

2021

Analysis of online questionnaire survey results



**MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
"PROF. DR. PARASKEV
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CONTENTS	Pages
1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. METHODOLOGY	2-4
3. STRUCTURE OF RESPONDENTS	4-8
4. SURVEY RESULTS	8-25
4.1 ETHICAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPECTS	8-13
4.2 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF	13-16
4.3 CONDITIONS OF WORK	16-23
4.4 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	23-26
5. SUMMARY OF RESULTS	27
5.1 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS	28-31
5.1.1 ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS	28
5.1.2 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF	28-29
5.1.3 CONDITIONS OF WORK	29-30
5.1.4 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	30-31
5.2 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS	32-36

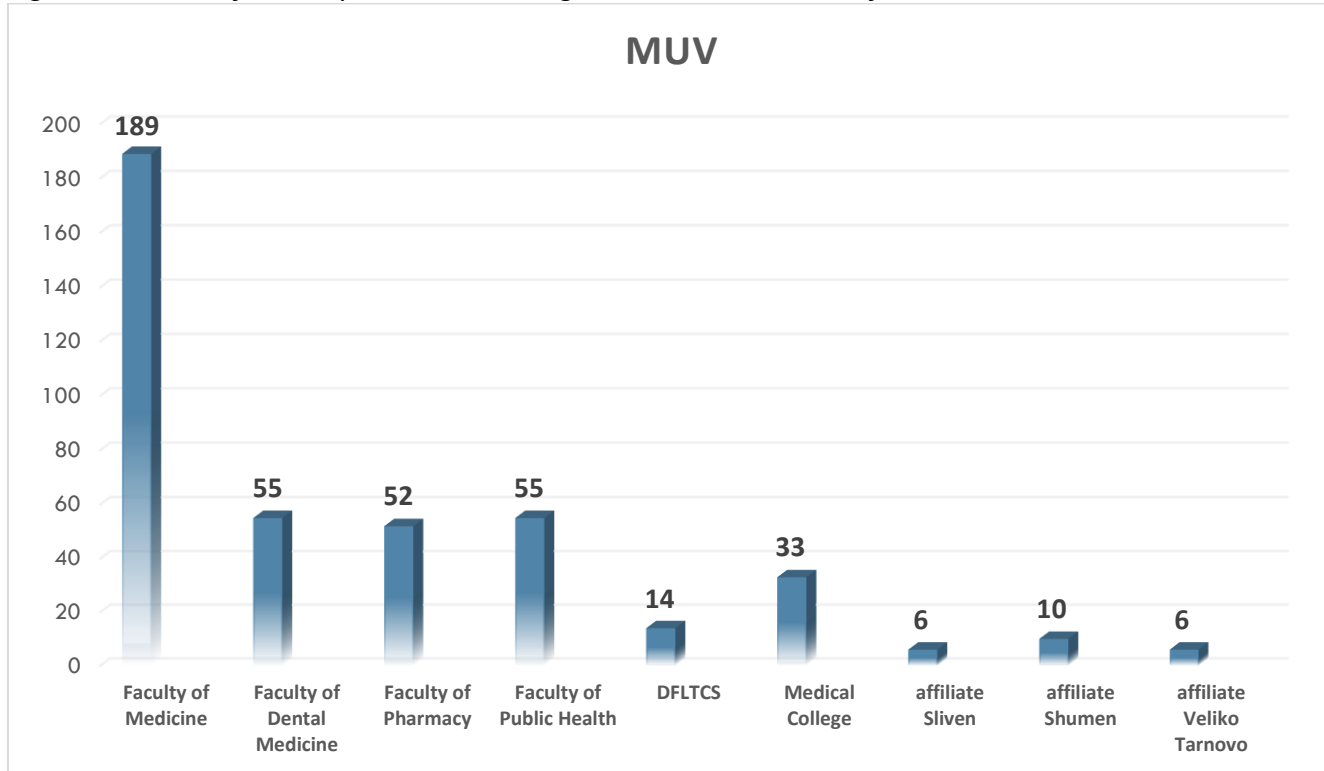
1. INTRODUCTION

An online questionnaire survey was carried out at the Medical University of Varna (MUV) in the period May-June 2021, aimed at gathering reliable information on the expectations and needs of the University employees, especially of the researchers, in terms of working environment and scientific work. The survey provided information that will help the University to draw up an effective Action plan going through the process of getting awarded the European Commission's Excellence Logo Prize in the field of Human Resources.

2. METHODOLOGY

The survey was based on quantitative data, the main collecting method being an online survey. All MUV employees involved in research were invited to take part. At the time of the survey, the total number of employees at MUV was 818. The questionnaire was completed by 420 respondents in total. This represents an overall response rate of 51.3%. The response rates of the individual university units are shown in the chart below. The structure of the respondents is described in more details in the next chapter. The average time to complete the questionnaire was 20 minutes.

Fig. 1. Structure of the respondents with regard to the main units of MUV



* DFLTCS – Department of Foreign Language Teaching, Communications and Sports

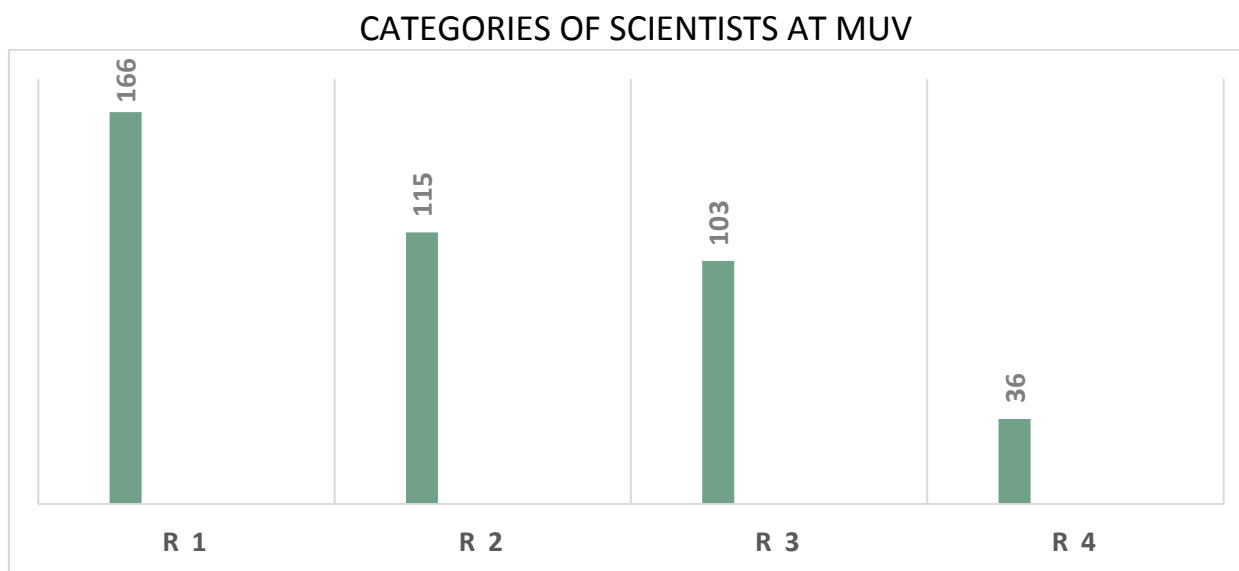
The survey was conducted online in Google Disk, which provides sufficient functionality to produce the questionnaire and meets all general requirements for personal data protection and data security. The questionnaire was available to all employees in two language versions (*Bulgarian and English*). The link to the questionnaire was sent by the heads of the MUV main units to the email addresses of the employees. The survey contains a total of 57 questions of the survey, 5 of which are focused on socio-demographic and professional characteristics of respondents, 49 of them are multiple choice questions examining the attitudes of respondents and 3 open-ended questions allowing the respondents to comment on all relevant topics. The multiple choice questions of the survey were divided into areas based on the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The main areas are as follows:

1. Ethical and professional aspects;
2. Recruitment and selection;
3. Working conditions;
4. Training and development.

The analysis of the results was carried out for the whole sample and for four specifically selected categories:

- R1 (*PhD student, assistant professor or lecturer without PhD degree*);
- R2 (*assistant professor, chief assistant professor and/or lecturer with PhD degree*);
- R3 (*associate professor*);
- R4 (*professor and/or Doctor of Science degree holder*).

Fig. 2. Categories of scientists at MUV involved in the survey



The questionnaire is structured in view of the above; it contains filters and questions that are common to all respondents. Some questions have only one answer and some have a choice of multiple answers. Therefore, the total number of responses may vary from one question to another. As a part of the response processing, those based on gender, ethnicity, age as well as the length of service-related responses were subject to further processing.

Most of the responses to multiple choice questions are based on a scale of 1 to 5, where the figures have the following meanings: 1 - No information available; 2 - Definitely not, 3 - Rather not, 4 - Rather yes, 5 - Definitely yes. When preparing the graphs, the responses were categorized into two groups to interpret the data received (*the responses "Definitely not" and "Rather not" were merged and at the same time, the answers "Rather yes" and "Definitely yes" were also merged*). Tables and diagrams have been produced in the framework of descriptive statistics using absolute and relative values only based on valid responses. Despite the fact that all elements of the questionnaire were mandatory, the average response rate for the individual questions ranged from 95 to 100%.

3. STRUCTURE OF RESPONDENTS

The questionnaire was answered by 420 respondents, representing an overall response rate of 51.3%. The response rate of the individual University units is shown in the diagram on page 3. The highest response rate was reported in the Faculty of Medicine (45%) and the lowest share of the completed questionnaires was returned from the Affiliates of the Medical University - Varna in Sliven and Veliko Turnovo (1.4%).

Table 1. Distribution by main units

	Medicine		Dental Medicine		Pharmacy		Faculty of Public Health		Medical College	
	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>
R1	81	43	24	44	15	29	15	27	13	40
R2	51	27	11	20	24	46	14	26	6	18
R3	42	22	15	27	9	17	17	31	14	42
R4	15	8	5	9	4	8	9	16	-	-
Total number	189		55		52		55		33	

	Department of Foreign Language Teaching, Communications and Sport		Sliven Affiliate		Shumen Affiliate		Veliko Tarnovo Affiliate	
	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>
R1	10	72	2	33	4	40	2	33.3
R2	1	7	3	50	3	30	2	33.3
R3	2	14	-	-	2	20	-	
R4	1	7	1	17	1	10	2	33.3
Total number	14		6		10		6	

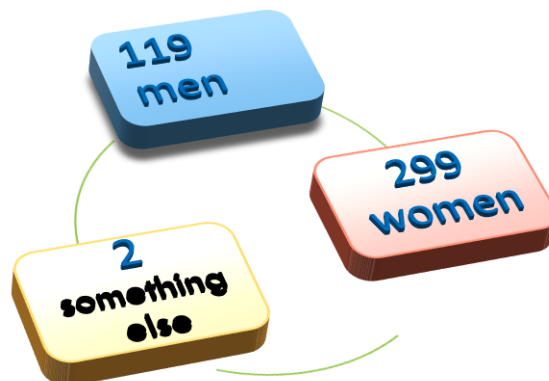
The group of respondents includes 28.3% men and 71.2% women. In absolute terms, this means 119 men and 299 women. The largest share of respondents was that of the R1 category – 40% (166 people), followed by R2 – 26.4% (115 people), R3 – 25% (103 people), and the lowest was the group of respondents in the R4 category – 8.6% (36 people).

By comparison, the scientific teaching staff of the Medical University - Varna includes 818 people, 293 of whom are men, and 525 women. This indicates that 57% of women and 41% of men took part in the survey.

Table 2. Distribution by gender

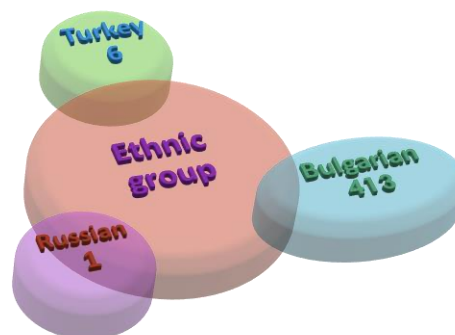
	MEN		WOMEN		OTHER		TOTAL	
	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>
R1	41	34	125	42	-	-	166	40
R2	30	25	83	28	2	100	115	26.4
R3	34	29	69	23	-	-	103	25
R4	14	12	22	7	-	-	36	8.6
Total	119		299		2		420	

Fig. 3. Distribution of the respondents by gender



A total of 7 respondents indicated an ethnic group other than Bulgarian, yet all of them used the Bulgarian version of the questionnaire.

Fig. 4. Distribution of the respondents by ethnicity

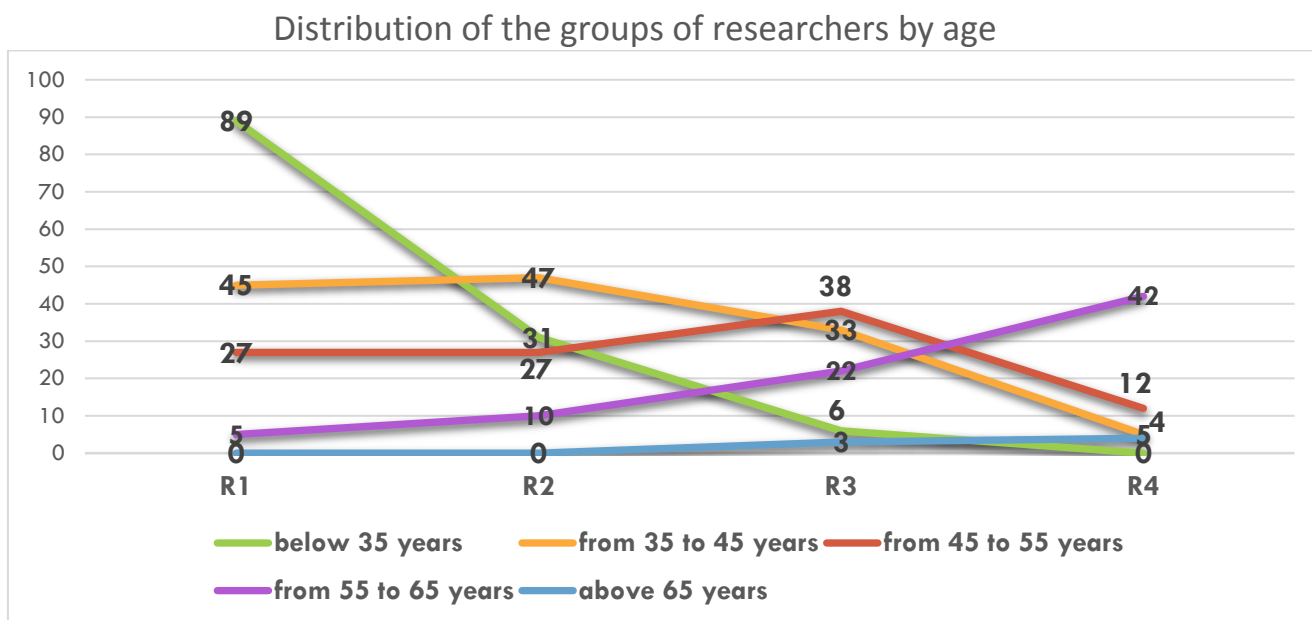


In terms of age structure, respondents aged 35–45 and under 35 are most represented in the survey; they account for almost three-quarters of respondents. A quarter consists of respondents aged 45–55 years. The smallest group consists of respondents aged over 65 years (11%).

Table 3. Distribution by age

	Below 35 years		35 to 45 years		45 to 55 years		55 to 65 years		Above 65 years	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
R1	89	54	45	27	27	16	5	3	-	-
R2	31	27	47	41	27	23	10	9	-	-
R3	6	6	33	32	38	37	23	22	3	3
R4	-	-	5	14	12	33	15	42	4	11
Total	126		130		104		53		7	

Fig. 5. Distribution of the group of the respondents by age

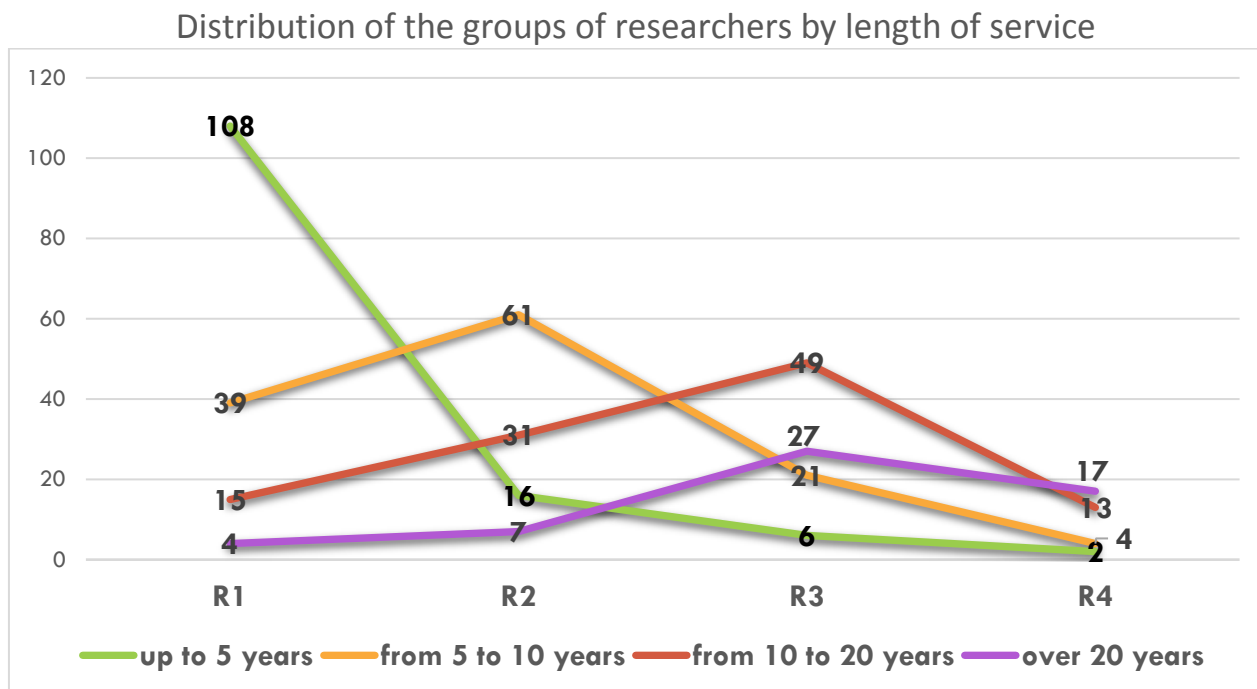


Among the respondents, the highest number is that of the representatives of assistant professors and active PhD students – 40%, of which the highest number is of those having an up to 5 years length of service, 26%. The postdoctoral students, i.e., those having obtained a PhD degree and the head assistant professors, form the next largest group – 26.4%, the most numerous part of which have a length of service (duration of employment) of 5 to 10 years – 15%. Among the associate professors (25% in total), the largest group is of those having a length of service of 10 to 20 years - 12%. Professors and holders of Doctor of Science degree have the longest service at MUV.

Table 4. Distribution by duration of the employment

	up to 5 years		5 to 10 years		10 to 20 years		over 20 years	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
R1	108	82	39	31	15	14	4	7
R2	16	12	61	49	31	29	7	13
R3	6	4	21	17	49	45	27	49
R4	2	2	4	3	13	12	17	31
Total number	132		125		108		55	

Fig. 6. Distribution of the group of respondents by work experience



4. SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS

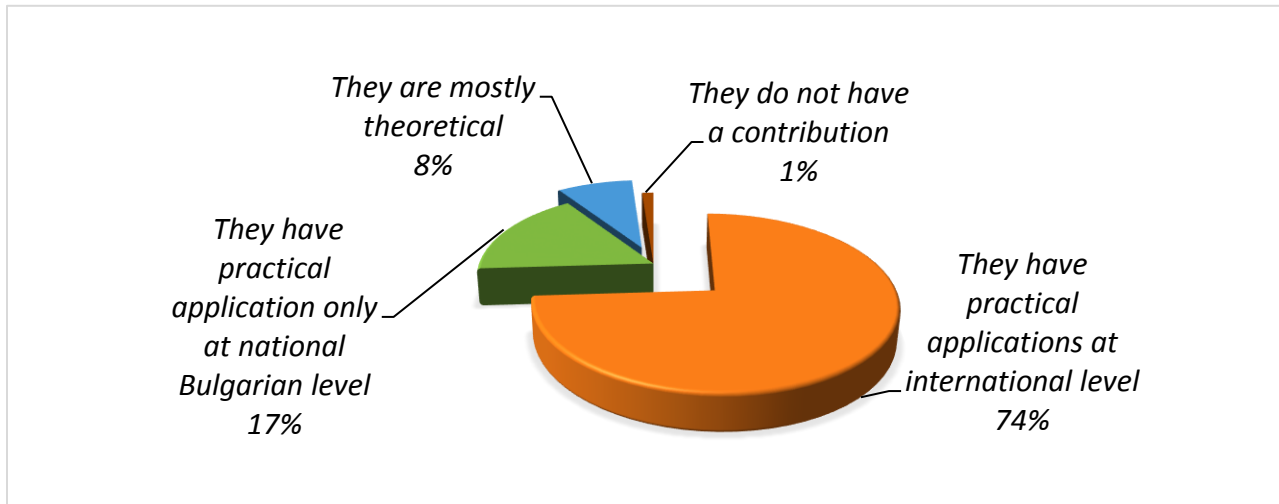
Most of the lecturers at MUV (381 out of 420 respondents) believe that the research works produced at the University have a practical aspect and contribution to the society. Of these, 311 respondents believe that this contribution is not of just national but of international relevance as well.

To this question, the answers of the respondents were evenly distributed among the different groups, such as men, women, PhD students, assistant professors, head assistant professors, associate professors, professors and DScs.

An interesting thing to note here is that respondents from the specialties other than medicine (nurses and midwives – 100-93%, lecturers from the Department of Foreign Language Teaching and Sport – 93%, pharmacists – 83%, followed by dental medicine doctors – 75%) believe that their research has higher practical contribution to the society. There is also a large percentage of physicians who think that their research has a practical side and a societal contribution (135 responders of 189 physicians or 71%.)

The lecturers from the Medical College have doubts about the practical side of their research (67%).

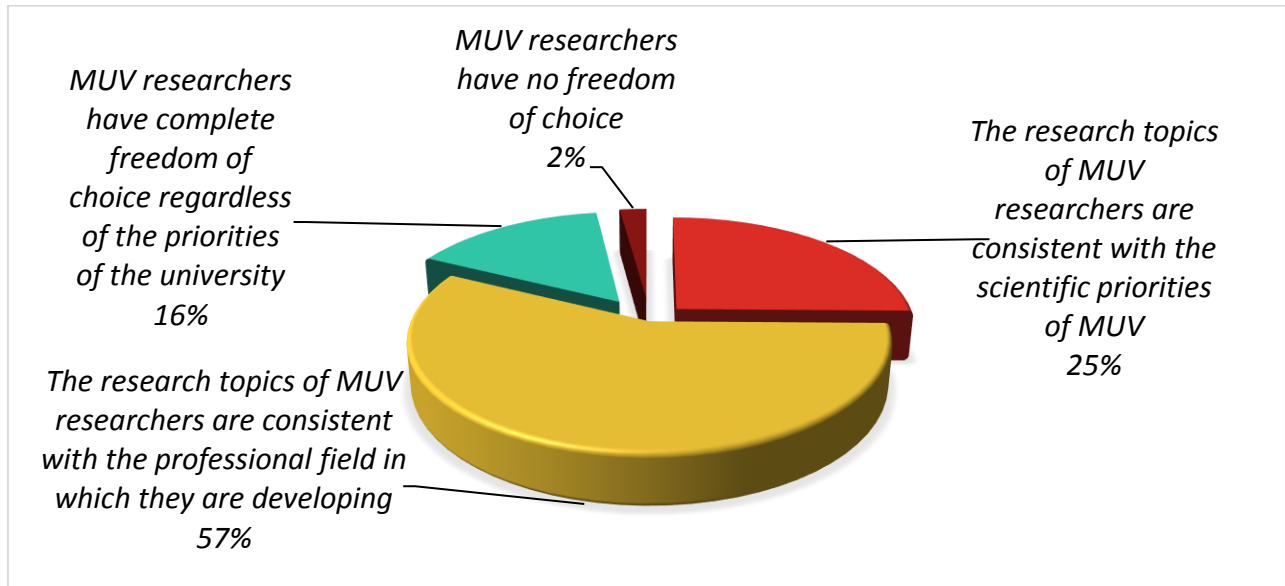
Do the scientific investigations carried out at MUV have a practical side and a contribution to the society?



Research is an integral part of the work at MUV, so the question of the scientific freedom is especially relevant. The most part of the participants in the survey (346 out of 420 people) think that they are partially restricted in their right to choose. 57% of respondents (240 people) think that they are restricted by the professional field, in which they develop, and 25% (106 people) believe themselves restricted by the scientific priorities of the University. Only 2% (9 people) of the respondents believe that they have no freedom in choosing the scientific field, in which to develop. On the other hand, 16% (65 people) are absolutely certain that they are completely free in their choice of scientific field, in which to develop.

To this question, the answers of the respondents are evenly distributed among the different groups, such as men, women, PhD students, assistant professors, head assistant professors, associate professors, professors and DScs.

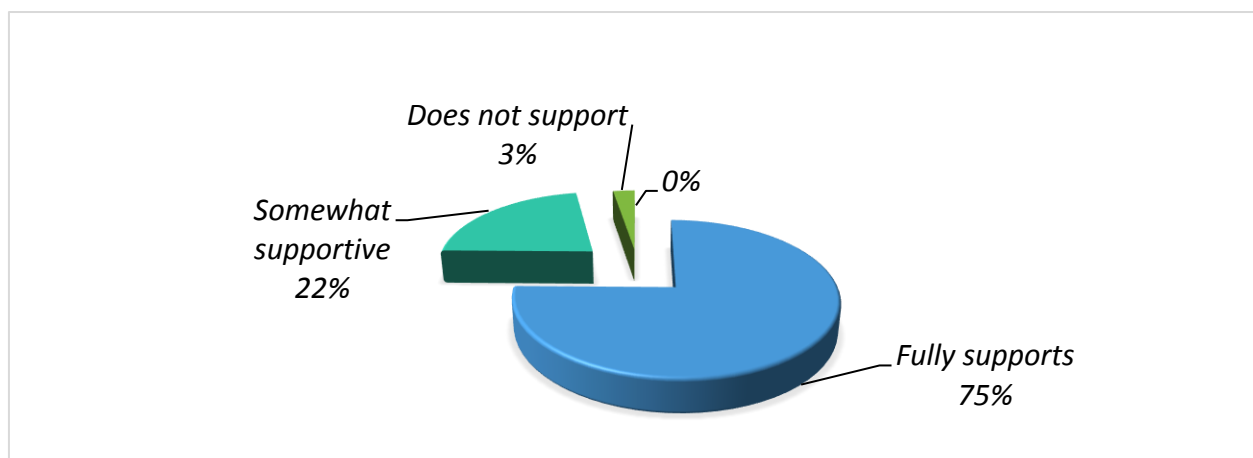
Do MUV researchers have the freedom to choose the area in which to develop?



A tradition has been established at MUV to develop the scientific potential of doctoral students, lecturers and academic staff and to support their scientific performances. This is evident from the answers of the surveyed employees at the University. 316 respondents (75.2%) believe that the MUV fully supports the dissemination and the publication of their research. 93 respondents (22.1%) believe that they find only some support from the University management in publishing their research papers and only 11 respondents (2.6%) do not find any support.

To this question, the answers of the respondents were evenly distributed among the different groups, such as men, women, PhD students, assistant professors, head assistant professors, associate professors, professors and DScs.

Does the University support the dissemination and publication of scientific results of its researchers?

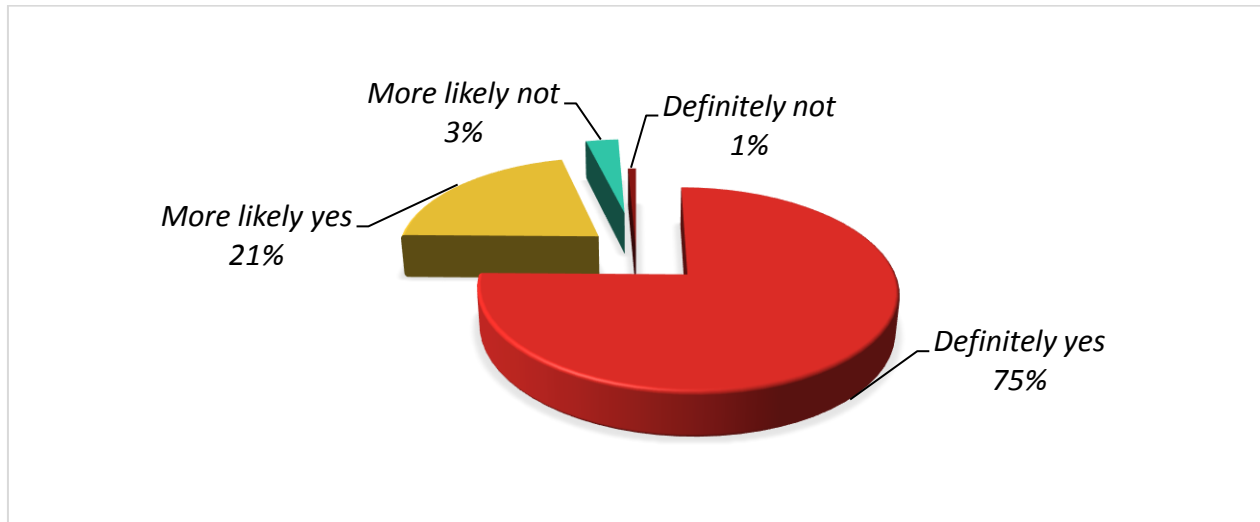


A system has been established at MUV that guarantees the quality of research and the compliance with the Code of Ethics. The control is applied at various stages - starting from research project development up to the publication of research results.

This obviously works fluently, as almost all lecturers and scientists at the University (*404 respondents, or 96%*) believe that the system is effective. 316 (*75%*) of the respondents definitely believe in the care taken by the institution in the protection of the individual and collective intellectual property. Less than 1% (*only 3 respondents*) are dissatisfied with the mechanisms to prevent plagiarism and infringement of individual and collective intellectual property rights.

To this question, the answers of the respondents were evenly distributed among the different groups, such as men, women, PhD students, assistant professors, head assistant professors, associate professors, professors and DScs.

Does the University apply mechanisms to prevent plagiarism and violations of individual and collective intellectual property rights?

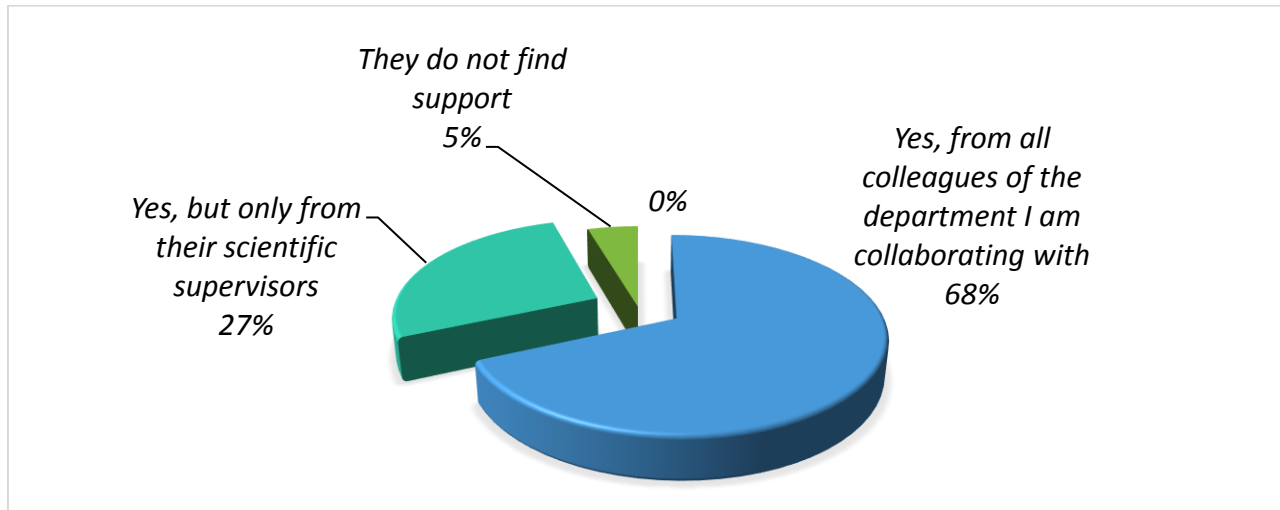


In terms of their professional development, the researchers at MUV get support from the institution itself, and from their colleagues. This is evident from the answers we receive in the online survey. Most of the respondents - 283 (68%) state that they receive support from all their colleagues in the unit they work in, others - 112 (27%) respondents say that they rely mainly on their supervisors in their professional development and only a small part - 19 (5%) of the respondents do not feel the support they need.

The interesting thing about the answers of the respondents is that about 5% of them believe that the support they receive is directly related to the unit at which they work (*the department*).

To this question, the answers of the respondents were evenly distributed among the different groups, such as men, women, PhD students, assistant professors, head assistant professors, associate professors, professors and DScs.

Do young MUV researchers find adequate support by their more experienced colleagues?

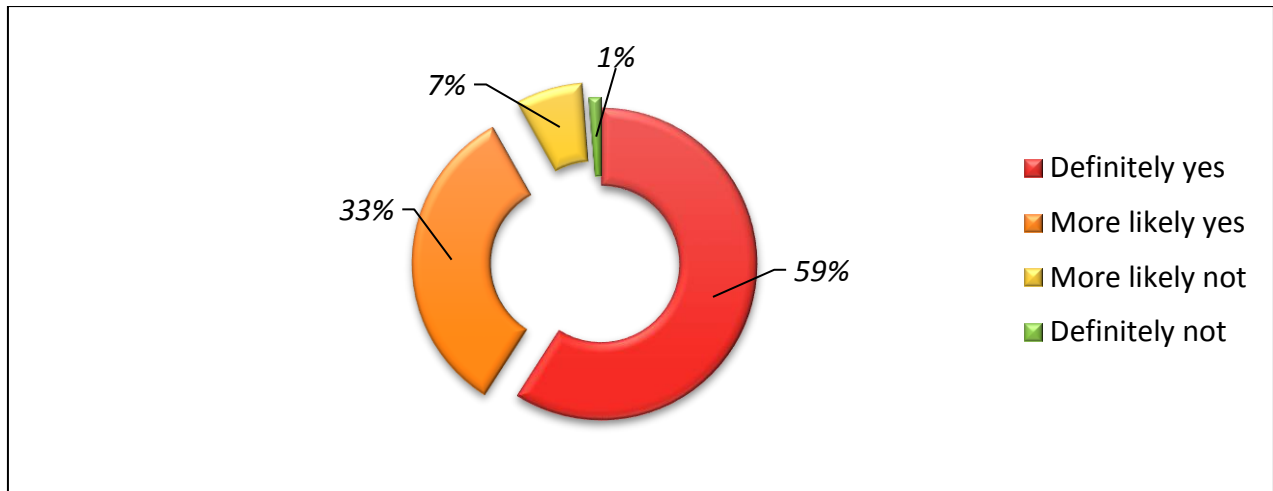


4.2 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Highly qualified staff who, in addition to their professional qualities, also have personal and moral qualities, are of great importance for any institution. For this purpose, MUV provides supportive environment for both employment and career development of its staff. The University strives for transparent and efficient staff recruitment procedures. This is also evident from the answers of the respondents in the online survey. 386 (92%) of the respondents believe that the procedures for recruitment of researchers at MUV are transparent and efficient and only 34 (8%) of them disagree with this statement.

Among the respondents who are not convinced in the transparency and efficiency of the recruitment procedures at the University, in percentage terms, most respondents are from the Faculties of Pharmacy and Dental Medicine (*between 14-15% of respondents in this group*). As a category of researchers, these are the assistant professors and the head assistant professors (R2), or these are 44% of those who answered negatively.

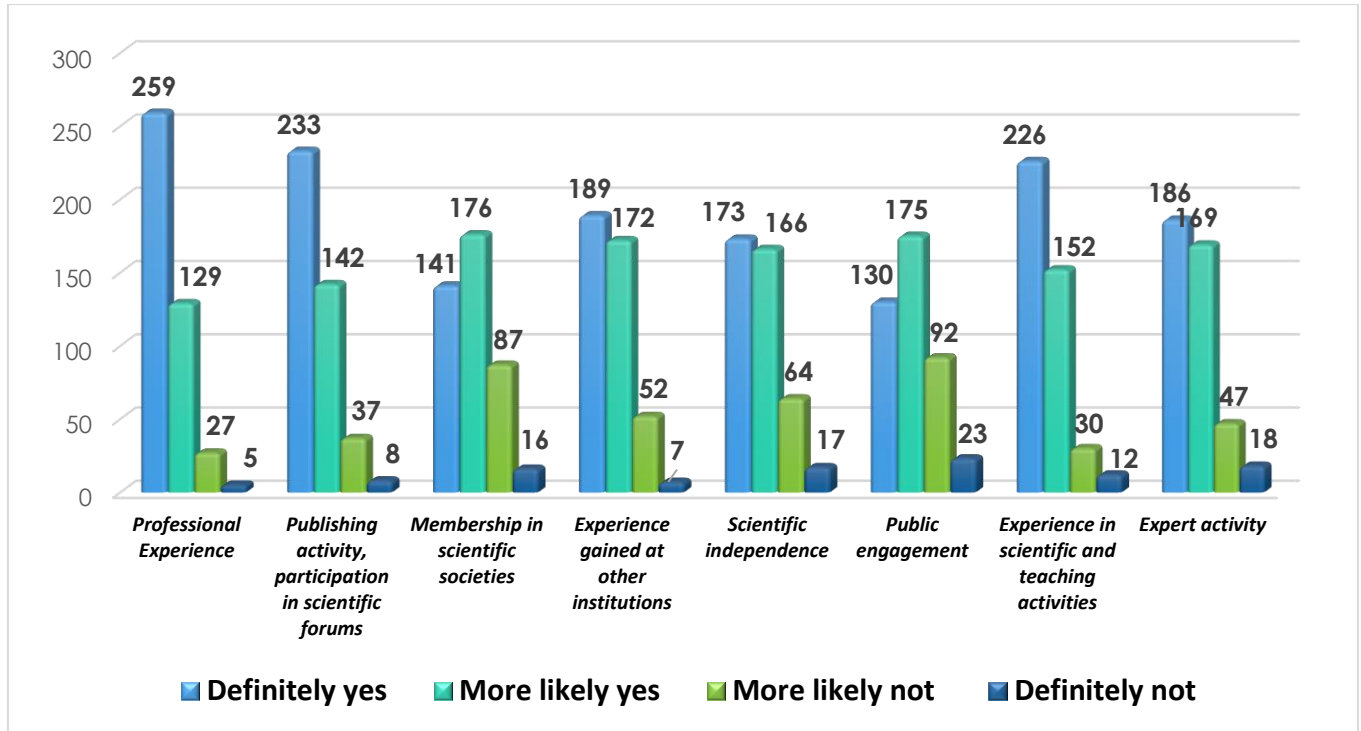
Are the HR recruitment procedures at MUV sufficiently transparent and effective?



According to the respondents, professional experience plays the greatest role in staff recruitment at MUV (388 out of 420 respondents or 92%), experience in science and teaching (378 out of 420 respondents or 90%), publishing activity and participation in scientific forums (375 out of 420 respondents or 89%), and less attention is paid to their societal contribution (307 out of 420 respondents or 73%) and membership in scientific societies (317 out of 420 respondents or 76%).

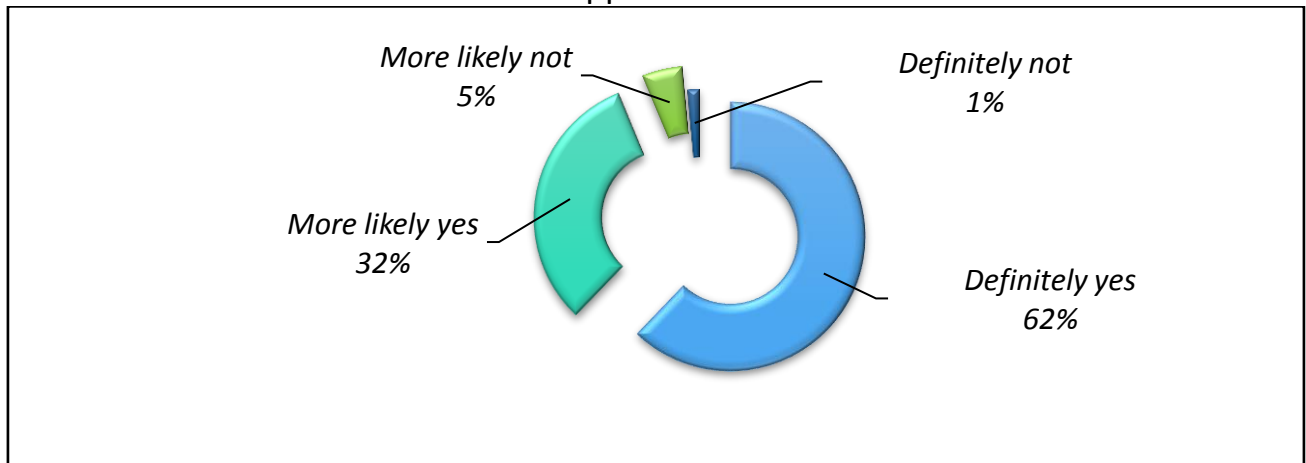
To this question, the answers of the respondents were evenly distributed among the different groups, such as men, women, PhD students, assistant professors, head assistant professors, associate professors, professors and DScs.

Which of the following aspects is evaluated by the MUV recruitment committees?



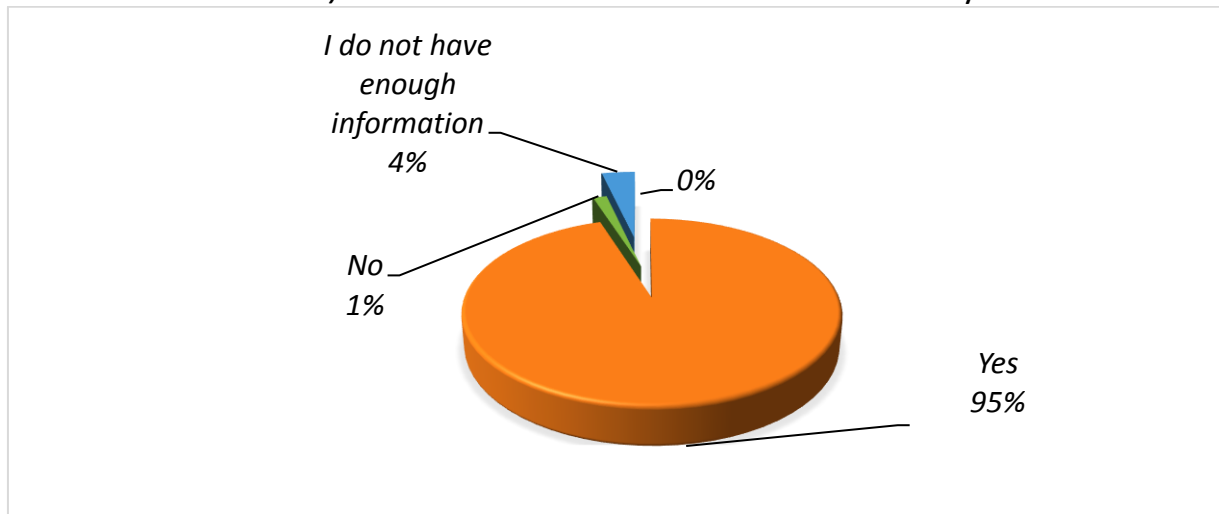
During the whole process of recruitment at MUV, as well as after the appointment of lecturers, the help of administrative staff is needed. According to 394 (94%) of the respondents, they receive support from University's administrative staff. 20 (5%) of the respondents have encountered difficulties in their work with the administrative staff at MUV and only 6 (1%) of the respondents have not received any assistance.

Does the university's administrative staff support candidates before and during their appointment?



The regulations describing the rights, obligations, procedures and minimum requirements for recruitment at MUV are available on the website of the University. 399 (95%) of the respondents who participated in the online survey agree on this statement. 6 (1%) of the respondents have failed to find the information they needed, and 15 (4%) have not tried to access it.

Are the administrative documents of MUV (*rules, regulations, procedures, etc.*) available on the website of the University?



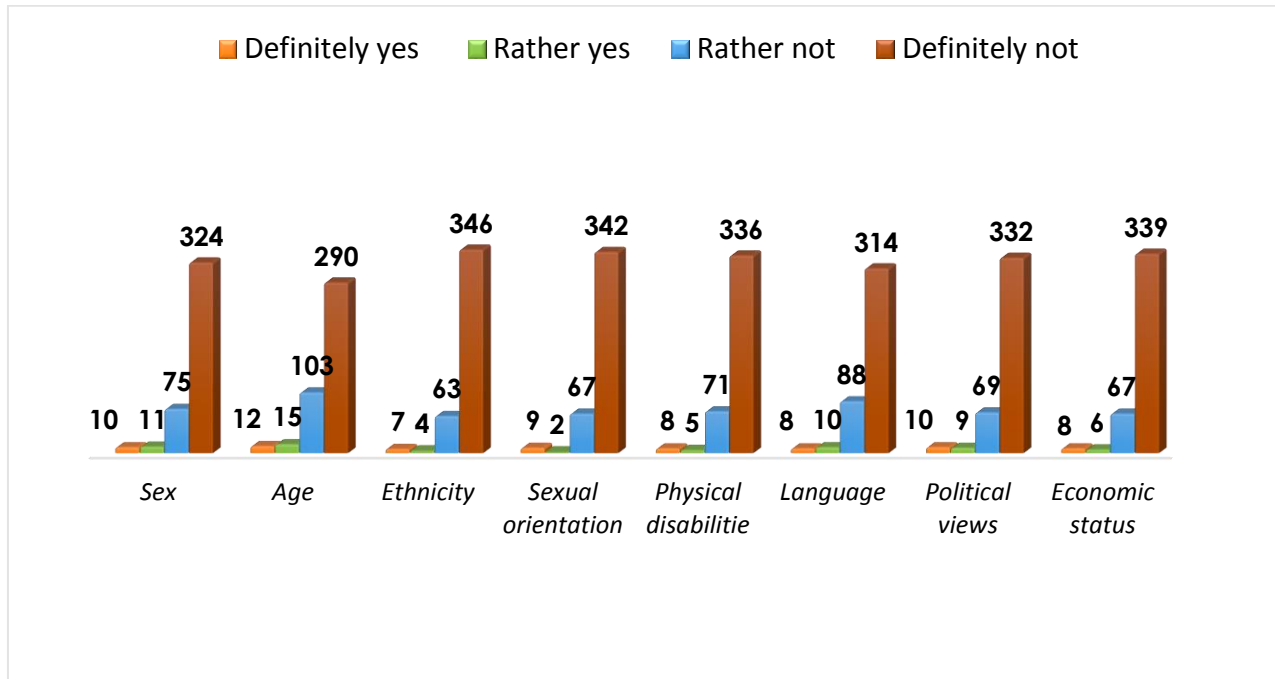
4.3 WORKING CONDITIONS

The conditions in which individuals practice their profession are one of the important factors for them to decide whether they will stay at the institution. There are several main points at MUV that are considered when assessing the work environment:

- Non-discriminatory environment;
- Supportive environment;
- Feeling of security and stability;
- Equality;
- Fair payment for labor.

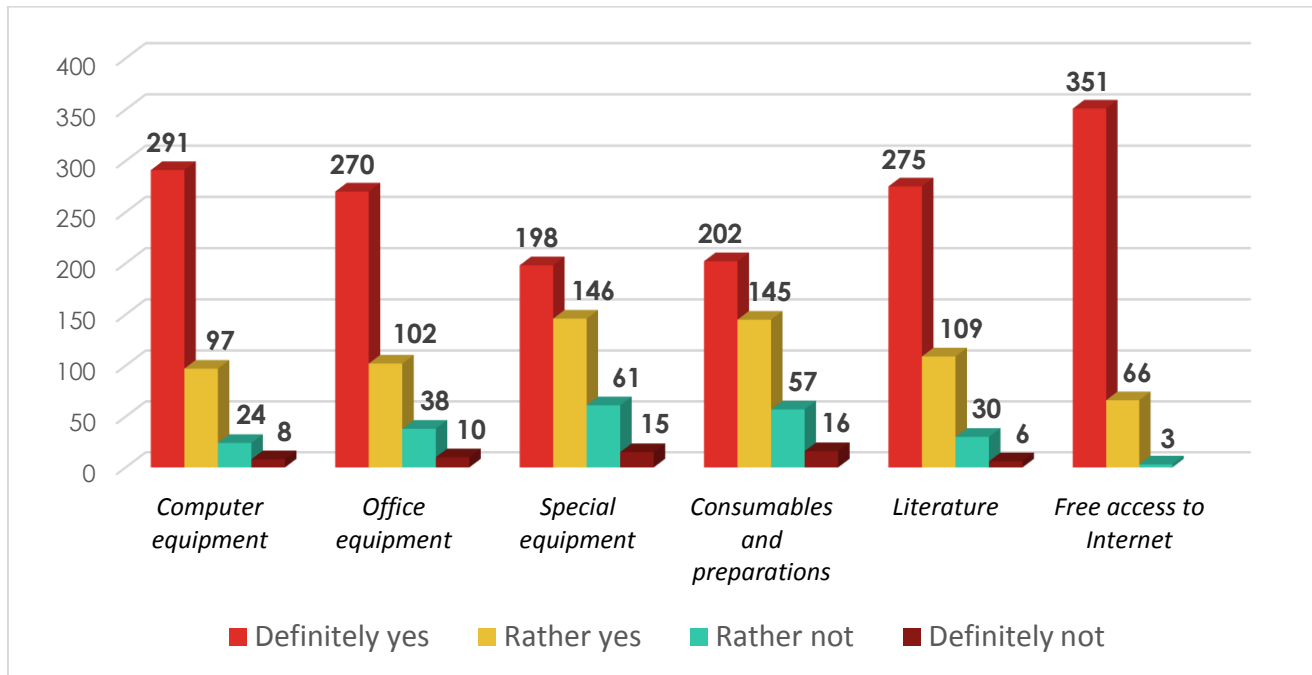
According to the online survey among the researchers, there is no discrimination at MUV (*between 95-97% of respondents*) on any grounds (*gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical disabilities, language, religious or political views, and economic status*). The small percentage of respondents who believe that there is still some kind of discrimination indicated age and gender grounds.

Is there discrimination at the University on the grounds of?



The respondents participating in the survey have expressed satisfaction of the provision of facilities as well as of their access to the Internet and the scientific literature. They are most satisfied with the free access they have to the Internet, 99%, between 90-92% - with the computer equipment, office equipment and literature availability, and least satisfied with specialized equipment and consumables, and preparations - 82%.

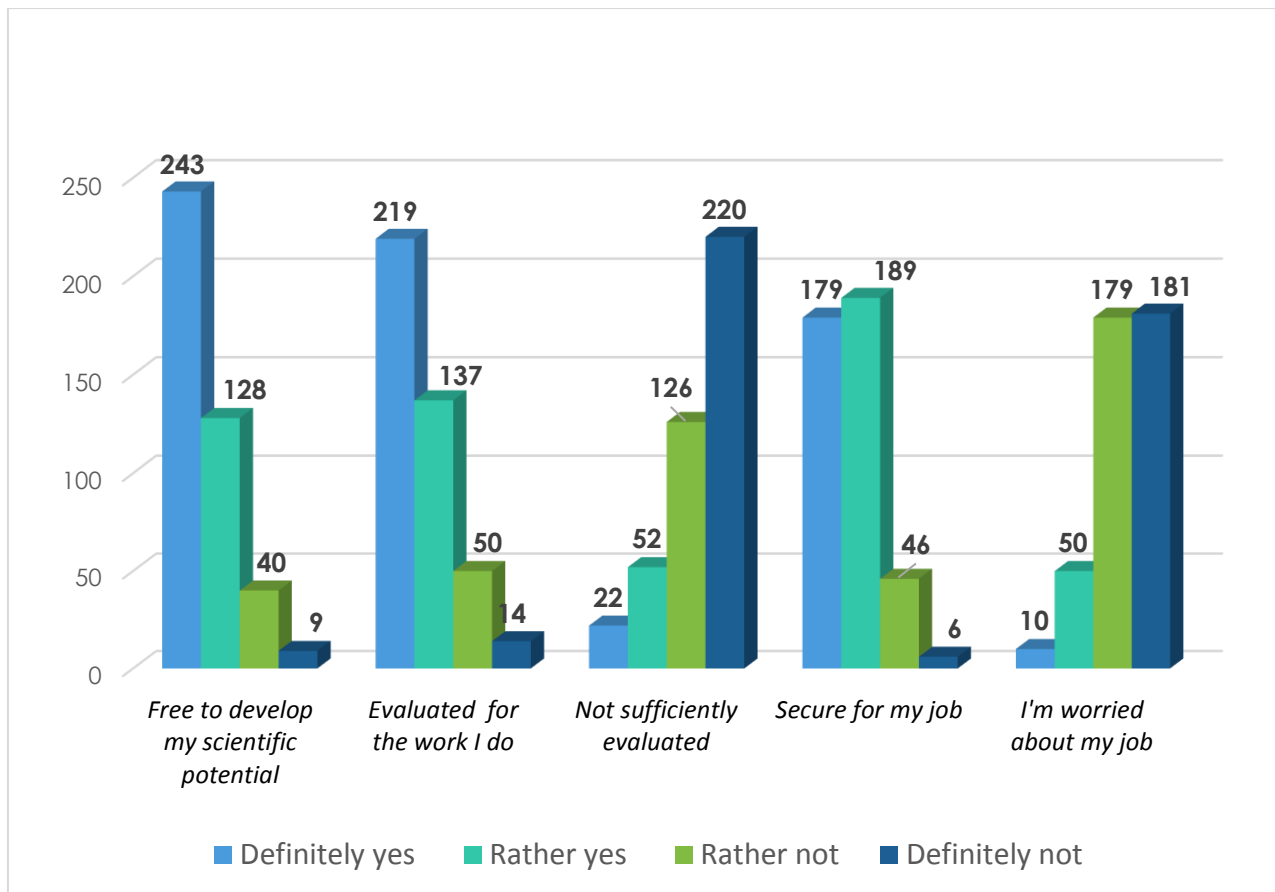
Are the employees of the University provided in their scientific work with?



To the next question, the respondents answer that they feel safe, not under stress at their workplace and about their job, and are evaluated enough for the work they perform. Only a small percentage - between 12 and 18%, feel themselves insecure and uncomfortable at work. Among those who answered in the negative, the highest percentage (17.6%, 74 respondents) is of those who feel underevaluated about the work they perform.

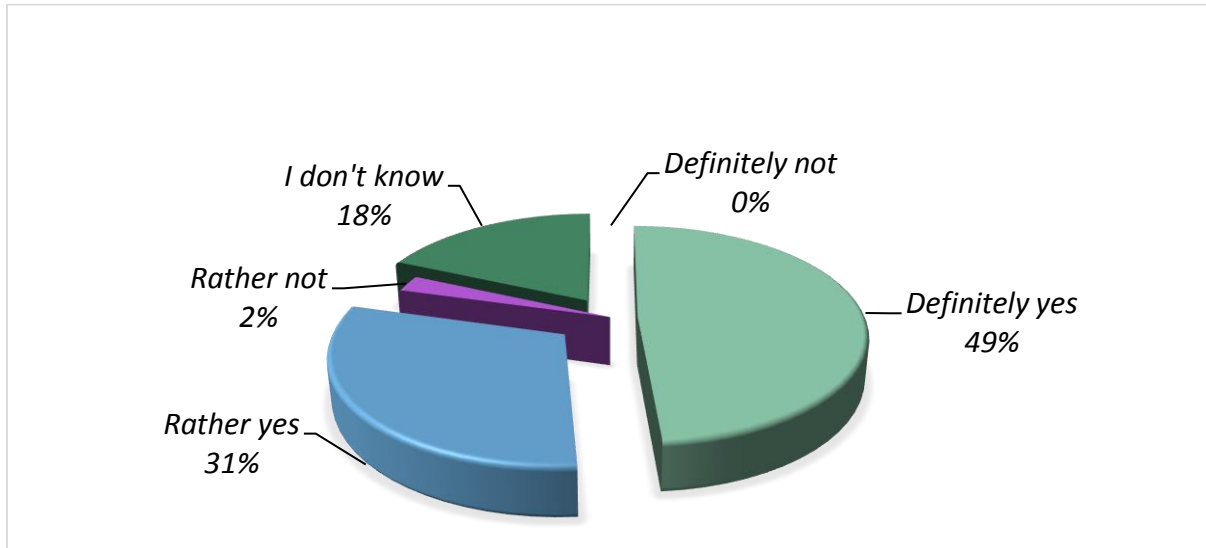
An interesting thing to note here is that most of the negative responses come from PhD students, assistant professors and head assistant professors (R1 and R2) - over 77% (57 respondents out of 74).

How do you feel as an employee of the University with respect to the environment you work in?



MUV provides good working environment for university employees with disabilities. 80% (333) respondents from the online survey believe that normal working conditions are provided for employees with disabilities. However, the share of those who have not inquired or have no information is significant - 18% (77 respondents out of all respondents).

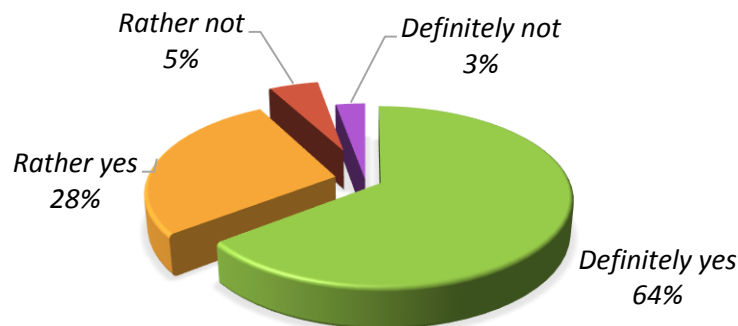
Are there good (*normal*) working conditions provided at MUV for employees with disabilities?



According to the online survey, there is gender equality at MUV both in the entire institution and at the managerial positions (*92% of respondents*).

To this question, the answers of the respondents are evenly distributed among the different groups, such as men, women, PhD students, assistant professors, head assistant professors, associate professors, professors and DScs.

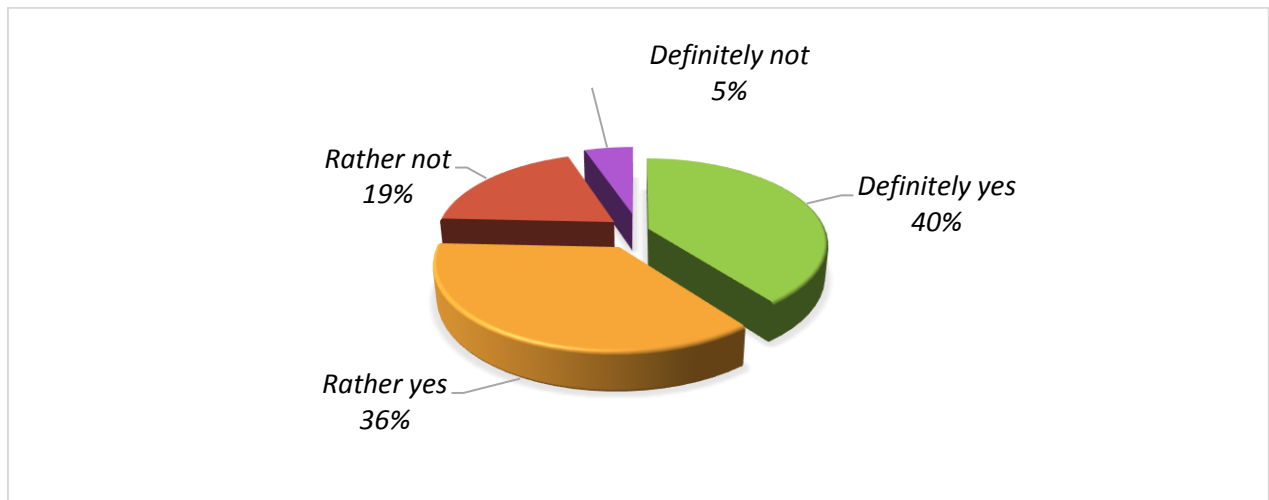
Is there gender equality in the workplace, including at the managerial positions?



With regard to the current quality assessment system at MUV, great attention is paid to the procedures related to handling of complaints, reports of discrimination, corruption, etc.

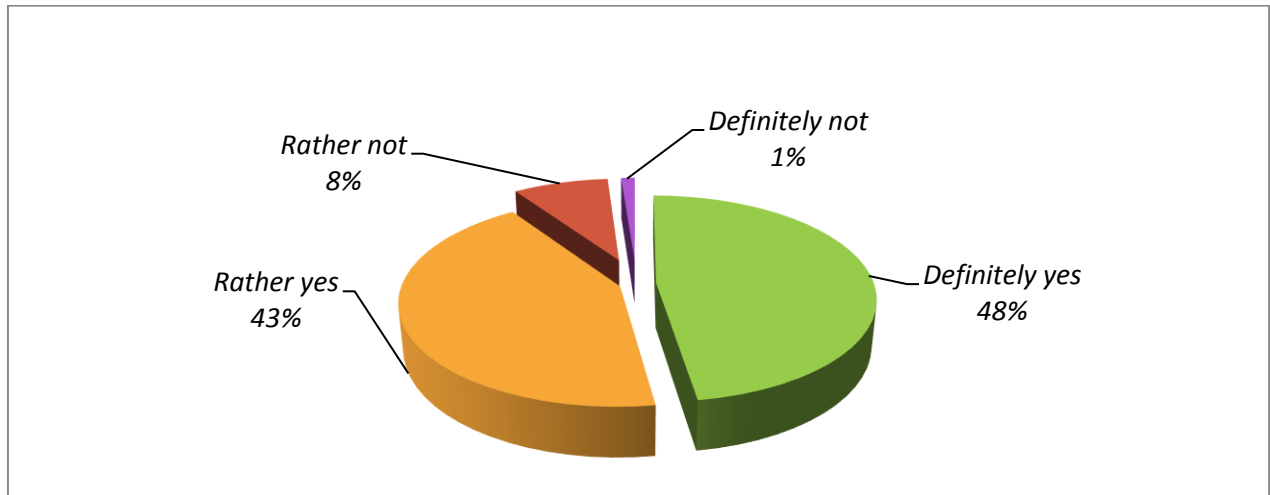
In the online survey, 77% of respondents (318 people of 420) have replied that the institution had a procedure in place for handling of complaints related to the work environment and the employee relations. However, the percentage of respondents who do not think that the procedure is followed or has an effect is not small either - 24% (102 people out of 420). Among these who believe that the procedure for handling of complaints at MUV does not work, the large percentage is accounted for by assistant professors and PhD students – 79% of those who answered in the negative, and 78% of them are women.

Is there a procedure in place to deal with complaints related to the work environment and employee relations?



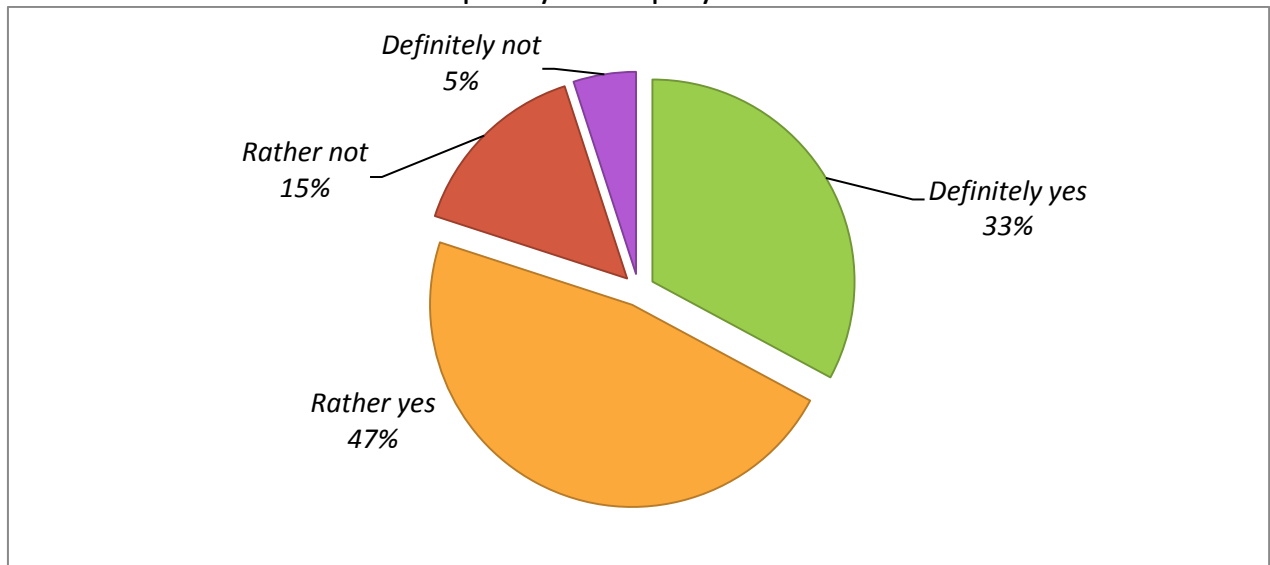
According to the respondents, the anti-discrimination mechanisms at MUV are much more effective - well than those to deal with complaints, or these are 91% of the respondents. Most of those who answered this question in the negative were women (75%).

Do you think that there are mechanisms to deal with discrimination at the University?



One of the important factors when looking for a job or motivation to stay at work is the payment received for the work performed. In the online survey, 80% of respondents (336 people out of 420) have stated that their remuneration is adequate to the level of responsibility and the quality of the work they perform. The highest rate of dissatisfied with their pay is accounted for in the groups R1 (PhD student, assistant professor or non-PhD lecturer) - 56%, and R2 (assistant professor, head assistant professor and/or PhD lecturer) - 27%. Gender, ethnicity and age are not of key relevance in this regard.

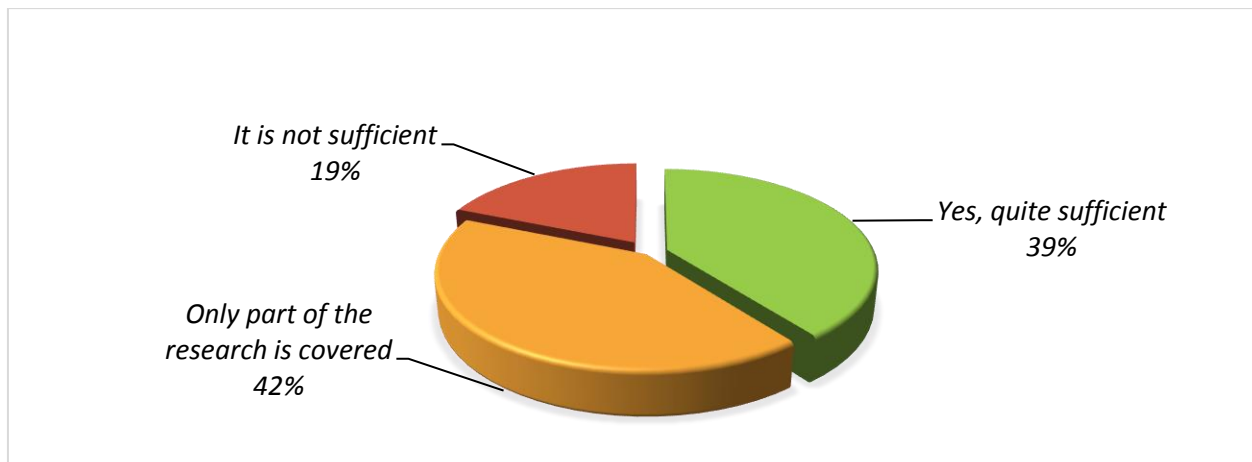
Do you think that the remuneration is adequate to the level of responsibility and the quality of employee's work?



When it comes to funding the research of scientists at MUV, things look a little different. Only 39% of respondents believe that they receive sufficient funding, 42% believe that the money they receive cover only part of their research, and the funding is absolutely insufficient for 19% of them.

To this question, the answers of the respondents are evenly distributed among the different groups, such as men, women, PhD students, assistant professors, head assistant professors, associate professors, professors and DScs.

Do you receive sufficient funding for your research?

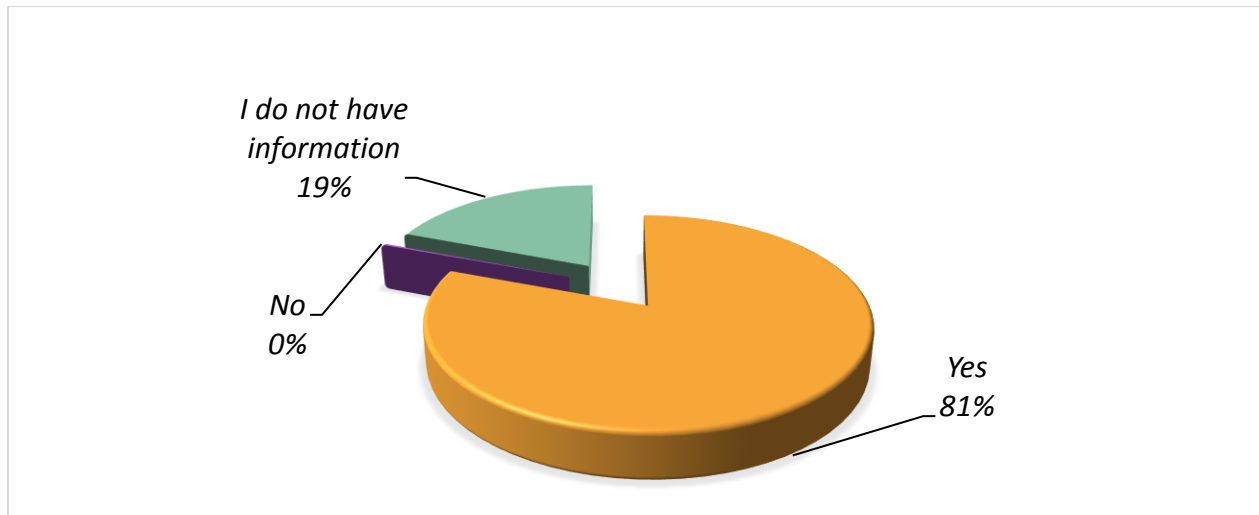


4.4 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

To develop and maintain its educational and scientific activities, MUV communicates with various universities, research organisations and representatives of diverse business fields. Contracts are entered into for this purpose to guarantee such relations.

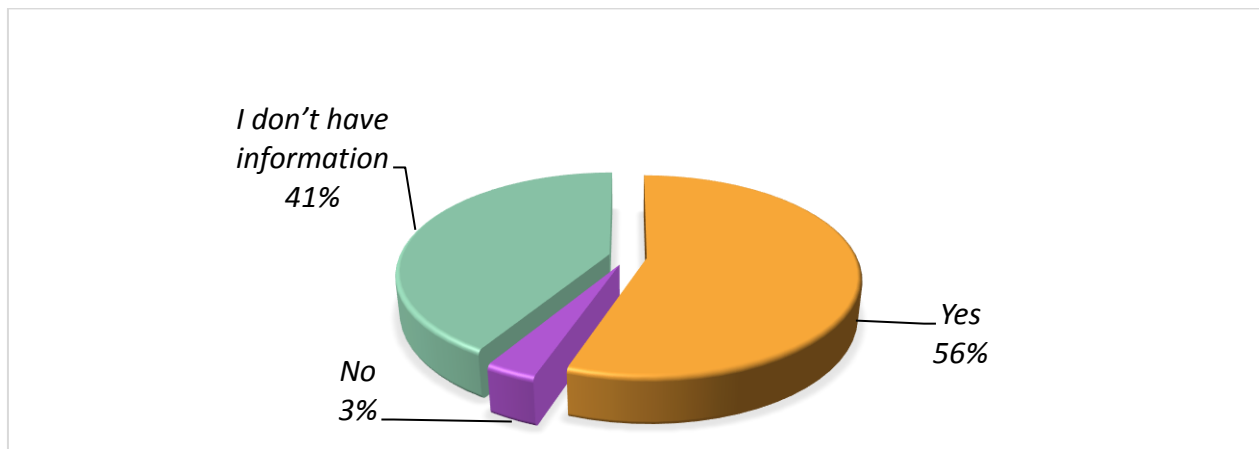
The survey conducted with at the University shows that the respondents are familiar with the contractual relations that have been established with other universities and research organisations or this accounts for 81% of the respondents.

Does the University have experience in establishing contractual relationships with other universities and research organisations?



When it comes to the contractual relations that MUV has with various business organisations, the percentage of informed respondents is much lower - 56%.

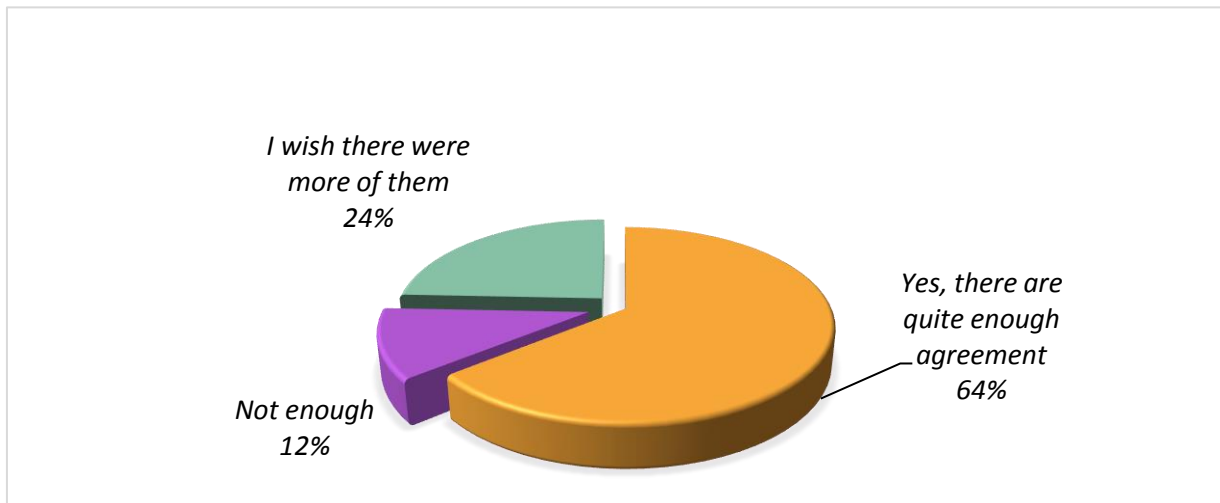
Does the University have experience in establishing contractual relationships with representatives of the business?



Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna

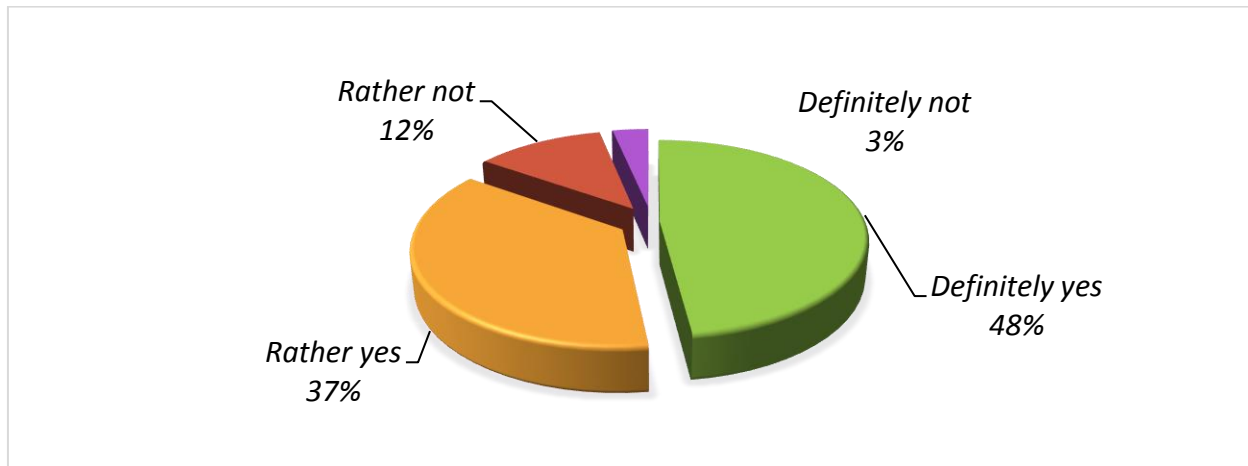
International exchange is also extremely important to MUV (to both researchers and students), therefore the University strives to maintain good relations with foreign universities. According to 64% (269 people of 419) of the respondents, the University has entered into enough number of agreements for international cooperation, for 12% (48 people of 419) they are not enough, 24% (102 people of 419) wish the agreements were more.

Is there sufficient information about the international cooperation agreements entered into by the University?



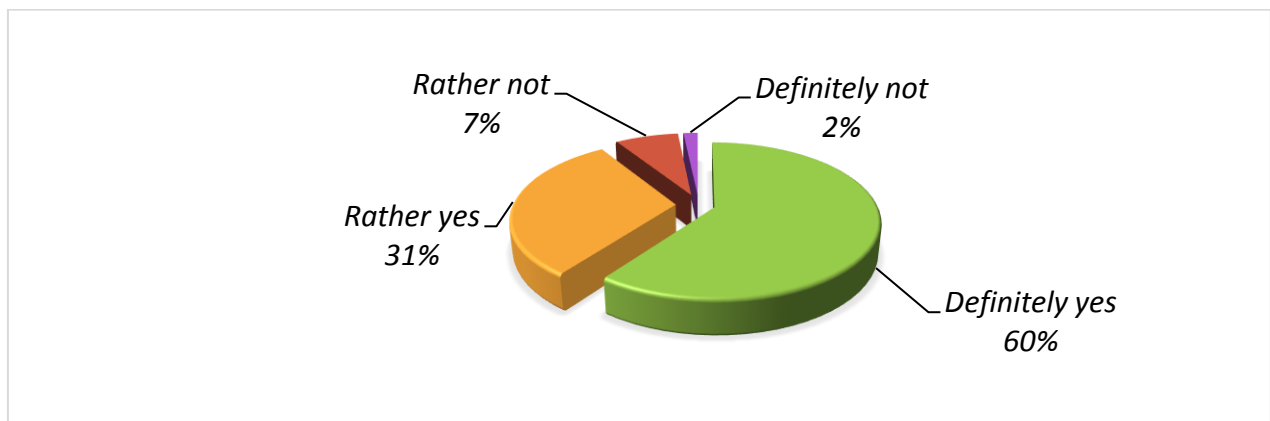
MUV makes efforts to improve not only the qualification of its employees, but also to develop their social and personal skills. Therefore, the University aims at retaining its employees and, if possible, to attract other highly qualified personnel. This is also evident from the answers of the respondents, 85% (355 people of 419) are convinced that MUV seeks to attract and retain highly qualified staff. Among the respondents who gave a negative answer, 65% are from the Faculty of Medicine.

Is there a practice at MU - Varna for attracting and retaining highly qualified staff?



Regarding the research staff at MUV, the respondents share that there is a plan for their development, and this is the opinion of 91% of the respondents.

Is there a plan for the career development of the research staff at the University?



5. SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

During the period May-June 2021, an online survey was conducted at the MUV, in which 420 respondents from all major university units took part (*Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Dental Medicine, Faculty of Pharmacy, Faculty of Public Health, Department of Foreign Language Teaching, Communications and Sports, Medical College - Varna, MUV affiliates in the towns of Sliven, Shumen, and Veliko Tarnovo*). The respondents included 413 individuals from Bulgarian, 6 from Turkish and 1 from Russian ethnic groups. The total number of responses was 51.3%.

Among the respondents, 28.3% are men and 71.2% - women. In absolute numbers, that means 119 men and 299 women; there are also 2 respondents (0.5%), self-determined as other gender.

The largest share of respondents falls into the R1 category (*PhD student, assistant professor or non-PhD lecturer*) - 40% (166 people) followed by R2 (*assistant professor, head assistant professor and/or PhD lecturer*) - 26.4% (115 people), R3 (*associate professor*) - 25% (103 people), and the lowest number of respondents is accounted for in category R4 (*professor and/or DSc lecturer*) - 8.6% (36 people).

In terms of age structure, respondents aged 35–45 and under 35 are most represented in the survey; they account for almost three-quarters of all respondents. A quarter consists of respondents aged 45- 55 years. The smallest group consists of respondents aged over 65 years (11%).

The respondents are mostly represented by the assistant professors and the active PhD students - 40%; among them, those having up to 5 years length of service are most numerous - 26%. The postdoctoral students, i.e. holders of a PhD degree and the head assistant professors, form the next largest group – 26.4%, the most part of which have a length of service of 5 to 10 years – 15%. Among the associate professors (25% in total), the largest group is of those having a length of service of 10 to 20 years - 12%. The professors and the DSc lecturers have the longest service at MUV.

5.1 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

5.1.1 ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS

Most of the lecturers at MUV 91% (381 out of 420 respondents) believe that the research developed at the University has a practical side and contribution to the society. Of these, 82% (311 of 381 respondents) believe that this contribution is not of just national but of international relevance as well. This is due to the fact that a large number of researchers are directly involved in business and societal service through expert assignments - 51% (214 out of 420 respondents), participate in expert committees and councils - 39.8% (167 out of 420 respondents) or conduct clinical trials commissioned by the business - 15% (63 out of 420 respondents).

Most part of the participants in the survey (346 out of 420 people) think that they are partially restricted in their right to choose the field of their research. 57% of the respondents (240 people) think that they are restricted by the professional field in which they develop, and 25% (106 people) believe themselves restricted by the scientific priorities of the University. On the other hand, 16% (65 people) are absolutely certain that they are completely free in their choice of scientific field, in which to develop.

75.2 % of the respondents (316) consider that the MUV fully supports the dissemination and the publication of their research, and 22.1% of respondents (93) believe that they find only some support from the University management in publishing their research papers.

96% (404) of the participants in the survey are convinced that the University uses its best effort and has mechanisms in place to prevent plagiarism and infringement of individual and collective intellectual property rights. Also, 78.3% (329) of the respondents are sure that the research conducted at MUV will be legally protected.

5.1.2 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

As the results of the survey show, 92% of the respondents believe that the selection procedures of the University are efficient and transparent, 97% believe that the advertisements related to the selection of staff contain all the necessary information about the job offered, as well as a reasonable set of job requirements. In general, 91% of the respondents agree to the statement that the experience and the competencies of the applicants that are suitable for the position are the main indicators in the selection procedures.

Among the respondents who are not convinced in the transparency and the efficiency of the recruitment procedures at the University, in percentage terms, most respondents are from the Faculties of Pharmacy and Dental Medicine (*between 14 and 15% of respondents in this group*). As a category of researchers, these are the assistant professors and the head assistant professors (R2) or 44% of those who answered in the negative.

The regulations describing the rights, obligations, procedures and minimum requirements for recruitment at MUV are available on the website of the University. 95% of the respondents who participated in the online survey agree with this statement.

5.1.3 WORKING CONDITIONS

The conditions in which the individuals practice their profession are one of the factors that matter to whether they will stay at work. There are several main points at MUV that are considered when assessing the work environment:

- Non-discriminatory environment;
- Supportive environment;
- Feeling of security and stability;
- Equality;
- Fair payment for labor.

According to the online survey at MU- Varna, there is no discrimination at the workplace (*between 95-97% of respondents*) on any of the listed grounds (*gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical disabilities, language, political views and economic status*). The small percentage of respondents who believe that there is still some kind of discrimination indicated age and gender ground.

The respondents participating in the survey have expressed satisfaction of the provision of facilities as well as of their access to the Internet and the scientific literature. They are most satisfied with the free access they have to the Internet, – 99%, between 90-92% - with the computer equipment, office equipment and literature, and least satisfied with specialized equipment and consumables, and preparations - 82%.

To the next question, 88% to 90% of the respondents answer that they feel safe, secure at their workplace and about their job, and are evaluated enough for the work they perform.

Similarly, 64.3% of respondents believe that working conditions are fair and equal for all employees, regardless of the type of employment contract they have. An interesting thing to note

here is that 24% of respondents do not know or care about whether they are on an equal footing with their other colleagues.

MUV provides a good working environment for its employees with disabilities. 80% respondents in the online survey believe that normal working conditions are provided for employees with disabilities. However, the share of those who have not inquired or have no information is significant - 18% of all respondents.

According to the online survey, there is gender equality at MUV both in the entire institution and at the managerial positions (*92% of respondents*).

Regarding the pay of the work carried out by researchers at MUV, as well as the pay based on the level of their responsibility, 80% of respondents think that they are well paid.

The respondents (*97%*) know their rights and obligations as set out in the internal regulations of the University, as well as those relating to safety and health protection at work or fire protection. They were briefed as early as at starting work. Regarding their further compliance, almost all respond that the rights and obligations are respected.

The MUV employees in their role as researchers are also aware of their rights and obligations (*91%*).

5.1.4 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

According to 81% of respondents, the University provides the staff with sufficient experience and opportunities for cooperation with other universities and research institutes, and the remaining 19% have no information about the contracts concluded by MUV. Interestingly, a large number of researchers (*41%*) had no information or were not interested in establishing any network and contractual relations with the business. On the other hand, however, 36% of respondents would wish there were more agreements for international cooperation.

According to most of the respondents (*79%*), MUV has mechanisms in place for regular evaluation of employees, as well as feedback on their performance at all stages of their career at the University. To this question, the answers of the respondents are evenly distributed among the different groups, such as men, women, PhD students, assistant professors, head assistant professors, associate professors, professors and DScs.

Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna

95% of respondents confirm that new employees can turn to a more experienced colleague (*supervisor – 27%, and 68% – senior colleagues*) in relation to the performance of their duties and tasks who will provide them with appropriate support. Respondents' responses do not vary from one group surveyed to another.

A total of 64% of respondents agree that the University provides an active support and access to international or other mobility programmes through concluded cooperation contracts. Only 12% of the researchers surveyed disagree on the above statement, and 24% would like to have more options than those provided.

MUV makes efforts to improve not only the qualification of its staff, but also to develop their social and personal skills. Therefore, the University aims at retaining its employees and, if possible, attracting other highly qualified personnel. This is also evident from the responses of the respondents, 85% of them believe that MUV seeks to attract and retain highly qualified personnel. Among the respondents who gave a negative answer, 65% are from the Faculty of Medicine.

The availability of a university system allowing the employees to get information about opportunities for further qualification trainings and involvement in different projects is confirmed by almost 89% of respondents.

The majority of the total number of respondents (*90%*) agree that their attestation assessment takes into account the personal activity aimed at increasing the qualification of the employee. 72% of the respondents having answered in the negative are in the R1 and R2 groups.

5.2. OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Why would you recommend the Medical University of Varna as a good employer for researchers?

Among the views of respondents in the online survey, the following are the most common responses to this question:

"...I recommend the MUV as a good and secure place of work because:

1. it provides opportunities for career development and upskilling of employees;
2. it ensures a good pay-to-work ratio;
3. it provides excellent working conditions:
 - good working hours;
 - flexibility in planning the learning process;
 - good organisation of work;
 - a sense of stability and security;
 - correctness;
 - clear and transparent rules and procedures;
 - support from the management and colleagues.
4. it offers good facilities and consumables;
5. the relationship between the clinic and the university work ensures practical application of theoretical knowledge;
6. the possibility of participating in international projects;
7. open to multidisciplinary and rapid introduction of new technologies;
8. it respects traditions.

"I would recommend the Medical university of Varna as a good employer for researchers, because it provides modern working conditions in the scientific field and an opportunity for development."

"Because of the quiet working environment and the young staff."

Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna

"A prestigious university, at a high academic level, with international recognition and authority, which is constantly evolving, and which also provides opportunities for the development of its staff and lecturers. The University provides excellent working conditions, appreciates the contribution of employees, promotes research and project activities."

"Good facilities and pay, excellent "start" for young ambitious colleagues."

"Because of the attitude of correctness and responsibility toward its staff."

"Support for less experienced scientists by the more experienced ones and the management. Adequate remuneration. Cozy working environment. Excellent availability of technology and resources at the workplace."

"Because of the image of the profession, the working conditions and pay."

Why would you not recommend the Medical University of Varna as a good employer for lecturers and researchers?

Among the comments by the respondents to the online survey on this question, the most common ones are:

"...I do not recommend MUV as a good and secure place of work because:

- The starting salary of the young assistant professors is lower than at the other medical universities in Bulgaria;
- The lack of equity and the double standards for the staff;
- Too many unnecessary administrative obligations leading to higher workload;
- Problems in working with one of the administrative departments;
- The specialized equipment is insufficient at some departments;
- Incomplete information about the changes occurring in the University regulations.

"Too many unnecessary, small, annoying, time-consuming and energy-consuming administrative obligations."

"... because of the difficulty of combining clinical work and teaching and research, one is often on the account of the other."

"I would not recommend it to colleagues who are not willing to work and do not have the necessary qualification."

"Clumsy response by some of the administrative departments involved in providing the necessary consumables and equipment for scientific work."

"I have no reason for not to recommend it."

"Double standards for employees."

What ideas and recommendations would you like to give to the management of MUV with regard to improving the working environment and the research activities at the University?

"Adequate funding for applied research."

"To carry out free health prophylactic examinations of all employees on an annual basis."

"Regular exchanges of visits (one working day) to the various departments and units are to be carried out in order to exchange experience and to gain knowledge on the working processes of colleagues, which I believe will lead to better communication between departments and knowing colleagues from other departments."

"The administrative service of the projects – the established procedures for organizing public tenders, contracts to external contractors, etc. – takes time of almost a year and is impairing the start of scientific work."

"There is a need for stronger financial support for participation in conferences and publication activities."

"Easing the criteria for applying for projects, which would increase the number of willing participants."

"Improving the communication between researchers from different departments."

"To shorten and speed up the procedures on which the Ethics Committee works."