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**REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**  
**ALEKSANDËR MOISIU UNIVERSITY DURRËS**  
**DIRECTORATE OF PROJECT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**ALEKSANDËR MOISIU UNIVERSITY DURRËS**  
**(UAMD)**

**INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGY**

**2022-2024**



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## 1. Legal basis

This strategy is based on:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Albania;
- Law no. 80, dated 22.07.2015 "On higher education and scientific research in institutions of higher education in the Republic of Albania", bylaws in its implementation;
- Statute (*approved by order No. 385, dated 09.07.2018 of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth*) and Regulation (*approved by Decision No. 154, dated 26.11.2018 of the Academic Senate*) of the University "Aleksandër Moisiu" Durrës (UAMD);
- Internal Regulation of the Directorate of Projects and Foreign Relations (approved by the Decision of the Academic Senate No. 5, dated 17.01.2020) as well as the Internationalization Strategy 2019-2021;
- Law no. 9936, dated 26.06.2008 "On the Management of the Budget System in the Republic of Albania";
- Financial Regulation of the Aleksandër Moisiu University Durrës, Article 43; which are the main legal and operational basis of this strategy.

## 2. Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy aims to define the general objectives regarding the dimension of internationalization in the institution of higher education. It clearly defines measurable indicators alongside each strategic objective, together with the tools needed to achieve those objectives.

It contributes against:

- (i) **the vision** of the Aleksandër Moisiu University Durrës, which as an institution, continuously aims to achieve the highest contemporary national and international academic standards, as well as to support the educational aspirations and achievements of anyone seeking to benefit from higher education;
- (ii) **its mission** to foster and develop critical and analytical thinking, as well as a sense of responsibility and commitment to one another, the community, cultures, events and issues that concern the individual and the community as a whole;
- (iii) **UAMD Strategic Development Plan 2020-2025** (objective no. 3) providing students with quality academic knowledge, in accordance with international standards for higher education, through active participation in national and international projects, exchanges with counterpart institutions in countries of the European Union (EU), as



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well as fostering partnerships, promoting the university at local, national and international level.

### **3. Internationalization at UAMD**

UAMD has set internationalization as one of its strategic priorities. It has been demonstrated to be a leader in aspects of internationalization and seeks to be an important actor in achieving international standards of higher education.

This university seeks to be an important center of university cooperation, scientific research, academic activity and promotion of the developmental values of higher education, for quality education and important contribution to society. Therefore, as an institution, it needs to act efficiently, quickly and flexibly towards an ever-changing society.

In addition to the achievements so far, there is still work to be done towards the internationalization of the institution, specifically, in the approximation of joint study programs and joint and / or dual degrees. The predetermination of internationalization as a strategic objective in the medium-term development plan of the institution (2020-2024), the pursuit of internationalization strategy with an integrated approach to the institution and the continuous measurement of the institution's progress in this regard, are important indicators of the importance of internationalization.

Seeking mutual benefits for the university, the community and stakeholders, UAMD intends to achieve a leading position in the field of research, innovation and technology transfer.

#### **3.1 Internationalization concept**

Internationalization, over the last quarter century, has become a global, strategic component and important factor in higher education. Time ago (*around the 60s*) the focus of internationalization was related to aspects of scholarships for foreign students or international projects, today the elements of internationalization of higher education are shaped into elements of joint / dual study programs, student mobility and staff, global citizenship, international institution ranking, branding and other components.

The internationalization of higher education requires institutions to adapt and define lines of action for internationalization. Institutions that have integrated this dimension time ago, such as: *the curriculum revision and adaptation between partner universities*, best demonstrates the practical benefits of internationalization, graduating capable and competent students to cope both locally and globally.



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Internationalization is included in institutional strategies and / or action plans at the national level as well as in international plans and agendas. The reasons for inclusion can be many, but, in principle, it seems that the element of internationalization in higher education comes as a response to globalization, the increasing competitiveness of higher education institutions and in response to the need for students to be prepared to adapt to rapid changes in personal and professional life, as well as in the local and global community.

### **3.2 What is internationalization in higher education?**

The concept of internationalization in higher education (although not new as a term) often means different things to different individuals. This concept seems to include everything related to global, intercultural or international aspects. Within the wide range of meanings and interpretations, for some it may mean a series of international activities, such as:

- student or staff mobility;
- networking and membership in international networks;
- partnerships and projects; new joint and / or dual academic programs;
- joint initiatives (*between partner institutions*) of scientific research.

For some it may mean the provision of study programs through several processes and platforms based on technology development, which are innovations compared to the traditional method of teaching-learning process or the inclusion of global and intercultural dimension in curricula.

Others may see internationalization in the perspective of ranking of the institution of higher education nationally or internationally, or recruiting the best students and offering the best scholarships. International projects are also considered as part of internationalization.

The term used as internationalization in higher education, widely agreed and referred to, is "*internationalization is the process of integrating international, intercultural and global dimensions into the strategic goals and primary functions of higher education, at the institutional and national level*" (Knight 2004).

### **3.3 Why internationalization?**

Higher education institutions, as creators and disseminators of knowledge and insights, as educators of future generations, are forced to face the key issues. Internationalization is exactly



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one of the dimensions that enable these institutions to respond to the challenges and at the same time the opportunities that societies face today.

There are many reasons and incentives that can push the leadership level of higher education institutions, to include internationalization as an essential part and strategic objectives of the institution. Among them we can mention some, such as raising awareness that intercultural competencies required in the global context are quite important and necessary to face, to work and live in multicultural societies.

On the other hand, the increasing demand by employers for a skilled and competent workforce, as well as the demand for training by students, reflects the growing interest in internationalization which enables the benefit of the same competencies and intercultural experiences that need to be gain across higher education, thus listing internationalization as a driving force for change.

Joint and / or multiple degrees with partner institutions create more employment space.

Networking and membership in partner networks, at local, national and regional level, expand opportunities for cooperation, consolidate relationships and revitalize institutions, making them more competitive and better.

The demand to attract and promote talent needs to be accompanied by patent awards as well as knowledge transfer. In recent years, scientific research has become more complex, seeking increasing cooperation between institutions and academics, thus also increasing in competitiveness. The planning and implementation of research infrastructure, the increase of research capacities, the development of new teaching platforms and the better coordination of all instances, require a more strategic focus on capacity development and international research systems or policies. The need to be flexible, to enable alternative infrastructure to traditional teaching and research, was clearly evidenced by the pandemic situation which challenged the entire education system, not just the higher one.

Among these opportunities and challenges at the global level, higher education also needs to be actively linked to the local reality, to enable both dimensions, namely local and global, to come together in harmony by nurturing each other.

#### **4. Internationalization2022-2024**

Internationalization is considered as a dual institutional process, internally and externally.



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**Internally**, it requires institutional support, desire, commitment and will of the parties to meet the opportunities and challenges. Specifically:

- *Curriculum review and adaptation; teaching in foreign languages;*
- *Education open to all - flexibility in the process of teaching and learning (the latter understood as a process of change from the traditional teaching process and the integration of new teaching methods such as: distance learning, peer to peer learning etc.);*
- *Possibility of accommodation of students and foreign staff by offering relevant facilities;*
- *Scientific-research activities or of another nature, joint and extra-curricular.*

The international dimension of the curriculum needs to improve in terms of both subjects and foreign languages studied, to integrate the international dimension as well as the content. It is also necessary to emphasize the results of students, finding means to identify and share as good practices their international and intercultural experiences and competencies.

**Externally**, it also requires commitment in relationships and trust in partnerships:

- *Student / staff mobility;*
- *Scientific research projects and joint activities;*
- *Development projects;*
- *Partnerships and networking.*

The (physical) academic mobility of staff and students needs to be accompanied in parallel with the mobility of study programs (twinning / joint / dual diplomas) and the provision of education campuses and Hubs.

Cross-border education (*between countries with geographical proximity*) is gradually being transformed from models of framework cooperation, into models of partnership and finally into models of competitiveness. There is no doubt that the internationalization of higher education is becoming more and more important, also with a complex accompanied by challenges.

An important component that accompanies the entire internationalization process is the quality (*such as that of the curriculum, teaching and learning processes, practices, or support services*) and the ongoing monitoring of the work.



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## **5. Strategic Objectives 2022-2024:**

### **5.1 Internationalization of study programs, through the organization and provision of joint and / or dual degrees with partner universities**

Through:

- development of joint / dual programs;
- programs that support exchanges of academic and administrative staff;
- programs that support the exchange of students of different study cycles for semester study periods (or longer) or for periods of teaching internships;
- joint activities and publications in the field of research and / or innovation;
- conferences, seminars, academic meetings, events, summer schools, etc that promote capacity building as well as the quality of teaching and learning;
- increasing the number of joint and / or dual programs in English or another language;
- increasing the number of foreign students studying at this university;
- providing study programs in English.

## **5.2**

### **Develop cooperation and foster partnerships at the local, national, Balkan and international levels**

UAMD is committed to develop cooperation and foster partnerships at local, national, Balkan and international level. This strategy fully supports the development of public-private partnerships, with the business community, think tanks, civil society and the community. A considerable number of cooperation agreements have been signed with higher education institutions inside and outside the country. The internationalization strategy supports the revitalization, vertically and horizontally, of existing cooperation agreements, as well as the signing of new agreements with universities at home and abroad, mainly Western ones, with stakeholders to formalize or institutionalize the relationship, to have a favorable and stimulating environment for scientific research and to realize exchanges of academic staff and students. UAMD also aims at signing new bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements at local, national, Balkan and international level, implementing them in practice, monitoring their progress, assessing / measuring the progress achieved and the potential impact with the possibility of escalating good practices at the national level and beyond.





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**At local and national level**, agreements can be operationalized by carefully monitoring, evaluating and scaling up good practices. At local level, partnerships with stakeholders are key to exploring opportunities for joint applications under EU-funded programs.

**At Balkan level**, the aim is to build cooperation relations with universities in the Western Balkan countries, to expand the possibility of cross-border and transnational applications, mutual benefits within the process of accession to the European Union; application at the regional level of development projects of the Western Balkans region under programs such as IPA CBC / INTERREG, IPARD, Norwegian Aid, etc., to increase the influence and expand the partnership at the Balkan level.

**Internationally:**

- *networking with OSCE participating States, expanding agreements with foreign universities and research agencies in order to transfer knowledge and good practices;*
- *exploring innovative techniques in teaching, learning and transferring knowledge and positive practices;*
- *exchange of academic and student staff for certain periods; collaborations in the field of scientific research and development projects;*
- *Exploring the possibility of accommodating foreign staff for internship periods and exchanging experiences or increasing mutual capacities.*

### 5.3

#### **Increasing the number and quality of project implementation in the field of research, technology, innovation, technology transfer and development**

UAMD is intensively engaged in the application and implementation of projects related to increasing the quality of research and innovation for higher education, projects targeting the development of academic staff capacity, mobility of professors and students at foreign universities, organizing conferences joint scientific, translations and academic and pedagogical publications by internationally renowned authors, in collaboration with local staff, as well as equipping teaching facilities and laboratories.



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## 5.4

### **Development and strengthening of primary and supporting structures for the internationalization of the institution**

The Directorate of Projects and External Relations, as a unit integrated in the university structures, contributes to the facilitation of the process of designing and implementing projects with partners and donors at national and international level. The focus of the work of this Directorate is mainly oriented towards the programs of the European Union for Research and Development such as: Erasmus +; Horizon Europe; European Program for Science and Technology (COST) etc., as well as the extension of networking and building partnerships at national and international level.

The full capacity functioning of the Directorate will be possible through the continuous increase of the capacities of the Directorate to face the needs and innovations in the field of project applications as well as that of their monitoring, based on the instructions and rules of donors. .

Providing the opportunity for capacity building of academic staff is enabled by mapping the needs and opportunities offered by institutions or donor agencies for capacity building, at home and abroad, or according to modalities on online platforms.

## 5.5

### **Increasing the visibility of the university through networking in university networks in the Western Balkans, the Mediterranean region and the OSCE participating States**

UAMD intends to be actively involved in international scientific and publishing activities. International activities will contribute to the international recognition and ranking of the university and beyond. As a result of the contacts created by the student and academic movements and the comparison of curricula, which is necessary in the case of student exchange, the academic staff will reflect on the education offered at UAMD. These activities will contribute to the quality of education and training as well as the adaptation and dissemination of "good practices".

More broadly, the community will benefit from the internationalization of the university by strengthening cooperation with business and other actors in society, as well as expanding contacts that are important to the economic, political and cultural interests of the community.



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## 6. Financial resources in support of the strategy

The financial resources on which the implementation activity of this strategy is based are provided in the law (*see section 1 above - Legal Basis*). Every year, the Directorate of Projects and External Relations submits to the Financial Directorate in the institution the budget request plan for the following year.

## 7. Objectives according to measurable indicators and tools

Objective	Measurable indicators	Means
1. Internationalization of study programs, through the organization and provision of joint and / or double degrees with partner universities	<i># signing of joint / dual programs;</i>	Appropriate infrastructure for the development of quality teaching;
	<i># of programs that support exchanges of academic and administrative staff;</i>	Available and timely financial means for carrying out activities and access to them;
	<i># of programs that support the exchange of students of different study cycles for semester study periods (or longer) or for periods of teaching internships;</i>	Skills of academic staff for teaching in English;
	<i># of joint activities and publications in the field of research and / or innovation;</i>	Adequate teaching and accommodation infrastructure for foreign students and staff;
	<i># of conferences, seminars, academic meetings, events, summer schools, etc. that promote capacity building as well as the quality of teaching and learning;</i>	Consortia and opportunities for the use of foreign physical and online
	<i># of joint and / or dual programs in English or other language;</i>	



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	<p><i># of foreign students studying at UAMD;</i></p> <p><i># of study programs offered in English.</i></p>	literature.
2. Development of cooperation and promotion of partnerships at local, national, Balkan and international level	<p><i># of bilateral agreements;</i></p> <p><i># of multilateral agreements;</i></p> <p><i># of agreements at national level;</i></p> <p><i># of agreements at regional level;</i></p> <p><i># of agreements at the international level;</i></p> <p><i># and the typology of agreements by entities.</i></p>	<p>Institutional availability;</p> <p>Established mechanisms that regulate the relationship and facilitate implementation;</p> <p>Availability of staff to build relationships with third parties;</p> <p>Necessary infrastructure for the implementation of agreements (both those of human resources as well as financial and physical infrastructure);</p> <p>Willingness to improve the quality of teaching through academic collaboration.</p>
3. Increasing the number and quality of implementation of development projects in the field of scientific research, technology, innovation and technology transfer;	<p><i># of projects applied as a leader and / or as a partner;</i></p> <p><i># of projects won as a leader and / or as a partner;</i></p> <p><i>Increasing the typology of applied project programs;</i></p> <p><i>Increasing the typology of programs of won projects;</i></p>	<p>Establishment of working groups for projects at each faculty;</p> <p>Sufficient human resources and with appropriate capacities to enable applications;</p>



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	<p><i>% of the number of projects won in relation to the applied projects;</i></p> <p><i># of successfully implemented projects;</i></p> <p><i># lessons learned through good practice and lessons learned from implementation;</i></p> <p><i># of staff and student exchanges through project implementation;</i></p> <p><i># of consortia set up for application;</i></p> <p><i>Capacity building for staff through project implementation.</i></p>	<p>Capacity building for certain projects of a scientific research nature;</p> <p>Financial resources available to co-finance;</p> <p>Availability of foreign partners for consortium.</p>
<p>4. Development and strengthening of primary and supporting structures for the internationalization of the institution</p>	<p><i>Increased and suitable capacities for application and implementation;</i></p> <p><i>Successful monitoring and implementation of projects;</i></p> <p><i>Support in the implementation of joint activities with partners;</i></p> <p><i>Conducting information sessions on Erasmus + exchanges for students;</i></p> <p><i>Participation and realization of fairs;</i></p> <p><i>Increasing the number of student and UAMD staff exchanges in European universities;</i></p>	<p>Opportunities for training and capacity building;</p> <p>Financial availability for activities;</p> <p>Lessons and experiences shared with counterparts;</p> <p>Orientations and strictly followed guidelines for project applications and implementations.</p>
<p>5. Increasing the visibility of the university, through networking in university networks in the region of</p>	<p><i># of membership in international networks;</i></p> <p><i># of joint activities (such as conferences, summer schools, etc.);</i></p>	<p>Financial availability to pay membership fees.</p>



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the Western Balkans, the  
Mediterranean region  
and OSCE member  
states.

*Increasing the visibility of UAMD in  
the international arena of higher  
education.*