

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE,
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT**

STATE AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY OF MOLDOVA



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Elevate
Elevating the internationalization of higher education in Moldova

Project "Elevating the internationalization of higher education in Moldova" (Elevate)

Projectr number 573921-EPP-1-2016-1-MDEPPKA2-CBHE-SP

**STRATEGY
of internationalization 2016-2020**

CHISINAU – 2016

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The internationalization strategy of the State Agrarian University of Moldova was developed within the project 573921-EPP-1-2016-1-MDEPPKA2-CBHE-SP "Elevating the internationalization of higher education in Moldova" (Elevate), funded by the European Union through through the Erasmus + program, key action 2 - Capacity Building in Higher Education.

PPROVED
by the SAUM Senate,
Minutes nr. 8
from 30 June 2016

Rector, prof.
Volconovici L.

**STRATEGY
of internationalization 2016-2020**

CHISINAU – 2016

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INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGY OF STATE AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY OF MOLDOVA

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 1.1. This strategy has been revised and updated on the recommendation and model proposed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova within Elevate project.
- 1.2. This Strategy has been reviewed and updated with the support of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova, the Rectors' Council, the Erasmus + Program and the Elevate Project.

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION

The main mission of State Agrarian University of Moldova is to train labor market specialists in the field of agriculture, economic sciences, engineering, offering degree programmes at three levels of the Bologna Process: Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral. By joining and implementing the Bologna Process as well as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the university has explicitly expressed its commitment to European educational values and structures. In this context, one of the main reasons for university internationalization is its integration into the European Higher Education Area.

SAUM tries to meet all the requirements of the economic environment, training new specialists, and at the same time giving students the opportunity to identify aspirations and future plans for the national labor market. As a university, we teach our students about shared values centered on a basic curriculum; at the same time, we want them to acquire and apply advanced knowledge skills. Universities are not closed structures and cannot function isolated from the rest of the world. The latest discoveries in science and technology and the latest contributions to the cultural world all have an impact on university life; in fact, they often start from the university - a dynamic and rich center of ideas.

SAUM is committed to becoming a more international institution both in research and education, through the internationalization of its education, research, students and staff. The university seeks to increase its international impact and visibility trying to maintain its identity with strong roots in the region.

Through its actions, programs, specializations and services, State Agrarian University of Moldova plays an important role on the stage of higher education system, fighting for visibility and recognition and proving that it is competitive, flexible and at the same time adaptable to the changes of the socio-economic environment.

The University offers various international mobility opportunities for students and academic staff due to experienced and efficient structures, which support and promote both outgoing and incoming mobility.

SAUM makes continuous efforts to develop specific activities aimed at attracting funds and making the best use of existing resources. In this context, the opportunity to access European funds through projects and programs represents a great opportunity. The European Union programme Erasmus + through which European projects are carried out within the university represents a good example.

3. DEFINING PROBLEMS

The process of adapting to a globalized educational environment and imposing university's

strategic mission focused on the promotion of internationalization experiences among all members of its community can be understood only in relation to various factors that negatively affect it, such as:

- National legislation on double degree programs;
- Disloyal competition in education both at national and international level;
- The lack of a national strategy for attracting international students, but also the lack of policies to promote quality education by setting precise targets;
- Low budget of higher education;
- Difficult recognition of international qualifications;
- Decreased attractiveness of certain fields of study/specializations and the need to reinvent them;
- Lack of mechanisms to allow students to identify quality study programmes and institutions;
- Lack of a budget dedicated to internationalization (the foreign large universities have such a budget);
- Limited presence, for financial reasons, at international educational fairs abroad.

4. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

One of the key elements for measuring university's success is the way it is perceived internationally, which means that its actions should be focused on how the university is viewed by the institutions with which they cooperate externally and on finding the best ways to prove that SAUM is a quality institution.

Becoming the priority option for international candidates is among the basic objectives. This objective emphasizes the focus of the internationalization strategy - increasing the quality degree of university's reputation in all areas: teaching, learning, research and technological and knowledge transfer.

Increased degree of university's international reputation will lead to: attracting a larger number of students, creating new opportunities for international research partnerships, attracting new funds for research, attracting new partners, participating at exhibitions and educational fairs. Becoming the priority option for candidates is not an end in itself, but a process that requires continuous improvement at all levels of the university, both vertically and horizontally.

The university aims to develop strategic international partnerships with as many prestigious universities as possible.

5. GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF INTERNATIONALISATION OF SAUM

The objectives of SAUM internationalization strategy are as follows:

- Internationalization of curriculum;
- Increasing the number of international students;
- Professional and personal development of staff and students;
- Strengthen international visibility of SAUM.

6. GENERAL OBJECTIVE NR. 1 INTERNATIONALIZATION OF CURRICULUM

Measures required to accomplish the objectives and to achieve the expected outcomes

Specific objective 1: To ensure the harmonization of curricular contents, standards and assessment of some study programmes with those offered by the specialized higher education institutions of the European Union. Students should acquire significant intercultural and linguistic qualities by attending foreign language courses together with foreign students.

Activity A) Modernization and development of the international study programmes in order to ensure the relevance, timeliness and quality of the offered study programmes.

Activity B) Ensuring an educational offer encompassing courses and study programmes taught in English.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators:

Increasing the number of courses taught in English. Internal assessment of the Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes taught in English (two study programmes).

Specific objective 2: To perform the periodic review and updating of the 1st Cycle curricula and their alignment with the curricula offered by similar universities from the European Union countries in order to improve the recognition of qualifications and facilitate the academic mobility of students at European level.

Activity A) Updated curricula that would focus on the development of employability skills and abilities required to meet the changing needs of the labor market.

Activity B) Cooperation with foreign institutions in order to update the contents of study programmes.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Annual review and update of university study programmes aligning them with the standards of the European Qualifications Framework.

Specific objective 3: To develop international extracurricular activities for students (equivalent to ECTS credits).

Activity A) Ensuring students access to internship and work placement opportunities, international summer schools, international conferences, etc.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Increasing the number of offers for internships, organizing summer schools and international student exchange programs.

Specific objective 4: To encourage the scientific and teaching staff to participate in projects related to the development of study programmes within ERASMUS + Programme, Horizon 2020 Programme, national projects, etc.

Activity A) Creating strategic partnerships with foreign universities in order to develop teaching and training mobility for the teaching staff.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Establishing international contacts. Organizing meetings with the coordinators of the Erasmus + Office and national coordinators of Horizon 2020. Organizing trainings on project writing and management.

Specific objective 5: To identify potential partners in Central and Eastern European countries by developing joint cooperation programs.

Activity A) Attracting international teaching staff and involve them into the training and research process in order to implement the best learning-teaching, research- innovation and entrepreneurial practices.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Identifying modules, courses, lectures

that can be taught by international teaching staff, identifying financial resources to fund this activity and monitoring the activity of invited teaching staff.

Specific objective 6: To create Double Diploma Programmes.

Activity A) Using the current module for double diploma programme for identifying new partners and compatible fields of study.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Creating Double Diploma Programmes. Drafting legislative proposals and submitting them to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research with the purpose of adjusting national legislation for the creation of double diploma programmes.

Specific objective 7: To ensure English translation and placement on the SAUM website of all study programmes offered by SAUM.

Activity A) Creating a more attractive web site that includes all the study programmes in English and other languages of international circulation.

Activity B) Developing study programmes taught in international languages, depending on the needs identified by current and potential students.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Revision of information on study programmes. Continuous update of the modified information.

7. GENERAL OBJECTIVE NR. 2 INCREASING THE NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Measures required to accomplish the objectives and to achieve the expected outcomes

Specific objective 1: To identify the priority areas of interest for the recruitment of international students (EU and non-EU) based on qualitative analysis of education in different geographical areas and establishment of competitive advantages of SAUM.

Activity A) Using social networks and university website to effectively disseminate information regarding the study offer and international activities offered by SAUM.

Activity B) Promoting university image, especially in countries with large population and attracting students from these countries.

Activity C) Cooperating with diplomatic missions with the purpose to disseminate information regarding SAUM educational offer.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Identifying recruitment agencies or companies from the EU and non-EU countries. Identifying the graduates who live abroad and appointing them as SAUM representatives abroad.

Specific objective 2: To identify the needs of potential students from the areas of interest by effectively communicating with the international co-national SAUM students.

Activity A) Participation of SAUM representatives and international co-national students at university fairs.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Developing a questionnaire for potential students destined to identify the required educational offer. Identifying funds for participation in these activities.

Specific objective 3: To analyze the list of recruitment agencies and their partners: identification

of the informal contacts with the existing recruiting agencies/agents and analysis of agencies/agents who contacted SAUM International Relations Department.

Activity A) Concluding specific agreements for the recruitment of foreign students.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Increasing the number of recruitment agencies in order to strengthen the international dimension of SAUM.

Specific objective 4: To attract foreign students, especially from the third countries, based on agreements concluded with recruitment agencies or using various social networks.

Activity A) Encouraging the participation of SAUM teaching staff and students in various radio/TV shows in order to increase university visibility. Optimizing the university web site.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Integrating or improving university materials for mobile devices.

Specific objective 5: To provide English teaching of all courses included into the most attractive study programmes for the internationalization of studies at SAUM - attracting foreign students to study and mobility.

Activity A) Improving the communication - teaching skills in English of the academic staff.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Assessing the current level of language skills of the academic staff. Organizing an intensive program aimed at improving foreign language communication skills of the teaching staff.

Specific objective 6: To develop tutoring programs for the integration of international students, with the support of faculty and local students representatives.

Activity A) Developing and promoting special services for international students (events, short-term programs).

Activity B) Promoting Romanian language as an attribute of the internationalization of higher education in the Republic of Moldova.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Developing an information and support guide for international students. Organizing lectures, round tables, seminars in Romanian for international students. Organizing meetings with the representatives of the Bureau for Migration and Asylum with the purpose of informing international students about the rules of their temporary stay during their studies in the Republic of Moldova.

8. GENERAL OBJECTIVE NR. 3 PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

Measures required to accomplish the objectives and to achieve the expected outcomes

Specific objective 1: To develop inter-university partnerships and specific projects within European mobility programs for students and teaching staff.

Activity A) Developing and adapting a European model focused on the management of relations between university management and international partners.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Developing a European model focused on the management of partnership relations with foreign universities, especially with those having similar fields of research.

Specific objective 2: To encourage students' mobility to universities abroad.

Activity A) Identifying of subjects of common interest in the field of education that can be developed during mobility.

Activity B) Increasing the quality of activities developed by the Erasmus mobility beneficiaries through a more careful monitoring and more consistent support offered by the IRD staff.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Placing on the SAUM web site the information regarding the available places offered by the Erasmus + Programme for student mobility. Interviewing the candidates and selecting them according to the eligible criteria.

Specific objective 3: To increase the academic mobility of the teaching staff.

Activity A) Identifying subjects of common interest in the field of education and research that can be developed by SAUM academic staff with foreign academic staff.

Activity B) Making strategic partnerships with foreign universities on the development of teaching and training programs for the academic staff.

Activity C) Analyzing performed mobility in order to show how the acquired knowledge and experiences are benefic for SAUM.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Establishing international contacts to identify modules, courses, lectures that can be taught by SAUM teaching staff. Improving the quality of Erasmus + mobility for teaching staff and disseminating the acquired international experience among the representatives of their departments. Analysis of the teaching staff reports who benefited from Erasmus + program. Highlighting the academic mobility that provided benefits not only for teachers but also for SAUM - making a synthesis.

Specific objective 4: To identify funds for academic mobility within the framework of inter-university agreements (companies from the respective states, funds of the respective states, etc.).

Activity A) Identifying companies or private firms able to provide funding for professional higher education.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Valorization of the collaboration relationships with authorities and specialized organizations.

Specific objective 5: To promote other types of mobility (Fulbright, AUF, CEEPUS, etc.).

Activity A) Creating and developing partnerships with foreign universities, which are members of other mobility programs.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Organizing meetings with the representatives of diplomatic missions and accredited international organizations in the Republic of Moldova in order to inform them about mobility opportunities.

Specific Objective 6: To strengthen the activity of the European Studies Center putting emphasis on the implementation of projects, increasing academic mobility and developing knowledge in the field of European Studies.

Activity A) Providing professional support for students and staff support in identifying and accessing programs, writing and managing international projects.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Increasing staff capacity to provide consulting services on project implementation, enhancing academic mobility and developing knowledge in European studies.

Specific objective 7: To involve university teaching staff in joint rural development projects at

European level.

Activity A) Establishing partnership relations and identifying possible joint programs.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Organizing conferences with invited foreign researchers. Developing research programs through joint rural development projects. Increasing the number of internships, work placements and student mobility opportunities.

Specific objective 8: To create opportunities for improving the international language skills according to the identified needs of students and scientific-teaching staff.

Activity A) Developing a policy on improving the language skills of students and teachers.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Identifying international weeks, conferences, symposiums, round tables in which SAUM staff and students could participate on topics that could respond to their needs.

Specific objective 9: To identify the needs of young teaching staff (up to 35 years old) for professional training and retraining (either in the field of their activity or in related activities: project writing, curricular development, etc.).

Activity A) Developing a motivation system to encourage young teaching staff to participate in professional training.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Developing and approving the professional training schedule for young teaching staff abroad. Organizing training courses in the field of professional training. Identifying the potential training needs of the teaching staff that could be covered by mobility programs.

Specific Objective 10: To create training programs on such topics as: internationalization, interculturality, etc. for SAUM administrative staff.

Activity A) Organization of information days on the internationalization of SAUM.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Presenting the quarterly report to the SAUM Administration Board and University Senate on the Internationalization and Interculturality.

Specific objective 11: To increase the participation of SAUM teaching staff in different specialization trainings organized in the universities of the European Union countries in order to gain advanced experience in their teaching activity.

Activity A) Identifying topics of common interest in the field of education and research that could be developed by SAUM academic staff at the universities from EU countries in order to gain advanced experience in their teaching activity.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Organizing foreign language courses for SAUM staff. Creating and developing strategic partnerships with EU universities for professional development.

Specific objective 12: To strengthen and expand collaborative relationships and partnerships with the EU agricultural universities, especially with the agronomic universities from Romania, as the same language of instruction would facilitate SAUM access to manuals as well as SAUM staff professional development and retraining.

Activity A) Organizing joint social, cultural and sports events for SAUM students and students of EU agronomic universities and especially from Romania.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Annual participation in the social - cultural event „Agronomiada”, organized by the agronomic universities from Romania. Organizing summer schools for SAUM students and students of agronomic universities from Romania.

Specific objective 13: To delegate SAUM academic staff to the scientific centers of the European Union countries in order to acquire competences compatible with those defined by the European Research Area, thus generating an increased access to the funds for research.

Activity A) Integrating foreign researchers into the academic activities.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Strengthening the academic cooperation between SAUM and other EU higher education institutions. Carrying out joint research projects and publishing scientific results in national and international scientific journals.

Specific objective 14: To support SAUM teaching staff to participate in international project competitions.

Activity A) Developing a transparent system that allows the teaching staff to participate in international project competitions.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Providing coaching assistance (performance training) in English or in the national language for the teaching staff. Ensure the quality of training regarding the linguistic dimensions (English). Developing a motivation system to encourage the university staff to participate in international project competitions.

Specific objective 15: To make the transfer of experience from European universities, based on existing collaborative relationships, in solving some social problems (canteens, leisure, etc.).

Activity A) Strengthening links with the local, regional community.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Organizing joint workshops for solving social problems based on collaborative partnerships.

Specific Objective 16: To provide moral and material incentives for teachers, PhD scientific advisors who work with a co-supervisor from abroad, as well as for teachers who write manuals, monographs, methodological guidelines with colleagues from abroad.

Activity A) Identifying the key areas of scientific research in order to ensure the participation in joint international competitions, as well as the publication of manuals, monographs and methodological guidelines with colleagues from abroad.

Activity B) Supporting teachers, students and researchers in publishing scientific articles in ISI indexed journals and participating in important international conferences.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Provide additional remuneration for the authors of scientific articles who published in Journal Impact Factor based on the decision of the University's Administrative Council. Optimization of the web site information regarding the Department of Science and Innovation. Increasing the number of participations in ISI indexed journals and important international conferences.

Specific Objective 17: To enhance English language communication skills of teachers through programs funded by SAUM and reducing the teaching workload of those who teach courses in English.

Activity A) Establishing the calculation coefficient for courses taught in English.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Organizing English courses free of

charge and involving international volunteers in the development of teachers' communication skills.

9. GENERAL OBJECTIVE NR. 4 STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL VISIBILITY OF SAUM

Measures required to accomplish the objectives and to achieve the expected outcomes

Specific objective 1: To identify the areas of excellence of SAUM and promote them internationally.

Activity A) Carrying out studies related to the areas of excellence of SAUM: agriculture, product processing, agricultural management, agricultural engineering etc.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Increasing the number of part-time study offers for international students who want to obtain qualification in these areas of excellence but do not have enough time to be enrolled at a full-time study programme.

Specific Objective 2: To identify actions to promote each specific area of excellence.

Activity A) Developing an open E-Door system and promoting it within SAUM with the aim of carrying out promotion activities of each specific areas of excellence.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Organizing seminars, workshops and round tables for farmers or producers who wish to deepen their subject knowledge in any of the areas of excellence offered by SAUM.

Specific objective 3: To support UASM teaching staff to participate with scientific reports in scientific congresses, symposiums or conferences organized abroad in order to increase SAUM visibility.

Activity A) Identifying the key areas of scientific research to ensure the participation in national and international competitions, thus ensuring future investment in research.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Increasing the number of international partnerships in the fields of scientific research. Providing competitive advantage for the teaching staff participating in national and international competitions when participating in the competition for job vacancies.

Specific objective 4: To develop a positioning strategy for SAUM by exchanging scientific articles, monographs and other scientific-didactic materials between universities.

Activity A) Strengthening the academic cooperation between SAUM and other EU institutions.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Increasing the number of internationally indexed research publications. Increasing the visibility of scientific research results by publishing articles, manuals and other scientific and teaching materials.

Specific objective 5: To increase the international visibility of the University by improving the website in English.

Activity A) Creating a more attractive web site, where the potential international students would find all the information they need.

Activity B) Periodic optimization of the SAUM web site information: the information will be available in Romanian and English.

Short, medium and long term performance indicators: Promoting special offers/services as

well as its opportunities offered by SAUM (study programmes, projects, special offers for national and international students) on the web site www.uasm.md. Continuous integration of the information and communication technologies into the teaching, learning and research process (MOODLE platform of SAUM).

Specific objective 6: To enhance the internationalization level of SAUM through mass media.

Activity A) Participating in national and international TV and radio broadcasts. Publishing articles about SAUM in national journals.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Participation of the teaching staff and students in TV shows in the field of education, culture and agricultural research. Publication of the Academic Mobility Results in the University Journal and in other Journals.

Specific Objective 7: To organize international scientific events at SAUM, which would contribute to increasing the visibility of the University in the world.

Activity A) Identifying topics of common interest in order to organize international scientific events, thus ensuring the visibility of the University.

Activity B) Publishing the program of national and international scientific events.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Increasing the number of international research partnerships. Increasing the number of invited international researchers. Organization of international scientific conferences (at least three conferences per academic year).

Specific objective 8: To participate actively in the European University Association, the Francophone University Agency and the Council of University Rectors.

Activity A) Establishing a program for participation in events organized by the European University Association, the Francophone University Agency and the Council of University Rectors.

Short, medium and long-term performance indicators: Increasing the number of participations in conferences and workshops organized by national and international stakeholders. Organization of training courses in cooperation with the Francophone University Agency.

10. FINAL PROVISIONS

10.1. The present UASM Internationalization Strategy approved by the UASM Senate, Minutes No. 8 of June 30, 2016, is revised and updated.

10.2. This internationalization strategy as well as its amendments shall come into force on the date of approval by the UASM Senate.

10.3. Modifications to this strategy could be made at the request of the Management Board, submitted to the University Senate or two-thirds of Senate members.

Modified and adjusted according to Elevate project objectives, nr.573921-EPP-1-2016-1-MD-EPPKA2-CBHE-SP, co-funded by Erasmus + based on Senate decision, Minutes nr.5 from 14.12.2018.