

МЕДИЦИНСКИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ - ВАРНА
„Проф. д-р Параскев Стоянов“

Ул. „Марин Дринов“ 55, Варна 9002, България
Тел. : 052/ 65 00 57, Факс: 052/ 65 00 19
e-mail: uni@mu-varna.bg, www.mu-varna.bg



MEDICAL UNIVERSITY - VARNA
“Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov”

55, Marin Drinov Str., 9002 Varna, Bulgaria
Tel.: +359 52/ 65 00 57, Fax: + 359 52/ 65 00 19
e-mail: uni@mu-varna.bg, www.mu-varna.bg

APPROVED:

/Prof. Dr. Krasimir Ivanov, MD, PhD, DSc/

INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGY

of

Medical University

„Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov“ – Varna

2019 – 2024

Varna

Contents

	Page
General framework	2
Strategic goals of the internationalization of MU – Varna	4
Activities to achieve the strategic goals of the internationalization of MU - Varna	5
Expected results from the implementation of the Internationalization Strategy of MU - Varna	7
Bibliography	8

General framework

The Internationalization Strategy of the Medical University “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov” – Varna (MU – Varna) adopts the definition of the European Parliament, which defines the internationalization of higher education as “an international process of integrating the international, intercultural and global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education in order to improve the quality of education and research for all students and teachers, as well as to achieve a significant contribution to society”¹. A key priority of internationalization is to increase the quality of education and research, as well as the social impact on society as a whole.

The Bologna Declaration² creates a new dimension for integration and development in the European Higher Education Area. The six main objectives set out in the Bologna Declaration constitute a conceptual framework within which the Internationalization Strategy of the Medical University “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov” – Varna is built, and includes:

- Adoption of a system of recognizable and comparable educational degrees;
- Inclusion in the education system based on the three cycles of bachelor's, master's and doctoral studies;
- Improvement of the system for accumulation and transfer of credits;
- Stimulation of mobility based on the idea of innovation, sharing of good practices in education, teaching and knowledge exchange;
- Stimulation of European cooperation in the field of quality assurance of education through the adoption of innovative practices;
- Stimulation of initiatives of common interest in the European dimension of cooperation in the field of higher education.

The activities of MU - Varna as an educational institution cover the following key areas, as set out in the Bologna Declaration:

1. *Building trust* through the forms of cooperation and the financial support mechanism operating at European level, for joint work, including monitoring of the achieved results and evaluating common activities and achievements for quality assurance in educational and research activities;
2. *Relevance* to the needs of individual national labor markets, but also to the European labor market;
3. *Mobility* of students, PhD students, Academic and administrative staff in higher education institutions as an essential feature of the European Higher Education Area;
4. *Comparability* in terms of qualification and competence characteristics across the three levels of study (bachelor, master and PhD);
5. *Attractiveness* of programs and forms of training and academic growth for young talents, researchers and academic staff from the regions of Southeast Europe, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Mediterranean Basin and the rest of the world.

The goals and scope of the Internationalization Strategy of MU - Varna are also consistent with the five guiding principles for the development of European universities, adopted in the Lisbon Declaration³, namely:

1. Internationalization;
2. Cooperation in scientific research;
3. Combining the fund type of financing and management with the decentralized type;
4. Quality in the implementation of activities;
5. Adapting training to the dynamics of the environment by expanding accessibility to higher education.

The international cooperation activities of MU - Varna are based on the principles of equality and mutual respect, mutual benefit, non-interference in internal affairs, respect for national cultural and academic traditions, etc. In organizing and conducting the international activities of MU - Varna, the principles of academic democracy, transparency, dialogicity, pluralism, responsibility and professionalism are applied.

Strategic goals of the internationalization of MU - Varna

The strategy for internationalization of the activities of MU - Varna during the period 2019 - 2024 is aimed at expanding cooperation with partner educational institutions in Europe and the world in the following main strategic directions:

1. Increasing the number of European partners - educational institutions from the member states of the European Union, with which it cooperates, with the expectations of achieving sustainable growth in terms of the number of mobility of students and teachers and employees in both directions and with the intention of increasing the quality of education;
2. Cooperation in the development of joint curricula and networks in innovative areas of knowledge and practice with leading European and world universities;
3. Development of joint educational and research projects in the three levels of education, based on modern infrastructure and technologies of teaching, testing and assessment of students and scientific research;
4. Participation in EU cross-border cooperation projects;
5. Mobility of students (in all three levels of higher education), academic and administrative staff, based on bilateral framework and bilateral Erasmus+ agreements with foreign partners;
6. Participation in international university networks in the field of knowledge, educational technologies, capacity building, transfer and dissemination of knowledge, acquiring of new knowledge;
7. Building strategic partnerships in the field of education and research related to the acquisition of new knowledge and innovative technologies;
8. Participation in projects with foreign partners for capacity building.

Activities to achieve the strategic goals of the internationalization of MU - Varna

The internationalization of MU - Varna will be implemented through the following activities:

1. Exchange of information with academic institutions from abroad regarding the structure, organization and management of the educational and research process;
2. Exchange of educational and scientific literature, good practices and innovations in the areas of cooperation;
3. Supporting membership (individual and collective) in global and European academic, educational and scientific organizations, working groups and committees, as well as participation in their activities⁴;
4. Preparation and conclusion of bilateral and multilateral agreements for international cooperation with institutions in the country and abroad⁵;
5. Supporting joint bilateral and multilateral developments of scientific and educational-methodological problems;
6. Issuing information materials on international cooperation and the Erasmus+ program of MU - Varna;
7. Organizing and conducting seminars, courses and other forms of training and information on the problems of European integration in higher education for academic staff, students and administrative staff;
8. Sending students, PhD students, academic and administrative staff for training and improving their qualifications abroad under European programs and under international treaties and agreements with countries from the European Union and beyond;
9. Coordination of exchange and training at MU - Varna of students, academic and administrative staff from foreign educational institutions under bilateral agreements, international arrangements and EU programs;
10. Presentation of information about MU - Varna and its activities in foreign media, directories, bulletins, the Internet and to interested organizations and individuals;
11. Assistance in the preparation and implementation of events for academic, social and cultural adaptation of foreign students and lecturers during their stay at MU-Varna;
12. Other forms of implementation of the agreed activities under bilateral and multilateral agreements.

During the implementation of the Strategy, transparency of activities related to the establishment and maintenance of contractual relations with foreign partners, including under the "Erasmus+" program, will be maintained. In fulfillment of the commitments arising from bilateral academic cooperation agreements and the Erasmus Charter, MU - Varna will publish and regularly update information on the website in the "International Relations" section in its Bulgarian and English versions.

All documents, rules and procedures for organizing and administering the participation of MU - Varna in international activities will be published along with the announcement of the results

and good achievements of MU - Varna's participation in various forms of international cooperation.

The International Relations Department, in cooperation with the participating educational, scientific and administrative units, will coordinate the participation of willing students, academic and administrative staff in various forms of mobility and international cooperation on the basis of clear rules, open access and a competitive principle, as well as ensure equal access to forms of international cooperation without discrimination on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, gender or age.

Expected results from the implementation of the Internationalization Strategy of MU - Varna

As a result of the implementation of the Internationalization Strategy of MU - Varna in the period 2019 - 2024, the University is expected to increase its international prestige, to position itself more successfully on the international educational market and to establish itself as a center offering high-quality educational, medical, scientific-research and social services at the European level. Its students, PhD students, academic and administrative staff must build competencies for working in a dynamic international and multicultural environment.

The expected results of the implementation of the Internationalization Strategy of the Medical University - Varna are as follows:

- Through the activities under the Erasmus+ program, to form awareness among students, teachers and employees of belonging to the common European educational area and to shape a new way of thinking that overcomes cultural differences among European partners, thereby contributing to the enrichment of the common European culture;
- To allow students, academic and administrative staff to share modern educational technologies and methodologies applied in training, which are used in partner European educational institutions;
- To improve the quality of the learning process through the mobility of students and academic staff and to form qualified human resources capable of working in Bulgaria and abroad;
- To gain experience from mobility at foreign universities, which will contribute to the development of innovative practices and high achievements in academic and administrative activities, thereby meeting the challenges in the dynamically changing educational environment;
- Through the EU research programs⁶ ("Horizon 2020", "M. Curie", etc.), create an opportunity for the establishment of joint international research teams, as well as for the participation of academic staff in individual research programs.

The internationalization strategy is in line with the Strategy for the Development of Higher Education of the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2014-2020⁷, the Regulations for the functioning of MU - Varna⁸ of 18.03.2019, the Strategy for the Development of MU - Varna 2016-2020⁹ and the Strategy for the Development of Scientific and Research Activities of MU - Varna for the period 2014-2020¹⁰.

The current Internationalization Strategy of MU - Varna was adopted at a meeting of the Academic Council with Protokol No. 53/09.12.2019 on the basis of Art. 36, item 17 of the Regulation of the functioning of MU - Varna.

Bibliography

1. Internationalization of Higher Education, European Parliament, Brussels: EU, De Wit, H., Hunter F., Howard L., Egron-Polak E. (Eds.) (2015)
2. Bologna Declaration on the establishment of a common European higher education area. Bologna, 19.06.1999 г.
3. The Lisbon Declaration, 2007
4. European University Association (EUA) (<http://www.eua.be>)
5. Procedure for recognition and acknowledgement of foreign partners, conclusion of bilateral agreements for academic cooperation and work with international partners in force from 18.04.2016 (www.mu-varna.bg)
6. Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, Brussels, 03.03.2010
7. Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria for the Period 2014 – 2020, published in the State Gazette, No. 18 of 10.03.2015.
8. Regulation of the functioning of MU - Varna 18.03.2019 (www.mu-varna.bg)
9. Strategy for the Development of MU – Varna 2016 – 2020. Protocol No. 1 of 21.03.2016 from the meeting of the Academic Council of MU – Varna (www.mu-varna.bg)
10. Strategy for the development of scientific and research activities of MU - Varna for the period 2016 - 2020. (www.mu-varna.bg)