

Challenges and Perspectives of Scientific Research at the University of Prishtina

Faton Berisha,
Vice-Rector for Research



University of Prishtina
"Hasan Prishtina"

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Introduction

- The University of Prishtina has been the intellectual, cultural, educational and political focal point of the recent history of Kosovo.
 - For over 40 years the sole higher education institution in the country
 - *The* driver of development in the kosovar society
 - Actually, the leading university in the country: out of *couple of dozens* higher education institutions
 - Around than 50,000 active students
- Research component: One of the missions of the University of Prishtina

Research Component at the University of Prishtina

- Most often, result of an actual or previous mobility in an international research center: Members of academic staff have developed research abilities and experiences, and have maintained links to the appropriate research community.
- Necessary condition for appointment and promotion of the academic staff
- Necessary condition for the final stage in the PhD studies:
- Small groups of researchers (advisor-candidates) undertake individual research
- *Individual undertakings*

Challenge: Research Quality Control

- Quality of research is determined by the quality of the journal the research results are published in.
- Suddenly, quality of the publications became an *issue*
 - Unreliable referees' reports for appointments and promotions regarding the quality of research
 - Crisis involving the rectors office, the university senate, media pressure, public turmoil. . .
- Less than a year ago, international academic databases have been introduced.
 - In the long run: ISI Web of Science, Scopus
 - Other databases: Microsoft Academic Search, WorldWildScience. . . Google Scholar
 - Additional conditions for the other databases
 - Avoidance of suspicious publishers and/or journals
 - *Beall's list* of potential, possible, or probable predatory scholarly open-access publishers

Academic Databases

- Quality of research is determined by the quality of the journal the research results are published in.
- In order to be credited for a research paper has to be *indexed*.
 - A necessary condition, checked at the university level
 - Other sufficient conditions continue to be evaluated by the referees' reports at the academic unit level.
- Research quality control has been implemented
 - for appointment and promotion of the academic staff
 - for approving the thesis of a PhD candidate

Impact

- More reliable evaluation, transparency and combating corruption
- Exponential increase of publications indexed in Scopus¹ both at the University and national levels
- More than 90% out of all publications indexed in Scopus from Kosovo come from the University of Prishtina.
- Plagiarism: Delegation of control of originality to the peer review process, compulsory for the indexed journals.
 - Remains an issue for "internal" publications: textbooks and students' papers.

¹Compiled data from Scopus for 2016: <https://www.scopus.com>

Short Run Solutions

- Essential challenges to be further addressed:
 - Lack of resources needed for research
 - Infrastructure: equipment, material
 - Lack of research dedicated budget lines
 - Problems with management (and mismanagement) of projects involving sponsors
 - Resources, dissemination
 - Regulation of intellectual ownership and technology transfer
- In short run, the university encourages and provides the academic staff with basic help in managing the sponsored projects
- Parts of the main budget line are reserved for activities facilitating research
 - Access to electronic libraries and databases
 - Staff and students mobility
 - Rewarding publications of academic staff in indexed journals

Perspectives

- A central office for sponsored research has been established at the university level.
 - A central contact point whose purpose is transition of research at the university from individual effort to an institutionalized enterprise.
 - A meeting point between the university and sponsors and/or industry
 - Help academic staff with managing sponsored research
 - Become self sustainable
 - A staff of one part time employee
 - Produce the documentation needed to regulate the financial part
 - Transfers of technology and knowledge

Transfers of Technology and Knowledge

- The University of Prishtina is a public budget financed institution.
- The budget and sponsorships, even though very important, offer insufficient means for quality research
 - This is not likely to change in the future!
- In perspective, the University Prishtina has to make a shift from budget financed towards *self sustainable income generating research*.

Thank you!

- Questions?