of those publishers</li> <li>• Developing post-doctoral programs both by attracting grant-funded projects and independently of them</li> <li>• Revitalization of existing research centres within USV and development of at least 5 new research centers in directions recently established at USV</li> <li>• Financial support for the publication of scientific papers in journals with international impact, mobility and research and innovation internships at prestigious institutions</li> <li>• Continuation of the policy of supporting the exceptional work of inventing and patenting inventions at USV and stimulating their technological transfer to the economic environment</li> <li>• The opportunity for career guidance as a researcher through counseling, coaching and mentoring services for undergraduate, master and PhD students, post-docs and researchers from all over the region - the USV COACH Centre</li> </ul> |   |  |  |
| <b>29</b> | <b>Value of mobility</b>  | + |  |  |
|           | <p><b>Good practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USV promotes programmes and projects to encourage and support the international mobility of researchers and academics</li> <li>• There is a Regulation for the organization and conduct of doctoral studies. USV supports the career development of young people through participation in research competitions, professional development in the scientific field concerned, payment of fees for participation in conferences, payment of fees for publication of articles, granting of mobility, other facilities</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the development of teaching and research careers of USV staff, including by facilitating access to academic mobility</li> <li>• Ensuring optimal conditions for student mobility by increasing the number of ERASMUS partnerships, diversifying the program offer and attracting funding and projects from the ERASMUS+ Programme, other national and specific international programs</li> <li>• Strengthening doctoral schools by supporting the empowerment of USV teaching staff and attracting PhD supervisors from home and abroad, financial support for academic mobility and dissemination of research results</li> </ul>   |   |  |  |
| <b>30</b> | <b>Access to career advice</b>  | + |  |  |
|           | <p><b>Good practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2023, USV established the only Regional Research Career Guidance Centre in the North East Region (COACH USV), which offers career guidance activities</li> </ul>  |   |  |  |

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|           | <p>such as counselling, coaching and mentoring for undergraduate, master's and doctoral students, postdocs and researchers throughout the region. At the same time, the centre promotes research and attracts young people to research careers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USV has its own Career Counselling and Guidance Centre (CCOC) which offers support services to all students of the university, including PhD students (training for the development of transversal skills, psychological counselling, career guidance).</li> <li>• The university's doctoral students expressed their satisfaction with the mentoring activity they received during their doctoral studies</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of experienced researchers in advising and mentoring early-stage researchers - North East Regional Research Career Guidance Centre (COACH USV)</li> </ul>   |            |  |  |
| <b>31</b> | <b>Intellectual Property Rights</b>   | <b>+/-</b> |  |  |
|           | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the need to capitalize on USV's patent portfolio and institutional image capital by holding the leading position at the national level in terms of the number of patent applications and patents registered at OSIM in the period 2012-2022</li> <li>• the need to improve the technology transfer activity carried out at the university level through the university technology transfer centers</li> <li>• the need to include in institutional documents provisions on the regulation of intellectual property rights issues</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of the policies to support the exceptional inventive and patenting activity of the USV and to stimulate their technological transfer to the regional, national and international economic environment, by attracting/training specialists in innovation management, technology transfer, technology brokerage, intellectual and industrial property law, promotion of the USV's technological offer and services and organization of specific events with the national and international economic environment</li> <li>• Strengthening the support offered to researchers for the development of better relations between academia and industry through the contribution of the university's technology transfer centers and the network of collaborations with industry through science parks, economic agents within the associations and clusters of which the university is part</li> <li>• Inclusion in institutional documents of provisions on the regulation of intellectual property rights issues</li> </ul> |            |  |  |
| <b>32</b> | <b>Co-authorship</b>  | <b>+/-</b> |  |  |
|           | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the USV, researchers are recognized as independent authors and co-authors by international practice in the field</li> <li>• The need to update institutional documents or create new tools to address the co-authorship procedure at USV level</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an intellectual property rights regulation and a co-authorship procedure</li> <li>• Produce an internal guide on internal regulations concerning the implications/obligations of the researcher with regard to the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> </ul>   |            |  |  |
| <b>33</b> | <b>Teaching</b>   | <b>+/-</b> |  |  |

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|    | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USV has a constant concern for the development of teaching skills of academic staff. Through the Department for the preparation of teaching staff, the initial and compulsory pedagogical training of teachers at the first levels of their career is ensured</li> <li>• The need to develop a policy for the development of teaching and research careers, systematically and uniformly presenting all existing practices at the institutional level, and an internal guide on internal regulations concerning the implications/obligations of the researcher about the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> <li>• The need to systematically organize continuous training activities tailored to the career level and individual needs of academic and administrative staff</li> <li>• There is a burden on academic staff and researchers with administrative activities which may affect the quality of their work</li> <li>• Still low level of use of digital technologies and artificial intelligence applications in the university's RDI work</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a research and teaching career development policy, systematically and uniformly presenting all existing practices at the institutional level, and an internal guide on internal regulations concerning the researcher's implications/obligations about the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> <li>• Improvement of career support services for researchers in the USV, development of continuous training programs for researchers in the USV - Regional Centre for Career Guidance for Researchers in the North East Region (COACH USV)</li> <li>• Relieve teaching staff involved in research, development and innovation activities of certain administrative tasks</li> <li>• Digitization of all USV processes and document and school management by completing the implementation of the USV Digital project</li> </ul> |     |
| 34 | <b>Complains/appeals</b>  | +/- |
|    | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the USV level, the authority in charge of resolving researchers' complaints/appeals is the University Ethics Commission.</li> <li>• There is no Ombudsman institution at the USV</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USV's strategy to prevent and combat plagiarism should be updated by aligning with the provisions of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers</li> <li>• Creation of the Ombudsman institution at USV level</li> </ul>  |     |
| 35 | <b>Participation in decision-making bodies</b>  | +/- |
|    | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers (academics) are represented in advisory and decision-making bodies, where they can defend and promote not only their own interests but also collective ones (e.g. in the university Senate and Faculty Councils). There is a pro-rector and pro-deans with research responsibilities. Department/faculty boards and pro-deans responsible for research have responsibilities in annual individual evaluation. Permanent academic staff elect representatives to department and faculty councils and to the University Senate. Trade unions participate in the interests of their members in negotiations on pay and working environment issues.</li> </ul>   |     |

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|           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>USV needs to make better use of the opportunities it has through membership of national and international networks and alliances such as: NEOLAIA Alliance of European Universities, European University Association (EUA), Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF).</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of pilot programs for the internationalization of education under the NEOLAIA European University Alliance contract and the creation of a centre dedicated to the work of this strategic alliance and the extension of examples of good practice in other international partnerships of USV</li> </ul>  |
|           | <p><b>Training and development</b>                      Implementation    GAP/Implementation    Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</p> <p>impediments</p>  |
| <b>36</b> | <p><b>Relation with supervisors</b>                      +</p> <p><b>Good practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each doctoral student is supervised and mentored by the coordinator and the mentoring committee.</li> <li>In 2023, the USV established the only Regional Research Career Guidance Centre in the North-East Region (COACH USV). The Centre offers career guidance activities such as counseling, coaching and mentoring for undergraduate, master's and PhD students, postdocs and researchers throughout the region. At the same time, the center promotes research and attracts young people to research careers.</li> <li>Access to mentoring in doctoral schools was appreciated by more than 70% of respondents to the survey of doctoral students.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <p>Continuation of good practice by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening doctoral schools by supporting the empowerment of USV teaching staff and attracting doctoral supervisors from home and abroad, accrediting at least 2 new doctoral fields, expanding, harmonizing and diversifying advanced graduate training programs, involving faculty from foreign universities in the mentoring and supporting committees, stimulating co-supervised doctoral</li> <li>Development of the USV Institute for Advanced Studies as a catalyst forum for interdisciplinary and international cooperation in the field of RDI in the USV</li> <li>Creation of research groups that bring together researchers interested in similar or complementary themes to better exploit the research results already obtained, and to create new research results with a strong innovative and multidisciplinary character</li> </ul> |
| <b>37</b> | <p><b>Supervision and managerial duties</b>                      +/-</p> <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to develop a policy for the development of teaching and research careers, systematically and uniformly presenting all existing practices at institutional level</li> <li>With the exception of doctoral studies (where there is a supervision committee), for researchers at the first two career levels there are no formally designated persons (senior researchers) to carry out supervision activities. Senior/senior researchers should pay particular attention to their multilateral role as supervisors, mentors, career advisors, leaders, project coordinators, managers or science communicators. They should perform these tasks to the highest professional standards. In their role as mentors or advisors to researchers, senior researchers should develop a constructive and positive relationship with junior/novice researchers in order to establish the conditions for an effective transfer of knowledge and for their successful subsequent</li> </ul>   |

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|           | <p>career development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to provide career counselling services to all categories of researchers on topics such as: preparing funding documentation, financial management of a research project, other issues</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing a teaching and research career development policy that systematically and uniformly presents all existing practices at institutional level</li> <li>Involvement of experienced researchers in advising and mentoring early-stage researchers - North East Regional Research Career Guidance Centre (COACH USV)</li> <li>Providing career counselling services to all categories of researchers on topics such as: preparation of grant documentation, financial management of a research project, other issues</li> </ul>  |            |
| <b>38</b> | <b>Continuing Professional Development</b>  | <b>+/-</b> |
|           | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need for the development of a research and teaching career development policy, systematically and uniformly presenting all existing practices at the institutional level, and an internal guide on internal regulations concerning the implications/obligations of the researcher about the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> <li>The need to systematically organize continuous training activities tailored to the career level and individual needs of academic and administrative staff</li> <li>The need to exploit the potential offered by the fact that USV has the only research career counseling centre in the North-East Region of Romania (COACH USV)</li> <li>The still low level of research project development about the number of researchers and the potential offered by the university research infrastructure</li> <li>Need for a system of incentives to motivate researchers and students to continue research activity</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a research and teaching career development policy, systematically and uniformly presenting all existing practices at the institutional level, and an internal guide on internal regulations concerning the researcher's implications/obligations about the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> <li>Improvement of career support services for researchers in the USV, development of continuous training programs for researchers in the USV - Regional Centre for Career Guidance for Researchers in the North East Region (COACH USV)</li> <li>Stimulating the development of competitive RDI projects</li> <li>Motivating students for study through a substantial scholarship program, financial support and facilities offered to students, with monitoring of the impact on improving academic performance</li> <li>Develop post-doctoral programs both by attracting grant-funded and independent projects to ensure predictability for the continuation of the research activity of successful PhD students from USV and other institutions</li> </ul> |            |
| <b>39</b> | <b>Access to research training and</b>  | <b>+/-</b> |



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|    | <b>continuous development</b>   |     |
|    | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of specific training needs among the university's doctoral student group</li> <li>• The need to develop programs oriented towards the development of specific skills in scientific creativity, invention and intellectual property protection</li> <li>• The need for unrestricted online access to scientific resources such as journals, international publications, databases</li> <li>• The need for financial support for the publication of scientific work and research traineeships</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the involvement of students from all study cycles in RDI activities, including through the award of ECTS credits, scholarships and prizes, the mandatory inclusion of students in project teams for internal grants, and the implementation of projects</li> <li>• Revitalization of existing Research Centres within USV and development of at least 5 new research centers in newly established directions at USV</li> <li>• Development of the Centre for Guidance, Association and Counselling in Research Careers for the North-East Development Region of Romania (COACH USV) and integration into the European Research Area (ERA) Talent Platform network</li> <li>• The use of transformative agreements concluded with prestigious collaborating publishers in the framework of the ANELIS PLUS project for the payment of open-access publication fees for scientific papers accepted for publication in the journals of those publishers</li> <li>• Continuation of the policy of financial support for the publication of scientific papers in journals with international impact and of books in prestigious international publishing houses</li> <li>• Supporting research and innovation internships at prestigious institutions at home and abroad and companies with intensive RDI activity, by attracting projects, own institutional income or direct funding from the private sector</li> </ul> |     |
| 40 | <b>Supervision</b>  | +/- |
|    | <p><b>GAP Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to provide career counselling services to all categories of academic staff and researchers</li> <li>• The need to appoint senior researchers to provide supervision for early career researchers</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggestions of improvement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement of career support services for researchers in the USV, development of continuous training programmes for researchers in the USV - Regional Centre for Career Guidance for Researchers in the North-East Region (COACH USV)</li> <li>• Development of the USV Institute for Advanced Studies as a catalyst forum for interdisciplinary and international cooperation in the field of RDI in the USV</li> <li>• Involvement of experienced researchers in advising and mentoring early-stage researchers - Regional Centre for Research Career Guidance in the North East Region (COACH USV)</li> <li>• Providing career counselling services to all categories of researchers on topics such as: drafting of grant documentation, financial management of a research project, other issues</li> </ul>   |     |

## 6. HRS4R IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

### Overview of the implementation process

The process of aligning USV with the 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers began with consultation of the university's academic community. To this end, an analysis of the university's research environment was carried out on 3 levels, namely:

- An analysis of the gaps/problems faced by the university's researchers and academics from the perspective of the 40 principles of the C&C (analysis based on face-to-face meetings with them, with the participation of researchers and academics from all 11 faculties of the USV).
- An analysis of the gaps/problems faced by PhD students in the two PhD schools of the university (analysis based on the interpretation of the online questionnaire on PhD students and the production of a report on the study on the research career orientation needs of USV PhD students, attached)
- An analysis of the institutional documents in terms of how they respond or not to the negative aspects identified and how they align with the 40 principles of C&C

To this end, an Action Plan was drawn up to obtain HRS4R accreditation, which comprises a series of actions grouped into the four categories pursued under C&C, namely:

- Ethical and professional aspects
- Recruitment and selection
- Working conditions and social security
- Training and development

Thus, actions have been proposed that address 3 key issues, namely:

- Updating the institutional documents of the USV to align them with the principles of C&C and to reach the aspects formulated as problematic by the interviewed categories
- Creation of new specific institutional tools (guidelines, regulations, procedures, platforms, services) to complete the framework of alignment with the C&C principles and to provide clarity, transparency and support to the academic environment of the university
- Initiate or continue actions/best practices to strengthen the career prospects of USV researchers in the context of the European opening of USV

Once the actions related to the USV Action Plan have been identified, services/committees within the USV have been assigned the prerogatives to carry out the actions foreseen and an indicative timeframe has been allocated for their implementation.

The implementation of the initial Action Plan will be carried out within 24 months after receiving the HRS4R certification following the completion of the initial phase of the whole HRS4R process. During the first 12 months the updating of institutional documents that need updating, highlighted as indicators of achievement in the Action Plan, will be carried out and the development of new institutional tools, also highlighted as indicators, will be started. During the last 12 months, implementation of the measures proposed in the new and updated institutional documents will start, feedback will be sought from the categories initially surveyed and improvements will be made where necessary. At the same time, the actions and good practices contained in the Action Plan will be initiated/continued and suggestions for improvement from the categories concerned will be made.

During the implementation of the Action Plan, reports will be periodically made highlighting the progress made in meeting the related indicators, possible delays, corrective actions, and other issues. An internal review of the HRS4R Strategy will be carried out two years after the launch of the Action Plan. Thus, based on the level of achievement of the indicators of the initial Action Plan and the corrective actions identified as necessary, the initial Action Plan will be revised to align with the issues reported. The revised Action Plan will be discussed and endorsed by the Implementation Committee and presented to the decision-making structures at the level of the USV for final validation.

The entire implementation process of the Action Plan will be carried out with the support of the HRS4R Implementation Committee, under the supervision of the Rector of USV

### **How will the implementation committee or steering group be regularly monitored on progress?**

The HRS4R Implementation Committee will periodically review progress reports on the implementation of the Action Plan containing indicators of achievement, possible delays, potential non-conformities, proposed corrective actions. These progress reports will be presented by the Committee to the USV Senate for approval of the proposed corrective actions to successfully implement the Action Plan.

The entire implementation process of the Action Plan will be carried out with the support of the HRS4R Implementation Committee, under the supervision of the Rector of USV.

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

The Implementation Committee and each Working Group will also include relevant stakeholder representatives (management, decision-making bodies, researchers and administrative staff of the USV). The Committee will oversee the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process of the Action Plan.

Each Working Group is responsible for the implementation of each action for all milestones defined in the Action Plan. In turn, the Working Group will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of progress and reporting to the Steering Committee.

The academic/research community of the USV will be involved in the implementation process of the Action Plan in the following ways:

- Representatives of the USV academic/research community are part of the Implementation Committee and working groups, in this sense representing an effective means of disseminating issues related to the Action Plan, as well as providing constructive feedback on implementation and possible improvements
- The research community will have a major influence on the implementation process through existing bodies (such as the USV Senate) in accordance with national legislation and the USV Statutes.
- The implementation process will also involve evaluation actions in the form of regular surveys among the research community based on which reports will be produced highlighting progress in meeting related indicators, possible delays, corrective actions, other issues.

## How do you go about aligning organisational policies with HRS4R?

The proposed actions and indicators assumed in the USV HRS4R Action Plan will be the main starting point for the update/creation of new institutional documents addressing the university's human research resource, being included in the USV Rector's Management Plan, with direct implications on the main operational directions specific to a university: education, research, innovation and technology transfer. This multi-criteria approach, intelligently linking human capital formation with high quality basic research and the exploitation of research with societal and economic impact, will contribute to strengthening the reputation, enhancing the performance and the national and international influence of our university.

## How do you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?

The Gap Analysis and Action Plan have been approved by the USV Senate. Accordingly, the proposed Action Plan is supported by the institution at the maximum representative level for implementation.

The Implementation Committee and Working Groups will include relevant members/representatives of the university, faculties, services, as entities that are mandated to implement the actions.

The implementation process of the Action Plan will involve regular consultation with relevant stakeholders (USV Senate, researchers, trade unions, etc.).

Members of the expert group of the research community, who also initially supported the gap analysis, will be invited to contribute to the regular review of the Action Plan. On the basis of the regular reports on the implementation of the Action Plan, potential delays in achieving the indicators will be identified and corrective actions will be proposed and monitored through the HRS4R Implementation Committee.

## How will you monitor progress?

In order to monitor and implement the actions in the Action Plan, the following measures need to be taken:

- Identify the entities to which the Action Plan's performance indicators are assigned. Even if several entities (services/commissions) at the level of the FSU are involved in the achievement of these indicators, each indicator is the responsibility of one of these entities.
- Opinion polls at the Working Group level to draw up regular reports on actions already undertaken, contributing to the regular review of the Action Plan.
- Quarterly meetings of the HRS4R Implementation Committee to monitor the degree of achievement of indicators, possible inconsistencies, potential delays, establish corrective/remedial actions on identified problems
- Regular reporting to the management structures of the USV

Through these actions to monitor the progress in the implementation of the Action Plan, it will be possible to identify promptly any inconsistencies/problems that have arisen, to identify effective corrective actions so that the risks associated with monitoring are minimized and the Action Plan indicators can be achieved in optimal conditions.

### How will you measure progress (indicators) for the next evaluation?

Each main action in the Action Plan is matched by a set of indicators established individually for all planned sub-actions. These sets of indicators will be subject to regular assessment by the Implementation Committee. Quarterly meetings of the members of this committee will make it possible to assess the level of achievement of the indicators. Depending on the situation identified for each of these indicators (met, partially met, met with comments/recommendations, fully met) the best decisions will be taken to remedy the problems encountered.

## 7. ENTITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING USV HRS4R

To implement the principles of the Charter and Code for Researchers at the level of the USV, it was necessary to create a coordination structure that would have the knowledge and authority to implement changes related to this approach (updating institutional documents, creating new tools, specific actions, best practices).

At the same time, the whole process of analyzing potential gaps at the level of the USV about the principles of the Charter and the Code was carried out with the support of Working Groups, groups that will also be involved in the process of implementing the changes related to HRS4R.

### HRS4R IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

#### How the HRS4R Implementation Committee was appointed

The committee was set up taking into account all the structures in the USV organisational chart that are related to the research activity of the university, respectively:

- Scientific research activity is under the coordination of the Prorectorate for Scientific Activity
- The human resources aspects of the USV are the responsibility of the Human Resources Department
- The financial resources of the USV are the responsibility of the Financial-Accounting Department
- Quality assurance issues are the responsibility of the Commission for Quality Assessment and Assurance
- The issues related to the activity of USV doctoral students are the responsibility of the Council of Doctoral Studies
- Legal issues are the responsibility of the Legal Department of the USV
- Issues related to the transfer of university research results to the industrial environment are the responsibility of the USV Centre for Technology Transfer and Spin-off Companies
- Issues related to access to national and European funding are the responsibility of the Programme and Project Management Department

The Committee will be under the direct supervision of the Rector of the USV and will ensure that the necessary steps are taken to bring the USV in line with the principles of the Charter and the Code:

- Updating institutional documents governing the issues raised in the GAP analysis related to the 40 principles of the Charter and Code.

- Creation of new instruments (guidelines, procedures, regulations) to regulate issues raised in the GAP analysis and not covered by the current procedures and regulations of the FSU
- Creation of new mechanisms to remedy the issues raised in the GAP analyse (development of an IT platform allowing the automatic completion of reports with research results indexed in international databases or in existing databases at USV level, possibility of electronic access to mobility opportunities, creation of an electronic platform at USV level or of a data repository containing the results and information from the university's research activity)
- Implement the Action Plan at the level of the USV and follow up the alignment with the 40 principles in order to improve the quality of researchers' careers and broaden career opportunities for researchers at the university and beyond.

The composition of the HRS4R Implementation Committee at USV level is as follows:

| Name                    | Position                            | Department  |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Aurelian Rotaru         | Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity | Prorectorate                                      |
| Cristina Elena Turcu    | President of Scientific Council     | University Scientific Council                     |
| Laura Bouriaud          | Director                            | Council for Doctoral Studies                      |
| Geanina Măciucă         | Economic Director                   | Financial-Accounting Department                   |
| Anișoara Moldovicean    | Head of department                  | HR Department                                     |
| Corneliu Octavian Turcu | Coordinator                         | Programme and Project Management Department       |
| Costel Mironeasa        | Coordinator                         | Quality Assessment and Assurance Committee        |
| Paul Pașcu              | Coordinator                         | Technology Transfer Centre and Spin-off Companies |
| Iolanda Rusu            | Legal advisor                       | Legal Department                                  |
| Otilia Cramariuc        | Referent                            | Technology Transfer Centre and Spin-off Companies |

## WORKING GROUPS

### How the HRS4R Implementation Working Group was appointed

The working group responsible for implementing HRS4R consists of representatives of the Administrative Advisory Committee of the USV, teachers, researchers (R1-R4), PhD students.



The academics and researchers come from all 11 faculties of the USV. When setting up the working groups, the following were taken into account:

- Involvement of representatives of the decision-making structures of the USV to gain legitimacy for updating institutional documents to adapt internal university regulations to the principles of the Charter and the Code.
- Non-discriminatory involvement of the representatives of the 11 faculties with respect for the principle of gender equality
- Knowledge of the university's institutional documents relating to research activity
- Involvement of researchers (academic staff) at all career stages (R1-R4)
- Willingness of working group members to inform themselves on how HRS4R principles have been implemented at other similar institutions in the country and abroad, willingness to learn from good practices and apply them at USV level
- Knowledge of national legislation and institutional regulations in the field of research and education with a focus on human resources

| Working groups   | The format consults  | Results  |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Working Group composed of representatives of the Administrative Advisory Committee | Face-to-face meeting | <p>The Administrative Advisory Committee is represented by the Administrative Departments of the USV directly or indirectly involved in human resources issues in the USV (Human Resources Service, Financial Accounting Service, Legal Service). Each of the designated members of these departments has been given responsibilities for conducting a review of the initial status of the C&amp;C principles and compliance with the OTM-R policy in their area of competence. This group conducted an analysis of the 40 principles and the OTM-R policy to assess the current status of compliance at USV. Based on this analysis, the main areas for improvement were identified and a first document containing these issues was drafted.</p> <p>The main institutional documents that will need to be amended to align with the 40 principles of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers and the MTO-R, respectively, have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USV Charter</li> <li>• USV Internal Regulations</li> <li>• Regulations for filling vacant or temporarily vacant teaching and research posts</li> <li>• Regulations for filling vacant teaching posts</li> <li>• Regulations for the organisation and running of the doctoral study programmes</li> <li>• Regulation on the organisation and functioning of the Career Counselling and Guidance Centre</li> <li>• Quality Assurance Code</li> <li>• Strategy to prevent and combat plagiarism and to verify compliance with academic ethics and deontology in the preparation of doctoral theses in the USV (including the creation of the Ombudsman institution at the USV level)</li> <li>• Other documents</li> </ul> |

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| <p>Working Group of Academic and Research Staff</p> | <p>Face-to-face interviews</p> | <p>The group of academic and research staff, consisting of 11 appointed scientific experts from each faculty, was trained on the HRS4R procedure (steps, and documents to be prepared). The main task of this group was to get feedback from the scientific community they are part of (the faculty they represent).</p> <p>In this respect, the following aspects have been identified as requiring improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient knowledge of the implications and obligations of the researcher about the research results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> <li>• The need for information and transparency regarding funding opportunities for research activity and the need for support in the preparation of funding documents and the implementation of these projects</li> <li>• The need for training in obtaining research projects and their implementation</li> <li>• The need for support for technology transfer of university research results to industry</li> <li>• Low visibility for the general public of the university's research activity and the research results developed</li> <li>• Still limited collaboration with prestigious publishers within the ANELIS PLUS project, as well as access to publishers and journals with international impact</li> <li>• Still low level of involvement of the university in the academic associations and networks to which it belongs</li> <li>• The need to update the documents concerning the recruitment of researchers and teaching staff to bring them into line with the provisions of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers</li> <li>• The need to revise the minimum necessary and mandatory standards for filling teaching and research posts</li> <li>• Vacancies are currently advertised on the Institution's website</li> <li>• The evaluation criteria for researchers/teaching staff should be adapted/updated and linked to the objectives of R&amp;D and innovation activities regarding socio-economic impact, sustainability, valorisation and open access to their results.</li> <li>• The need for measures to motivate outstanding researchers</li> <li>• the need to pay attention to special situations of at least 1 year interruption of the research career (e.g. sick leave, childcare)</li> <li>• Need to capitalize on USV's patent portfolio and institutional image capital by holding the leading position at the national level in terms of the number of patent applications and patents registered at OSIM in the period 2012-2022</li> <li>• The need to update institutional documents or create new tools to address the co-authorship procedure at USV level</li> <li>• There is a load on teaching staff and researchers with administrative activities which may affect the quality of their work</li> <li>• Need to develop a policy for the development of teaching and research careers, systematically and uniformly presenting all existing practices at the institutional level, and an internal guide on internal regulations concerning the implications/obligations of the researcher about the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> <li>• Except doctoral studies (where there is a supervision committee), for researchers at the first two career levels there are no formally designated persons (senior researchers) to carry out supervision activities. Senior/senior researchers should pay particular attention to their multilateral role as supervisors, mentors, career advisors, leaders, project coordinators, managers or science communicators.</li> <li>• The need to systematically organise continuous training activities tailored to the career level and individual needs of academic and administrative staff</li> </ul> |
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|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Still low level of research project development about the number of researchers and the potential offered by the university research infrastructure</li> <li>• Need for a system of incentives to motivate researchers and students to continue research activity</li> <li>• The need to develop programmes aimed at developing skills specific to scientific creativity, invention and intellectual property protection</li> <li>• The need for unrestricted online access to scientific resources such as journals, international publications, databases</li> </ul> <p>It was therefore proposed to develop the following documents at the level of the institution to regulate the specific issues raised at the level of the university research community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy and implementation of a phased inclusive USV plan to transform USV campuses into inclusive campuses and provide equal study opportunities for people with special educational needs, through the involvement of the Faculty of Education Sciences and the Career Guidance and Counselling Centre.</li> <li>• A strategy aimed at the valorisation and dissemination of university research results</li> <li>• Own OTM-R policy and procedure proposed to be implemented in the first 2 years of the Action Plan</li> <li>• Intellectual property rights regulation</li> <li>• Internal guidance on internal regulations concerning the implications/obligations of the researcher about the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> <li>• Implementation of a research and teaching career development policy, systematically and uniformly presenting all existing practices at the institutional level</li> <li>• Creation of a co-authorship procedure at USV level</li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|

|                                |                      |   |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| USV PhD students working group | Online questionnaire | <p>This analysis is part of a larger study targeting PhD students in the NE Region of Romania and aims to investigate the needs for career guidance and counselling in research careers. The results of the study will be taken into account in the training and counselling of doctoral students in the Centre for Guidance, Association and Counselling in the Research Career for the North-East Region of Romania, developed at the "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava. The study is carried out by the project Creation and development of the Centre for guidance, association and counselling in research careers for the North-East Region of Romania within the University "Ștefan cel Mare" of Suceava - COACH USV, funded by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan PNRR-III-C9-2022-I10.</p> <p>The interpretation of the results of the questionnaire applied in 2023 on the 67 PhD students of USV reflects the following situation:</p> <p><b>General views of doctoral students on the challenges of working in the doctoral school:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 70% feel they made the right choice in enrolling in a PhD both in terms of maintaining their interest and reflecting their expectations in the doctoral work they do. However, for 25% of them, the pressure they feel during their doctoral research is likely to affect their relationship with those close to them.</li> <li>• 22% declare that they have thought of giving up their doctoral studies, the reasons being linked to personal constraints (lack of time and money, burn-out), contextual issues (the weight of publishing papers in journals with an impact factor) or interpersonal problems (poor communication)</li> <li>• One positive aspect is that among the career goals expressed by those who responded to the questionnaire, there are also aspects related to sustainable development and addressing community issues: contributing to technological development and innovation, deepening, development and improvement, continuous research, changing the image of the school in the community. No less important, however, are the barriers that doctoral students experience in achieving these objectives, in the form of financial, time, age, bureaucracy, limited access to European projects, workload</li> </ul> <p><b>Perspective on the conditions of the doctoral school:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A positive aspect is that 94% of PhD students at our university are clear about the doctoral pathway to which they have committed, which is also confirmed by the high percentages (over 70%) of those who have good and very good knowledge of both data collection and analysis methods in their chosen doctoral field</li> <li>• A majority (82%) are satisfied and very satisfied with the academic environment of our university and the research resources they have access to, as well as the opportunities for collaboration and publication required in their doctoral work (70%).</li> <li>• The support from the doctoral coordinator seems to be considered optimal by more than 80% of the doctoral students of our institution who responded to the questionnaire, both in terms of the encouragement and attention they receive from the coordinator, the appreciation for their doctoral work, as well as in terms of effective communication in terms of counteracting any issues that could affect the best possible conduct of their doctoral work. This percentage is decreasing when it comes to the relationship with the research group/doctoral fellows to which the respondents belong, in that only about half feel that their expertise is valued/appreciated at the group level, with the lowest percentage being for encouragement and support from fellow researchers.</li> <li>• Access to mentoring within our university's doctoral school is highlighted by almost 70% of respondents</li> </ul> <p><b>Training and professional development:</b></p> |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|---|

- Over 60% of those surveyed feel they need training/counselling in data collection and analysis
- Approximately 60% of the PhD students who responded to the survey believe that the issues they face in managing stress and anxiety, as well as achieving work-life balance, would require access to training and counselling resources that address these issues
- 67% of doctoral students believe that addressing time management issues should be part of counselling sessions during their doctoral studies
- 60% declare themselves interested in counselling and consider themselves deficient in developing their motivation and perseverance in the context of their doctoral work

**Research management and professional conduct, knowledge of project writing, financial management, and research ethics:**

- One of the important aspects to highlight in the context of the university's desire to align with the regulations of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers is that 85% of PhD students who responded to the questionnaire know the ethical principles of research. However, only 57% have obtained the approval of the university's research ethics committee for the research they conduct.
- 75% of respondents have no information on how to obtain a research project and 43% have a low level of skills for the financial management of such a project
- 76% consider that they have a medium to high level of skills in writing a research project in a project competition

**The results of the analysis carried out at the level of the group of PhD students of our institution indicated the following areas of intervention to increase convergence with the principles of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers, respectively:**

- Improving internal communication and information dissemination processes within the doctoral school and beyond
- Conducting training on research data collection and analysis within the PhD School
- Conduct courses/trainings on obtaining research projects (application and implementation of these projects), financial management of these projects
- Counselling doctoral students on the effects that doctoral work can have on their personal lives, as well as on issues such as time management, stress resistance, motivation and perseverance development
- Creating research groups that bring together researchers interested in similar or complementary topics to make better use of research results already obtained, and to create new research results with a strong innovative and multidisciplinary character
- Establish institutional mechanisms and strategies to encourage effective training activities and to support research career development
- Strengthening support for researchers to develop better links between academia and industry

## 8. ACTION PLAN

| Proposed action  | Principles           | Due date | Who is responsible   | Indicators  |
|--|----------------------|----------|--|---|
| <b>ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS</b>  |                      |          |  |   |
| <b>Strengthening institutional commitment to the ethical principles of the research profession</b> | 2,3, 5,6,7,8,9<br>11 | S2, 2025 | Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity<br>University Scientific Council<br>Quality Assessment and Assurance Committee<br>HR Department<br>Legal Department                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Updated USV CHARTER</li> <li>✓ Strategy to prevent and combat plagiarism and to verify compliance with academic ethics and deontology in the preparation of doctoral theses updated</li> <li>✓ Creation of the Ombudsman institution at USV level</li> <li>✓ An internal guide on internal regulations concerning the implications/obligations of the researcher about the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities carried out</li> <li>✓ An IT platform to allow automatic completion of reports with research results indexed in international databases or existing databases at USV level, as well as real-time promotion of RDI results on university and faculty websites</li> <li>✓ A strategy aimed at the valorisation and dissemination of the results of academic research carried out</li> <li>✓ Institutional documents regarding evaluation criteria for researchers/teaching staff to be in line with the principles of the updated Charter and Code (e.g. Regulation on the evaluation of the performance of teaching staff)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Increasing researcher support for research activity</b>   | 1,3,4,6,7,8,10,11    | S2, 2026 | Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity<br>University Scientific Council<br>Quality Assessment and Assurance Committee<br>Legal Department<br>Council for Doctoral Studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reports assessing the need and type of support</li> <li>✓ Courses/training in various areas (project writing and implementation, research data collection and analysis in the doctoral school)</li> <li>✓ Open Science, Open Data policy implemented</li> <li>✓ Attracting and co-funding projects for online access to collections of high-impact journals in the international community, international scientific databases, and research performance analysis tools through the ANELIS PLUS Association</li> <li>✓ A regulation on intellectual property rights made</li> <li>✓ Revitalization of existing Research Centres within USV and development of at least 5 new research centres in newly established directions at USV</li> </ul>  |

|  |                            |          |   |  |
|--|----------------------------|----------|---|--|
|  |                            |          | Financial-Accounting Department<br>Programme and Project Management Department  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Intensification of USV's activity in international academic associations and networks and joining new associations/networks relevant to the university's activity to facilitate the technological transfer of research results to industry</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Creation of research groups that bring together researchers interested in similar or complementary topics to exploit better the research results already obtained, and to create new research results with a strong innovative and multidisciplinary character</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Implement a system of differentiated pay for academics and researchers based on performance, based on annual evaluations, internal USV grants won through competition, outstanding achievements and their degree of involvement in institutional development</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Re-launch the research career and reduce the teaching norm to the minimum norm established in the USV's regulations for at least 2 academic years and award, through competition, internal research grants to categories of researchers who have had interruptions of at least 1 year (e.g. medical leave, child raising)</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Develop a strategy and implement a phased inclusive USV plan to transform USV campuses into inclusive campuses and provide equal learning opportunities for people with special educational needs</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Providing counselling, coaching and mentoring services for undergraduate, masters and PhD students, postdocs and researchers across the region - USV COACH Centre</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Promoting ethical behaviour and respect for the law in collaboration with the European Law Student Association (ELSA) and the Centre for Applied Ethics Research</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION</b>   |                            |          |   |  |
| <b>Strengthening institutional commitment to the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment</b> | 12,13, 14, 15,16<br>17, 20 | S2, 2025 | Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity<br>University Scientific Council<br>Quality Assessment and Assurance Committee<br>HR Department<br>Legal Department | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>USV OTM-R policy and procedure implemented</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Conduct specific courses on OTM-R for those involved in the training and selection process at USV level</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Inclusion in institutional quality control rules (e.g. Quality Assurance Code) of special provisions regarding OTM-R policy</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Publication of job vacancies on the EURAXESS platform already in the first year of the Action Plan, immediately after obtaining the HRS4R logo</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Updated documents on recruitment of researchers and teachers:</i></li> </ul>   |



|   |                                       |          |  |   |
|---|---------------------------------------|----------|--|---|
|   |                                       |          |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules for filling vacant or temporarily vacant teaching and research posts</li> <li>• Regulations for filling vacant teaching posts</li> <li>• Other documents containing regulations in the field of recruitment of researchers and teaching staff</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Attracting new teachers and researchers with high research performance</b>                             | 13,14, 18, 19,21                      | S1, 2026 | <p>Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity<br/>University Scientific Council<br/>Quality Assessment and Assurance Committee<br/>HR Department<br/>Legal Department<br/>Programme and Project Management Department</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Minimum required and mandatory standards for teaching and research posts revised</li> <li>✓ Initiation of the Young Researchers' Gala, where outstanding young teachers and researchers in R&amp;I work will be highlighted and rewarded, following a joint evaluation by teachers and employers</li> <li>✓ Develop post-doctoral programmes both by attracting grant-funded projects and independently of them, to ensure predictability in the continuation of research activity by outstanding PhD students from the USV and other institutions.</li> <li>✓ Possibility to access mobility opportunities electronically</li> </ul>  |
| <b>WORKING CONDITIONS AND SOCIAL SECURITY</b>   |                                       |          |  |   |
| <b>Increased support for researchers and academics in terms of working conditions and social security</b> | 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30 32, 33 | S1, 2026 | <p>Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity<br/>University Scientific Council<br/>Quality Assessment and Assurance Committee<br/>HR Department<br/>Technology Transfer Center and Spin-off Companies<br/>Legal Department<br/>Financial-Accounting Department<br/>Programme and Project Management Department</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Updating of the Internal Regulations of the USV, inclusion of provisions on distance working conditions, intellectual property rights</li> <li>✓ An internal guide on the internal regulations concerning the implications/obligations of the researcher about the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</li> <li>✓ A research and teaching career development policy developed</li> <li>✓ Relieving teachers/researchers of certain administrative burdens through administrative simplification and de-bureaucratisation</li> <li>✓ Digitisation of all USV processes and documents and school management by finalising the implementation of the USV Digital project</li> <li>✓ Revitalization of existing USV Research Centres and development of at least 5 new research centres in newly established USV directorates</li> <li>✓ Development of at least 20 new or upgraded research laboratories with advanced equipment and state-of-the-art software</li> <li>✓ Continuation of the policy of financial support for the publication of scientific papers, internships</li> </ul> |

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|--|----------------|----------|--|--|
|  |                |          |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provide counselling, coaching and mentoring services for undergraduate, masters and doctoral students, postdocs and researchers throughout the region - USV COACH Centre</li> <li>✓ Use of transformative agreements with prestigious collaborating publishers in the framework of the ANELIS PLUS project for the payment of open-access publication fees for scientific papers accepted for publication in the journals of the respective publishers.</li> <li>✓ Re-launch of research careers and reduction of the teaching norm to the minimum norm established in the USV's regulations for at least 2 academic years and award, through competition, of internal research grants for categories of researchers who have had interruptions of at least 1 year (e.g. medical leave, child rearing)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Improving recognition and motivation at work and in research</b>  | 22,23,26       | S1, 2026 | <p>Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity<br/>University Scientific Council<br/>Quality Assessment and Assurance Committee<br/>HR Department<br/>Financial-Accounting Department<br/>Legal Department<br/>Programme and Project Management Department</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Initiate the Young Researchers Gala, in which teachers and young researchers with outstanding performance in the CDI activity will be highlighted and rewarded, following a joint evaluation by teachers and employers.</li> <li>✓ Motivate the development and submission of RDI projects in national and international competitions, including through internal research grants</li> <li>✓ Implement a system of differentiated pay for teachers and researchers based on performance, according to annual evaluations, internal USV grants won through competition, outstanding achievements and their degree of involvement in institutional development</li> <li>✓ Develop a benefits package for USV employees by negotiating facilities from shops and service providers, including health services</li> <li>✓ Increase the degree of involvement in RDI activities of students from all study cycles in research, development and innovation activities, including through scholarships, awards, internal grants</li> </ul> |
| <b>Creating all premises for the respect of intellectual property and the development of technology transfer activities at the USV level</b> | 23,28,31,32,34 | S2, 2026 | <p>Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity<br/>University Scientific Council<br/>Quality Assessment and Assurance Committee</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ An Intellectual Property Rights Regulation created</li> <li>✓ A co-authorship procedure created at USV level</li> <li>✓ Updated USV Plagiarism Prevention and Combating Strategy and creation of the USV Ombudsman institution<br/>Un Regulament privind drepturile de proprietate intelectuală creat</li> <li>✓ Supporting the patenting of inventions in the USV</li> <li>✓ Support the transfer of knowledge and technologies, such as the Siret Science and Technology Park, the interdisciplinary research laboratory for the analysis</li> </ul>  |

|  |                    |          |   |  |
|--|--------------------|----------|---|--|
|  |                    |          | Technology Transfer Center and Spin-off Companies<br>Legal Department   | <i>of quality, safety and identification of food adulteration within the Suceava-Botoșani Regional Innovative Bioeconomy Cluster; development of USV structures and training of human resources dedicated to these collaborations, such as the Centre for Technology Transfer in Industry 4.0 and Smart Destinations (MCID authorised), the Electromagnetic Compatibility Laboratory (RENAR accredited), the Centre for Technology Transfer and Spin-off Companies)</i>  |
| <b>Internationalization of USV research activities</b>   | 22,23,28,29,35     | S1, 2026 | Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity<br>University Scientific Council<br>Council for Doctoral Studies<br>Financial-Accounting Department<br>Legal Department   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Collaborative actions with universities in international networks of which USV is a member: Alliance of European Universities NEOLAIA, European University Association (EUA), Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)</li> <li>✓ Creation of a centre dedicated to the NEOLAIA Strategic Alliance and extension of examples of good practice in other international partnerships of the USV</li> <li>✓ Implementation of Open Science, Open Data policies adopted at the national and European level</li> <li>✓ Financial support for the publication of scientific papers in journals with international impact, mobility and research and innovation internships at prestigious institutions</li> <li>✓ Ensure optimal conditions for student mobility by increasing the number of ERASMUS partnerships, diversifying the programme offer and attracting funding and projects from the ERASMUS+ Programme and other specific national and international programmes</li> </ul> |
| <b>TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT</b>  |                    |          |   |  |
| <b>Creating all premises for the optimal development of the teaching career of USV researchers</b> | 36, 37, 38, 39, 40 | S2, 2026 | Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity<br>University Scientific Council<br>Council for Doctoral Studies<br>Quality Assessment and Assurance Committee<br>Legal Department<br>Technology Transfer Center and Spin-off Companies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A teaching and research career development policy developed</li> <li>✓ Strengthening doctoral schools by supporting the empowerment of USV teaching staff and attracting PhD supervisors from home and abroad</li> <li>✓ Accreditation of at least 2 new PhD fields</li> <li>✓ Development of the USV Institute for Advanced Studies as a catalytic forum for interdisciplinary and international cooperation in the field of RDI in the USV</li> <li>✓ Improving career support services for researchers in the USV through the North-East Region's only researcher career guidance centre (COACH USV)</li> <li>✓ Courses/training in various fields (project writing and implementation, research data collection and analysis in the doctoral school)</li> <li>✓ Revitalisation of existing Research Centres within USV and development of at least 5 new research centres in directions recently established at USV</li> </ul>  |

|   |    |          |  |  |
|---|----|----------|--|--|
|   |    |          | Programme and Project Management Department  |  |
| <b>Financial support for researchers in professional development issues</b> | 39 | S1, 2026 | Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity<br>University Scientific Council<br>HR Department<br>Council for Doctoral Studies<br>Financial-Accounting Department | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>A policy of financial support for the publication of scientific papers implemented</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Research and innovation internships for researchers supported from USV resources</i></li> </ul> |

**Detailed presentation of the Action Plan:**

|   | <b>ACTION</b>   | <b>INDICATORS</b>  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS</b> |   |  |
| <b>1.</b>                               | <b>Strengthening institutional commitment to the ethical principles of the research profession</b>  |  |
| 1.1                                     | <i>Updating the Code of Ethics and Professional Deontology part of the USV CHARTER</i>  | <i>Updated USV CHARTER</i>   |
| 1.2                                     | <i>Updating the Strategy to prevent and combat the phenomenon of plagiarism and to verify compliance with academic ethics and deontology in the preparation of doctoral theses to update/harmonise it with the principles of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Strategy to prevent and combat plagiarism and to verify compliance with academic ethics and deontology in the preparation of doctoral theses updated</i></li> <li>• <i>Creation of the OMBUDSMAN institution at USV level</i></li> </ul> |
| 1.3                                     | <i>Develop an internal guide on internal regulations on the implications/obligations of the researcher on the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities.</i>                                     | <i>An internal guide on the internal regulations concerning the implications/obligations of the researcher about the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities carried out</i>                      |
| 1.4                                     | <i>Creation of a USV-wide electronic platform or data repository containing in one place the results and information from the university's research activity</i>  | <i>An IT platform allowing the automatic completion of reports with research results indexed in international databases or existing databases at USV level, as well as the real-time promotion of RDI results on university and faculty websites</i>                                 |
| 1.5                                     | <i>Implementing a strategy to exploit and disseminate the results of university research</i>  | <i>A strategy aimed at exploiting and disseminating the results of academic research carried out</i>   |
| 1.6                                     | <i>Updating institutional documents in terms of evaluation criteria for researchers/teaching staff in order to align them with the principles of the Charter and the Code, with the objectives of R&amp;D and innovation activities</i>   | <i>Institutional documents regarding the evaluation criteria for researchers/teaching staff to correlate with the principles of the updated Charter and Code (e.g. Regulation on the evaluation of the performance of teaching staff)</i>  |

| 2. Increasing researcher support for research activity |   |   |
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| 2.1  | <i>Assessment of the type of support and provision of courses/training in areas that need support (personalised counselling, mentoring coaching)</i>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reports assessing the need and type of support</i></li> <li>• <i>Courses/training in various areas (project writing and implementation, research data collection and analysis in the doctoral school)</i></li> </ul>  |
| 2.2  | <i>Transition to open research and open access to publicly funded results through the implementation of Open Science, Open Data policies adopted at national and European levels, respecting the principle of "as open as possible, but as closed as necessary".</i>            | <i>Open Science, Open Data policy implemented</i>   |
| 2.3  | <i>The use of transformative agreements concluded with prestigious collaborating publishers in the framework of the ANELIS PLUS project for the payment of open-access publication fees for scientific papers accepted for publication in the journals of those publishers.</i> | <i>Attracting and co-funding projects for online access to collections of high-impact journals in the international community, international scientific databases, and research performance analysis tools through the intermediary of the ANELIS PLUS Association.</i>   |
| 2.4  | <i>Implementing good practice in research</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A regulation on intellectual property rights achieved</i></li> <li>• <i>Revitalization of existing Research Centres within USV and development of at least 5 new research centres in newly established directions at USV</i></li> <li>• <i>Intensification of USV's activity in international academic associations and networks and joining new associations/networks relevant to the university's activity to facilitate the technological transfer of research results to industry</i></li> <li>• <i>Creation of research groups that bring together researchers interested in similar or complementary topics to better exploit the research results already obtained, and to create new research results with a strong innovative and multidisciplinary character</i></li> <li>• <i>Applying a system of differentiated pay for teaching and research staff based on performance, based on annual evaluations, internal USV grants won through competition, exceptional achievements and the degree of their involvement in institutional development</i></li> </ul> |

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|                                  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-launch research careers and reduce the teaching norm to the minimum norm set in the USV's regulations for at least 2 academic years and award, through competition, internal research grants to categories of researchers who have had interruptions of at least 1 year (e.g. medical leave, child raising)</li> <li>• Develop a strategy and implement a phased inclusive USV plan to transform USV campuses into inclusive campuses and provide equal study opportunities for people with special educational needs</li> <li>• Provide counselling, coaching and mentoring services for undergraduate, masters and PhD students, postdocs and researchers across the region - USV COACH Centre</li> <li>• Promoting ethical behaviour and respect for the law in collaboration with the European Law Student Association (ELSA) and the Centre for Applied Ethics Research</li> </ul> |
| <b>RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION</b> |  |   |
| <b>3.</b>                        | <b>Strengthening institutional commitment to the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment</b>   |   |
| 3.1                              | <i>Developing our policy and an OTM-R procedure</i>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USV OTM-R policy and procedure implemented</li> <li>• Conduct specific training on OTM-R for those involved in the training and selection process at USV level</li> <li>• Inclusion in institutional quality control rules (e.g. Quality Assurance Code) of specific provisions regarding the OTM-R policy</li> <li>• Publication on the EURAXESS platform of job vacancies already in the first year of the Action Plan, immediately after obtaining the HRS4R logo</li> </ul>  |
| 3.2                              | <i>Updating of documents concerning the recruitment of researchers and teaching staff to bring them into line with the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers</i> | <p>Documents aimed at recruiting researchers and updated teaching staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rules for filling vacant or temporarily vacant teaching and research posts</li> <li>• Regulations for filling vacant teaching posts</li> <li>• Other documents containing regulations on the recruitment of researchers and teaching staff</li> </ul>   |
| <b>4</b>                         | <b>Attracting new teachers and researchers with high research performance</b>  |   |
| 4.1                              | <i>Revision of the minimum necessary and mandatory standards for teaching and research posts</i>   | <i>Revised minimum required and mandatory standards for teaching and research posts</i>   |

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| 4.2   | <i>Highlighting and attracting outstanding researchers</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Initiating the Young Researchers Gala, where outstanding teachers and young researchers in the CDI activity will be highlighted and awarded, following a joint evaluation by teachers and employers.</i></li> <li>• <i>Develop post-doctoral programmes both by attracting grant-funded projects and independently of them, to ensure predictability in the continuation of research activity by outstanding doctoral students from USV and other institutions.</i></li> <li>• <i>The possibility of accessing mobility opportunities electronically</i></li> </ul>  |
| <b>WORKING CONDITIONS AND SOCIAL SECURITY</b>   |  |  |
| <b>5 Increased support for researchers and academics in terms of working conditions and social security</b> |  |  |
| 5.1   | <i>Development of tools for the alignment of labour and social security conditions related to the Charter and the Code</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Updating of the Internal Regulations of the USV, inclusion of provisions on distance working conditions, intellectual property rights</i></li> <li>• <i>An internal guide on the internal regulations concerning the implications/obligations of the researcher about the results obtained in the context of different types of funding and service contracts for research and innovation activities</i></li> <li>• <i>A policy for the development of teaching and research careers developed</i></li> </ul>  |
| 5.2   | <i>Actions to support USV research activity</i>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Relieving teachers/lecturers of certain administrative tasks by simplifying and de-bureaucratising administration</i></li> <li>• <i>Digitisation of all USV processes and document and tuition management by completing the implementation of the USV Digital project</i></li> <li>• <i>Revitalization of the existing Research Centres within USV and development of at least 5 new research centres in newly established directions at USV</i></li> <li>• <i>Development of at least 20 new or upgraded research laboratories equipped with advanced equipment and state-of-the-art software</i></li> <li>• <i>Continuation of the policy of financial support for the publication of scientific papers and internships</i></li> <li>• <i>Provide counselling, coaching and mentoring services for undergraduate, masters and doctoral students, postdocs and researchers throughout the region - USV COACH Centre</i></li> <li>• <i>The use of transformative agreements concluded with prestigious collaborating publishers in the framework of the ANELIS PLUS project for the payment of open-access publication fees for scientific papers accepted for publication in the journals of those publishers.</i></li> </ul> |



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|          |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Re-launching research careers and reducing the teaching norm to the minimum norm established in the USV's regulations for at least 2 academic years and awarding, through competition, internal research grants to categories of researchers who have had interruptions of at least 1 year (e.g. medical leave, child rearing)</i></li> </ul>   |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Improving recognition and motivation at work and in research</b>  |   |
| 6.1      | <i>Recognising outstanding researchers</i>   | <i>Initiation of the Young Researchers Gala, in which teachers and young researchers with outstanding performance in the CDI activity will be highlighted and awarded, following a joint evaluation by teachers and employers.</i>  |
| 6.2      | <i>Motivation for developing and submitting RDI projects</i>   | <i>Motivating the development and submission of RDI projects in national and international competitions, including through internal research grants</i>   |
| 6.3      | <i>Implementation of other measures to motivate researchers and teachers</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Applying a system of differentiated pay for teaching and research staff based on performance, based on annual evaluations, internal USV grants won through competition, exceptional achievements and their degree of involvement in institutional development</i></li> <li>• <i>Develop a benefits package for USV employees by negotiating facilities provided by shops and service providers, including health services</i></li> <li>• <i>Increase the degree of involvement in RDI activities of students from all study cycles in research, development and innovation activities, including through scholarships, awards, internal grants</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Creating all premises for the respect of intellectual property and the development of technology transfer activities at the USV level</b> |   |
| 7.1      | <i>Create our own Intellectual Property Rights Regulation</i>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>An Intellectual Property Rights Regulation created</i></li> <li>• <i>A co-authorship procedure created at USV level</i></li> <li>• <i>Updated strategy to prevent and combat plagiarism at USV and creation of the Ombudsman institution at USV level</i></li> </ul>  |
| 7.2      | <i>Continue policies to support patenting activity and knowledge and technology transfer</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Supporting the patenting of inventions in the USV</i></li> <li>• <i>Support the transfer of knowledge and technologies, such as the Siret Science and Technology Park, the interdisciplinary research laboratory for the analysis of quality, safety and identification of food adulteration within the Suceava-Botoșani Regional Innovative Bioeconomy Cluster; the development of USV structures and the training of human resources dedicated to these collaborations, such as the Centre for Technology Transfer in Industry 4.0</i></li> </ul>   |

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|                                 |  | <i>and Smart Destinations (MCID authorised), the Electromagnetic Compatibility Laboratory (RENAR accredited), the Centre for Technology Transfer and Spin-off Companies)</i>  |
| <b>8</b>                        | <b>Internationalization of USV research activities</b>   |   |
| 8.1                             | <i>Creating opportunities in collaboration with universities in international networks</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative actions with universities in international networks of which USV is a member: Alliance of European Universities NEOLAIA, European University Association (EUA), Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)</li> <li>• Creation of a centre dedicated to the NEOLAIA Strategic Alliance and the extension of examples of good practice in other international partnerships of the USV</li> </ul>   |
| 8.2                             | <i>The transition to open research</i>   | <i>Implementation of Open Science, Open Data policies adopted at the national and European level</i>  |
| 8.3                             | <i>Financial support for USV's internationalisation activities</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial support for the publication of scientific papers in journals with international impact, mobility and research and innovation internships at prestigious institutions</li> <li>• Ensuring optimal conditions for student mobility by increasing the number of ERASMUS partnerships, diversifying the range of programmes on offer and attracting funding and projects from the ERASMUS+ Programme and other specific national and international programmes</li> </ul>   |
| <b>TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT</b> |  |   |
| <b>9</b>                        | <b>Creating all premises for the optimal development of the teaching career of USV researchers</b>   |   |
| 9.1                             | <i>Developing a teaching and research career development policy that systematically and uniformly presents all existing practices at the institutional level</i> | <i>A teaching and research career development policy developed</i>  |
| 9.2                             | <i>Exploitation of training and development opportunities offered by specific USV structures</i>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening doctoral schools by supporting the qualification of USV teaching staff and attracting doctoral supervisors from home and abroad</li> <li>• Accreditation of at least 2 new doctoral fields</li> <li>• Development of the USV Institute for Advanced Studies as a catalyst forum for interdisciplinary and international cooperation in the field of RDI in the USV</li> <li>• Improving career support services for researchers in the USV through the only researcher career guidance centre in the North-East Region (COACH USV)</li> <li>• Courses/training in various fields (project writing and implementation, research data collection and analysis in the doctoral school)</li> </ul> |

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|           |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Revitalization of existing USV Research Centres and development of at least 5 new research centres in directions recently established at USV</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Financial support for researchers in professional development issues</b>  |   |
| 10.1      | <i>Continuation of the policy of financial support for the publication of scientific papers in journals with international impact and books in prestigious international publishing houses</i> | <i>A policy of financial support for the publication of scientific papers implemented</i>   |
| 10.2      | <i>Supporting research and innovation internships at prestigious institutions in the country and abroad and companies with intense RDI activity</i>  | <i>Research and innovation internships for researchers supported by USV resources</i>   |

## ANNEXES

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| 1. | Resolution of the Senate of "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava no. 7 of 23 February 2023 adopting the principles of the Charter and Code of Conduct for Researchers |
| 2. | Report on the study on the research career orientation needs of USV PhD students   |
| 3. | Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment Check-list – OTM-R   |