



Silesian University in Opava

**Long-term project of educational and scientific,  
research, development and innovation, artistic  
and other creative activities of the Silesian  
University in Opava  
for the period 2016-2020**

## PREAMBLE

Long-term project of educational and scientific, research, development and innovation, artistic and other creative activities of the Silesian University of Opava for the period 2016 to 2020 (hereinafter referred to as Long-term project of SU) builds on the strategic documents which were approved by the top bodies of the Silesian universities in 2004 and 2011 and on their regular updates. Its conception also respected the recommendations of the Long-Term Project of Educational and Scientific, Research, Development and Innovation, Artistic and Other Creative Activities for Higher Education Institutions for the period 2016-2020, prepared by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

The SU, although one of the youngest public universities, has built an important position in the Moravian-Silesian region over the last twenty-five years in the development of education, science and artistic activities. Thanks to the high-quality structure of available study programmes, young people are not forced to leave their region for adequate education. In addition, there is a relatively significant influx of highly motivated students from abroad, especially from adjacent Slovak and Polish regions. However, the reputation that the SU has built up in the Czech and Slovak higher education markets in the last quarter-century is also a commitment and, above all, a call for its retention and further improvement in the future. This will require the implementation of further steps, both to modernise and improve the quality of the educational, scientific and creative process itself, and to strengthen the prestige of the SU not only among the professional and lay public in the territory of Northern Moravia and Silesia, but also among applicants for study, students, educators and scientific and artistic staff operating mainly throughout the Central European area and in selected areas in the world context. For the whole academic community, the basic pillar in achieving this objective must always be the maintenance of basic principles of functioning of a standard higher education institution. We are mainly referring here to the consistent promotion of academic rights and freedoms, in particular the principle of freedom of thought, not only in the field of education, but also in the field of scientific, research, development and innovation, artistic and other creative activities. The SU must continue to be an autonomous and independent institution characterised by a high degree of internal integrity and creates a community that stimulates the creativity of its employees and students.

Further deepening of inter-faculty and interdisciplinary cooperation is essential for the full use of SU potential in the educational and creative fields, aimed not only at developing individual study programmes, but also at increasing their prestige in the Central European area. It remains in the interest of the SU to maintain the full spectrum of study programmes, starting with professionally focused bachelor programmes with a strong connection to the region of Northern Moravia and Silesia, which are supplemented by Masters and doctoral study programmes providing pure

academic education, enabling their graduates to find work not only in the territory of our region, but also on a national, European or global scale.

Development of study programmes is not possible without the support of scientific research, development, innovation, artistic and other creative activities (hereinafter referred to as "creative activities") and the linking of such activities to educational activities. Improvement in the quality and prestige of available study programmes can only happen through the building of quality work teams whose activities in the field of education are fully consistent with their scientific, research and creative activities. In order to build and further develop these work teams, not only the management of the Silesian University, but in particular the management of individual constituents must create quality conditions and an objective and transparent evaluation of their activities with a direct impact on their financing.

Quality educational and creative activities are also conditioned by deepening cooperation at both national and international level. The SU must strive to strengthen relations with both Czech higher education institutions, scientific institutions and particularly with the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, public administration institutions, professional chambers and estates and student organisations, as well as foreign institutions, with a view to greater involvement in the international academic community and greater opening to foreign students, educators and scientific and creative staff. To the same degree, the SU wants to continue to enable its own students and academics to acquire practical experience and skills and complement their theoretical knowledge at foreign higher education institutions and scientific and research workplaces.

All of the above activities must be supported by the University's corresponding communication strategy, which must aim to openly and truthfully inform about events on campus, to comment on current developments in society, both at the level of the Moravian-Silesian region and the whole Czech Republic or central European area, and last but not least, to attempt to inspire the non-academic sphere to be more involved in the formation of civic society. In this respect, it is necessary to strengthen the awareness of the responsibilities of each member of the academic community. In this regard, the University must not forget its graduates, who should perform the role of good-name promoters of the Silesian University in the Czech Republic and in the world. Therefore, already during their studies, the SU will try to build in its students a sense of belonging to their alma mater, and will continue to strengthen this relationship even after they leave its gates.

As part of a modern and advanced society, contributing to its cultural and economic growth and taking responsibility for further sustainable development, the SU fulfils its mission together with other universities through three main groups of activities: scientific, research, development and innovation, artistic and other creative activities and direct social and professional activities.

## **Educational activities**

The Silesian University in Opava, as a higher education institution, stands at the top level of the educational system of the Czech Republic. This position transfers a considerable dose of responsibility to its academic staff, as they significantly influence the level of knowledge, skills and competences of SU students by their attitudes towards their own education process, thereby also helping to shape the students' attitudes to problems of the current dynamically evolving society. Educational activities at the Silesian University in Opava must therefore reflect modern trends and procedures which have been advocated for a long time in the framework of the actual teaching process. These forms of teaching then contribute to increasing the students' professional and specific knowledge and skills, developing their creativity, critical thinking, enhancing their other soft skills; and, last but not least, promote their need for a lifetime education.

Therefore, the basic principles in the development of educational activities over the next five-year period will be:

- providing an education that respects added value for every student, i.e. a set of knowledge, skills and competences that will lead to the development of student creativity and critical thinking, and thanks to which SU graduates will acquire a corresponding advantage on the domestic and foreign work markets;
- the use of modern educational methods to prepare graduates who will be able to respond to the challenges of the 21st century with the quality of their education.
- the building of a higher education institution open to both its internal and external environments and built on reflection of the possibilities and needs of its students;
- dissemination of information about the results of current scientific research and artistic activities.

## **Scientific, research, development, innovation, artistic and other creative activities**

The scientific, research, development, innovation and other creative activities of SU staff include a wide range of activities that are determined by the specificity of the fields carried out at the university and which include natural sciences, social sciences, economic, pedagogical and artistic disciplines. Creative activities at SU have long been aimed at gaining new knowledge, which not only have good renown and resonance with the professional public on a domestic and global scale, but also find their application in practice and thus contribute to better satisfaction of the needs of the whole society.

To carry out basic and applied research, development, innovation or artistic creation, the SU cooperates with a number of partners from practice, thereby deepening the process of two-way transformation of new knowledge between the applied and academic spheres.

A regular and transparent evaluation of its quality, including the use of quality indicators, is central to the development of scientific, research, development, innovation and other creative activities.

Therefore, the basic principles in the development of educational activities over the next five-year period will be:

- support of scientific and research activities in the fields of basic research, which at professional level will be comparable to the outputs of top Czech but also European and world-wide workplaces;
- promoting scientific, research, development, innovation and other creative activities, the outputs of which will have a general contribution to the development of knowledge, will be relevant to society, its culture and needs, with particular regard to the needs of the region;
- the use of scientific and research and creative methods and procedures which are fully in line with the procedures used in the 21st century;
- creating conditions for closer cooperation between the academic and applied spheres, both in the field of research and creative activities and in the field of education.

### **Direct social and professional activities**

The SU also responsibly approaches the fulfilment of the so-called the third role of higher education institutions, consisting in accepting responsibilities and tasks which are not directly related to its core educational and creative activities. Academics and students contribute to the dissemination of knowledge through their social activities, consolidate traditional values of Czech society and engage in an open, critical, cultured and professionally correct way in public events related to serious topics associated not only with the Moravian-Silesian region, but also with Central European area and with issues of global character. The potential of SU scientists and creative staff, who can contribute to a critical assessment of the causes and consequences of global problems and discuss whether the current development paradigm represents the only possible view of the current world, must also be harnessed.

Therefore, the basic principles in fulfilling the university's "third role" over the next five-year period will be:

- promoting direct social and professional work of university academics with a view to disseminating knowledge and values and engaging in an open, critical, cultured and professionally correct way in public events in the context of current domestic and global themes;
- creating the conditions for multidisciplinary cooperation between scientific and creative staff of the Silesian University in order to strengthen their critical thinking on global and human development issues;

- harnessing the potential of academics and SU students to make the university one of the major regional innovation centres.

## MISSION

By means of attractive study programmes, the SU ensures quality education in scientific, social, economic, pedagogical and artistic study programmes at bachelor's, Master's, follow-up Master's and doctoral degrees for students who come mainly from the Moravian-Silesian Region and adjacent regions. In the effectuation of these study programmes, the SU relies on the work of highly qualified and well-motivated academic and scientific staff, doctoral students and other university staff. SU focuses on quality scientific and research activities, the outputs of which are subsequently reflected in the improvement of its own pedagogical process, including the preparation of students in doctoral study programmes. The SU is a university involved in international cooperation and the preparation of international and European projects, both through international mobility of students, educators and researchers, and as a respected partner of a number of foreign academic and scientific institutions. An integral part of the SU mission is to contribute to the development of the region, particularly through close cooperation with private and public sector actors.

## STARTING POINT FOR LONG-TERM PROJECT

### **Educational activities**

The Silesian University in Opava, with less than 6,000 students, is one of the smaller public higher education institutions, as evidenced by its share of the total number of all university students in the Czech Republic, which slightly exceeds 2%. These students study at the university in 64 study programmes, 9 of which are offered at the doctoral degree. Students can also enrol in 9 English-language study programmes. The University also offers one international joint-degree programme, which is realized together with the University of Pavel Josef Šafárik in Košice. These study programmes are oriented to the field of natural sciences, social sciences, economic, pedagogical and artistic disciplines. The University involves 314 academic and scientific staff who work in three faculties and one higher education institute. The range of available study programmes is therefore quite wide and no significant expansion can be expected in this area in the future. Support in this area will thus be directed in particular to the development of programmes that have demonstrated their quality in the past and have led to an increase in the prestige of the Silesian University and those reflecting new needs and trends in the regional and national labour market, thereby contributing to increase the usability of graduates.

The university fully implements a three-step study structure, with almost 73% of all students enrolled in the bachelor type, the remaining 24% of students studying in the follow-up Master's type of study, and 3% of SU students are doctoral students. The proportion of students of the combined form of study, who make up less than 38% of all enrolled students, can be identified as significant. The SU will have to respond fairly flexibly in this area to the expected continued adverse development of the

population curve, from which it can be concluded that the number of secondary school graduates who will be adequately prepared for university education in the coming years will continue to decrease. For this reason, it will be necessary to focus on further deepening of the cooperation with secondary schools and, where appropriate, closer cooperation with primary schools, where pupils' interest in university studies can be "started" at a time when they are deciding where to continue with their education after primary school.

Doctoral study is an important element of the educational process, particularly its full-time form appearing to be an important base of future pedagogical, scientific and research staff of the SU. However, the declining interest of applicants in this form of study can be considered alarming, and is probably due to both its difficulty and the lack of doctoral scholarships, which in many cases are unable to provide internal doctoral candidates with an existential basis. The SU management therefore aims to pay more attention to doctoral study, including the preparation of new accreditation of doctoral study programmes in a foreign language, which will lead to further internationalisation of teaching at the SU. An integral part of the related activities is the development of links of teaching innovation to new scientific research results.

The SU has developed its digital learning environment, especially through the Moodle system, which has created a number of study courses for which separate study supports have been prepared. In this area, too, support for modern distance learning methods and the subsequent creation of open teaching materials, including new forms of education such as MOOC, will be a priority in the coming years.

As mentioned above, the emphasis on deepening the internationalisation of their educational activities is beginning to play an increasingly important role in the educational process at Czech universities. In this area, the SU has its reserves, especially in terms of the equilibrium of the number of departing and arriving mobility students. Support for internationalisation is necessarily associated with an increase in the level of language skills of both students of the Silesian University and its employees, especially in social and humanities fields. In the coming years, the SU will support study and teaching stays of its students and staff at foreign universities or research institutions, both on the basis of bilateral contacts and under the Erasmus+ programme.

The university carries out a total of 76 lifelong learning courses, almost half of which are offered within the University of the Third Age. The offer of lifelong learning courses at the SU will respond consistently to labour market requirements in the coming years. The development of the University of the Third Age as an important element of the expansion of activities of older people, as well as other forms of fulfilment of the role of the university in the field of direct professional and social activities, will also remain a priority.

SU students are motivated to a higher level of activity through both scholarships and through special scholarship programmes of the rector, which also support those areas of student activities that have a close relationship to the third role of universities.

The SU has not yet fully harnessed the potential of its graduates and, despite several attempts to establish closer ties, still lacks a systematic approach in this area, leaving room for development on both sides. The SU wants to strengthen relations with graduates over the next five years, in particular through activities in the fields of education, culture, sport and strengthening feedback.

### **Scientific, research, development, innovation, artistic and other creative activities**

The SU is a modern and open scientific and research institution that is fully competitive not only in Central European area, but also, in certain selected fields, at the world level. Its scientific, research, development and innovation activities are directed towards both basic and applied research. A notable part of the creative activity of the SU is also artistic activity in which art-oriented institutes are one of the most important workplaces in both the Czech Republic and Central Europe. However, the level of artistic and other creative activities at SU has room for development. For this reason, the university's management, in close cooperation with the management of individual faculties and institutes, will support, above all, the development of those scientific and artistic fields that have demonstrated their quality in the past and led to an increase in the prestige of the university. At the same time, however, it will also pay particular attention to the development of fields that reflect new trends in their research and have the potential to achieve European or world standards, as well as fields that focus on applied research and respond to current needs of the practice sphere and the region.

An important element that influences the quality of scientific and research and artistic creative activities is the structure of research teams that operate in individual fields. Here we can say that there are also research groups at the SU, in addition to teams that have been stabilised for a long time, both in terms of their qualification and age structure, whose structure is gradually forming. When creating these teams, we quite often encounter problems related to the lack of funding, which would allow foreign scientists, researchers and young scientific forces to be more involved in this area. It seems necessary for the SU to pay increased attention to the completion of the existing structure of scientific and research and artistic teams in the coming years, with the main emphasis on financial and personnel needs.

The amount of funds spent on Science and Research at the SU has long been at 15%. In this area, too, it will be a priority for the management of the SU and the management of individual constituents to motivate academic staff to raise funds for scientific and creative activities in the coming years, both by increasing the university's share of the overall volume of institutional funds allocated to higher education institutions on the basis of the results achieved and through the acquisition of domestic and foreign grant funds.

As in the case of the educational process, science, research, development and innovation have come to increasingly depend in recent years on the involvement of scientific workplaces and research teams in international structures. Although many institutes, departments and research centres of the SU have long cooperated with a number of prestigious workplaces in Europe and the world, the volume of this cooperation does not always fully correspond to its level at comparable Czech public universities. In this area, too, the SU has reserves which it will seek to remove in the coming years. The main shortcoming remains, above all, the low involvement of research teams in international infrastructures and the low amount of science and research funding obtained from foreign sources.

### **Direct professional and social activities**

The SU is well aware of the importance of its third role in the current society. For this reason, it has established cooperation with a number of Czech universities, institutes of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and, last but not least, with regional and national institutions active in the field of public administration. This cooperation intends to further strengthen the SU and thus increase the scope of its direct professional and social activities.

Although the university is one of the smaller Czech universities, it does not give up its share of the formation of domestic educational and scientific and research policy. Both the university's and its constituents' management and individual academics have expressed their professional position on a wide range of draft laws and implementing regulations. Nor did the SU avoid the debate on how to evaluate educational, scientific, research and creative activities. The SU intends to continue in this commitment, without preventing the professional views of members of the academia from being heard not only in areas directly related to the school system in the Czech Republic, but also in areas affected only by the school system marginally, or not at all.

Within the university, conditions are gradually being created for multidisciplinary cooperation of its scientific and creative staff. In particular, these steps aim to strengthen their critical thinking on global challenges and general human development issues, as well as to use their potential to make the SU one of the major regional innovation centres.

Although the SU has become an integral part of the Moravian-Silesian region in the twenty-five years of its existence, if it wants to continue to be seen as an institution that is attractive to students and academics, business entities or institutions of public administration, it must not forget its external presentation, which must show significant changes, particularly in the field of internet presentation, the use of new media and the consistent unification of the visual style of the university. Similarly, successful cooperation with both public national media such as Czech Television and Czech Radio and regional media, which are the main creators of the university's media image in the eyes of the public, must be established. In the next five years, the SU will continue to work to strengthen its reputation not only in the North Moravian and Silesian region and throughout the Czech Republic, but also in the countries of our immediate neighbourhood, i.e. Slovakia and Poland.

### **Process management**

Since its establishment, the Silesian University of Opava has been built on the principles of strong higher education autonomy, in which academic self-government, impersonated by individual academic chambers operating both at the level of the university and the level of its individual components, plays an important role. Other important elements that contribute to the smooth running of the university include the Rector's Council, whose members include representatives of academic self-government and representatives of individual constituents and important university-wide workplaces. In the coming years, the university's management will openly inform representatives of the academic and non-academic community who operate in these bodies about the individual steps that will be implemented at the university's management level, or continue to discuss these steps with them.

Approximately 600 employees currently work at the SU, more than half of whom are academics. The SU will not be able to stand in the current dynamically evolving world if these employees do not achieve a high degree of expertise, a responsible approach to their work duties and a significant work commitment. For these employees to be motivated to remain at the SU, it is necessary to seek further improvement to their working, social and wage conditions in the coming years, including the consistent implementation of instruments such as career rules, the remuneration incentive principles system, or transparent principles of human resources management. The creation of a system of postdoctoral posts must also be considered essential.

A critical point of process management at SU is the absence of a single internal quality assessment system, both at the level of educational activity and at the level of scientific and artistic activity, internationalisation or the third role of the university. One of the key tasks for the next five-year period will therefore be the introduction of a single internal quality assessment system, capable of respecting the specificities of the various fields of educational and creative activities carried out at the SU, while reflecting the requirements of the upcoming amendments to the Higher Education Act. We must build on the tradition of student assessments of teaching, which are an important tool for ex-post evaluation of the quality of our own educational process.

Although the SU has long achieved a positive economic result, it must be noted that particularly in recent years, there has been a need to respond very flexibly to almost regular changes in the way public higher education institutions are funded, which tend to have a rather heavy impact on regional higher education institutions. Although the university's economic situation has remained relatively stable in spite of these interventions, and even in the coming years it might not be significantly deteriorated, it is necessary, in view of possible future developments, to develop a methodology for monitoring the financial profitability in each area and to develop incentive policies for raising external funds.

At present, a system of distribution of funds to individual constituents and institutes is gradually being developed. Simultaneously with the finalisation of this system, the issue of rapid and systemic

emergency response which individual constituents can encounter in each fiscal year, arises. The SU therefore expects that it will continue to complete the system of distribution of funds, while also considering the possibility of creating appropriate measures to address extraordinary and undue economic problems of the individual constituents.

In terms of fundraising, the SU also considers the resources it can acquire under the third programming period of the European Structural and Investment Funds, announced for the years 2014 to 2020, as very important. In view of the fact that under the second programming period the SU managed to obtain financial resources totalling approximately 400 million EUR, it is necessary in the new programming period to strive for the maximum use of these possibilities for further development of the SU.

The SU is also the owner of a number of properties that have been used in the past for both teaching and research purposes and for the accommodation of university students. As the policy of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic in the field of public higher education funding gradually adapts to the decline in the demographic curve, some of these buildings have become unnecessary for the SU and represent a significant financial burden for the university. The SU will therefore focus in the coming years on assessing the efficiency of the use of existing buildings, correcting deficiencies in their use and the possible divestment of those properties that are an intolerable burden on the university.

## SWOT analysis

Based on the above assessment of the SU's Long-term Project, the following strengths and weaknesses of the university, its opportunities and potential threats have been identified. This SWOT analysis has become the basis for defining the different priority strategic areas, follow-up strategic objectives and, consequently, the measures that will lead to their achievement.

STRENGTHS:	WEAKNESSES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• achieving a full cycle of undergraduate studies in most study programmes</li><li>• existence of quality research centres and institutes at all faculties of the SU</li><li>• good and constantly evolving interpersonal relations between representatives of individual constituents, public administration and business sector</li><li>• tradition of long-term evaluation of the quality of the educational process by SU students</li><li>• above-standard relations of academic and scientific staff with a wide range of foreign higher education institutions</li><li>• existence of incentive systems for academics supporting their publishing and scientific research</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• lack of public awareness of the educational and scientific and research processes at the SU</li><li>• lack of cooperation with foreign institutions in the field of science and research in a number of fields</li><li>• lack of strategy of cooperation with the applied sphere</li><li>• absence of a single internal quality assessment system</li><li>• existence of only one international joint-degree programme</li><li>• relatively small number of teachers in the age category 40 to 50 years</li><li>• low average economic performance coefficient for some university constituents</li></ul>

<p>activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• long-term stability of material technical base</li> <li>• existence of study programmes focused on the field of audiovisual creation and multimedia techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• absence of a comprehensive long-term marketing strategy</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• untapped potential offered by international joint-degree and double-degree programs and offers of study to foreign students</li> <li>• willingness of external domestic and foreign entities to cooperate with SU workplaces on science and research projects</li> <li>• position of the SU as the only public higher education institution operating in the historical territory of Silesia</li> <li>• harnessing the potential of university graduates in assessing the quality of the educational process</li> <li>• establishing cooperation with universities and scientific workplaces in economic centres (USA, China) and countries whose citizens show an eminent interest in studying in EU countries</li> <li>• offer of the possibility of rapid personal and professional growth for new university staff compared to long-established public higher education institutions</li> <li>• existence of European Union-funded projects (Horizon 2020, Operational Programmes)</li> <li>• untapped potential of SU graduates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• outflow of young educators and researchers from the public higher education system due to poor financial evaluation</li> <li>• increasing quality of outputs in the field of science and research at the main competitors of the Silesian University</li> <li>• location of the university in the region, which seems to be less attractive to both students living outside the Moravian-Silesian Region and potential students from abroad</li> <li>• poor setting of criteria for assessing the quality of educational and creative activities</li> <li>• decrease of interest in cooperation with SU research teams by world capacities in the field of science and research</li> <li>• financial possibilities of private higher education institutions operating in the region in relation to the wage evaluation of associate professors and professors</li> <li>• procrastination of innovation of the rules of financing public higher education institutions by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic</li> <li>• reluctance of the constituents and their workplaces to adopt a unified visual style of the university and to identify with the university's long-term marketing strategy</li> </ul>

## STRATEGIC AREAS

Based on the Mission, the starting points of SU's long-term project and the SWOT analysis carried out, the following priority strategic areas can be defined for the period 2016 to 2020:

- priority strategic area 1: education,
- priority strategic area 2: science, research and creative activities,
- priority strategic area 3: relations with the external environment,
- priority strategic area 4: quality,
- priority strategic area 5: internationalisation,
- priority strategic area 6: human resources,
- priority strategic area 7: management,
- priority strategic area 8: image.

## VISION

The SU is a modern and open educational institution fully competitive in the higher education market in the Central European area. A university providing its students with professionally oriented study programmes strongly connected to the region of Northern Moravia and Silesia, which are supplemented in the subsequent Master's and doctoral degrees with study programmes providing purely academic education, enabling their graduates to find employment on a global scale. SU also fulfils its societal role in education by offering study programmes in the field of lifelong learning and the University of the Third Age. SU is an institution that enables its students to gain deeper practical experience, resulting from their wider involvement in professional experience, international activities and the realisation of its own scientific and research, development, innovation, artistic and creative activities, in highly stimulating academic environment. SU supports the transition of higher education from a quantitative-based approach to an approach in which the quality of graduates and their readiness to find adequate application in the domestic and foreign labour market play a decisive role.

## **PRIORITY STRATEGIC AREAS OF THE LONG-TERM PROJECT**

SU has formulated its vision for 2016 to 2020 based on a detailed baseline analysis, definition of its mission and swot analysis, and identified eight priority strategic areas to achieve this vision. Within the different priority strategic areas, the SU has subsequently set its strategic objectives, which represent the desired state it intends to achieve by 2020 through the proposed measures. The level of achievement of these objectives can be verified using indicators which are also part of the various priority strategic areas.

### **Priority Strategic Area 1: Education**

#### **Strategic objective**

**Ensure quality education of students at all levels of higher education with an emphasis on the development of both professionally oriented study programmes reflecting labour market requirements and academically focused study programmes, which are supported by quality scientific, research and artistic activities.**

The Silesian University in Opava will be an attractive place to study, sought by both domestic and foreign applicants. Within the educational field, the SU will be profiled as an educational institution that focuses on both professionally oriented study programmes and the implementation of those academically oriented study fields which are supported by quality science and research or valuable artistic outputs. In supporting the study programmes, there will also be a considerable emphasis on the more dynamic development of doctoral studies and finding its international overlap. The university will also not neglect the development of lifelong learning and fulfil its role in actively involving seniors in the educational process within the concept of the University of the Third Age. In achieving this strategic objective, emphasis will also be placed on the use of modern methods and technologies. The quality of the educational process will then be ensured by the newly built system of evaluation of the quality of the educational process.

#### **Measures**

In order to successfully implement the above strategic objective, it is necessary that the following measures be taken at the Silesian University in Opava during the years 2016-2020:

- Creation of the concept of and ensuring optimal development of study programmes and fields in terms of content, staffing and accreditation management depending on the development of legislation.
- Creation and innovation of study programmes using methods of describing the learning process through learning outcomes and developing language and other transferable competences.
- Innovation of selected, especially professional, fields of study, depending on the requirements of the business community and societal needs.

- Creation and implementation of a system of regular comprehensive evaluation of the quality of educational activity, which will ensure, among other things, compliance with the legal condition for obtaining institutional accreditation under the amendment of the Higher Education Act.
- Improving the communication system and getting feedback from graduates on the content of the study and its reflection in the creation and update of study programmes.
- Involvement of students in the activities of practical, scientific and creative centres of the university.
- Systematic monitoring of the success of studies and measures to reduce student decline, focusing in particular on first years of bachelor's degree.
- Promoting individual approach to students and promoting modern pedagogical methods (student-oriented teaching, so-called learner-centred approach, appropriate use of information and communication technologies, etc.).
- Promoting lifelong learning as an integral part of the activities of a tertiary education institution and developing the University of the Third Age programme.
- Development of digital learning environment and learning materials in electronic form for both combined and full-time study, support of modern methods of distance learning and creation of open learning materials (including MOOC).
- Emphasis on high quality of higher education qualification theses (thematically oriented on the research focus of individual constituents, requirements of the public sector and business environment).
- Development of services to applicants and students in areas such as direct support, counselling, digitalisation of study materials, teaching, etc., with the aim to remove barriers to access to education for disadvantaged groups of students.
- Reflection of the needs, interests and possibilities of exceptionally gifted students as part of the educational offer.
- Continuous innovation of scientifically oriented study programmes following the results of scientific research.

### **Indicators**

The following indicators will be used within the Silesian University in 2016-2020 to monitor the achievement of the strategic objective:

- Concept of optimal development of study programmes and fields.
- Number of innovated fields of study.
- System of communication with graduates and getting feedback.
- A system of regular testing of the quality of educational activities, evaluation of results and use of these outputs to support the management of teaching and related activities.
- Implementation of the concept to reduce the decline in the number of students, monitoring the ratio between the number of enrolled students in the first year and the number of students continuing to study in the second year.
- Number of U3V lecture cycles U3V and CŽV courses.
- Number of open learning materials (MOOC).

- Number of students involved in the activities of practical, scientific and creative centres of the university.
- Number of supported persons with specific educational needs.
- Rector's scholarship programme for exceptionally gifted students.
- Number of students affected by innovations in study programmes following the results of scientific research.

## **Priority Strategic Area 2: Science, research and creative activities**

### **Strategic objective**

**To strengthen and develop the position of the Silesian University in Opava as a recognized centre of quality scientific research, artistic and other creative activities, both at regional and national level, as well as at European and global level.**

The Silesian University in Opava will focus on further development of basic and applied research, with emphasis on cooperation with the practical sphere in relevant fields. As part of its development, it will also pay attention to creative artistic activities. Its aim is to further develop the concept and organization of scientific and research activities, systematization of quality assurance of creative activities, especially within research centres, their internationalization, strengthening of personnel security and their effective financing. It will continue to support both fields that have achieved quality results in the past and thus increase the prestige of the SU and prospective new areas in which future dynamic development can be expected. For the implementation of its scientific and research, artistic and other creative activities, SU will build the necessary infrastructure and use the most up-to-date methods and technologies. It will also support continuous innovation of teaching based on the outputs of research centres.

### **Measures**

In order to successfully implement the above strategic objective, it is necessary that the following measures be taken at the Silesian University in Opava during the years 2016-2020:

- Development of quality basic and applied research or creative artistic activities in all existing research and creative centres and institutes, and increase of their creative performance.
- Updating the medium-term concept of scientific research activities at the individual constituents of the SU.
- Support of the involvement of Master and doctoral students in scientific and creative activities.
- Invocation and development of a system of motivational tools to involve employees in publishing activities, especially in impacted or professionally recognized journals, and in the creation of artistic outputs, at university-wide or constituent level.
- Creating conditions for the qualification growth of core employees, in particular for their habilitation and naming procedures, including, where appropriate, the provision of the necessary creative sabbatical.

- Expansion and improvement of the spectrum of peer-reviewed foreign-language periodicals issued by the University and an increase in the number of such periodicals incorporated into international databases.
- Development of cooperation with external partners in order to increase the relevance of research to the needs of the application sphere, business entities and the public sector.
- Creating the conditions for successful participation in EU operational programmes for 2014-2020 in areas of improvement, internationalisation and dissemination of the results of scientific research activities, and the building, maintenance and modernisation of infrastructure for this activity.

### **Indicators**

The following indicators will be used within the Silesian University in 2016-2020 to monitor the achievement of the strategic objective:

- The results of the evaluation of the university's creative activities and those of its constituents and workplaces, particularly of its research and artistic creative centres, according to the valid methodology of evaluation of research organisations or evaluation of artistic outputs.
- **Medium-term concept of scientific and research activities of individual constituents**
- Proportion of publications whose (co)authors are master or doctoral students or recent graduates (up to 2 years after Ph.D.).
- Number and proportion of master or doctoral students involved in projects within the framework of specific higher education research (Student Grant Competition).
- Motivational system for promoting publishing activities, especially in impact or field-recognised journals, and the creation of artistic outputs, at university-wide or constituent level.
- Proportion of the university's core staff with a scientific degree.
- Tools to support the habilitation and naming procedure of core staff.
- Number of newly published professional reviewed periodicals in English.
- Number of periodicals issued regularly by the university registered in the ERIH+ and Scopus databases.
- Share and volume of contract research, in particular of interdisciplinary research in the field of small and medium-sized enterprises and applied social research.
- Acquired OP VVV, projects or projects of other EU subsidy programmes.

## **Priority Strategic Area 3: Relations to external environment**

### **Strategic objective**

**To strengthen and develop relations of the Silesian University in Opava with external entities, both in the academic sphere, as well as in the business sector and public administration, while not neglecting the links with the SU alumni.**

The Silesian University in Opava will be a place open to wide cooperation both in the field of academia and in the field of public administration and business sector. The University will strive to

increase its attractiveness for cooperation for both business entities and public administration entities operating not only in the North Moravian and Silesian region, but also throughout the Czech Republic. The university will also not forget to communicate with its graduates and supporters, who should, together with students and academic and non-academic staff, form a unified community of the Silesian University.

### **Measures**

In order to successfully implement the above strategic objective, it is necessary that the following measures be taken at the Silesian University in Opava during the years 2016-2020:

- Promoting cooperation with academic and public sphere.
- Support of cooperation with companies of the business and non-profit sector.
- Creation of a comprehensive database of cooperating entities.
- Creation and support of specialised workplaces aimed at cooperation with external subjects.
- Support of cooperation in the field of seminar, bachelor, master's and doctoral and habilitation theses in cooperation with external entities.
- Preparation and implementation of projects in cooperation with other academic institutions.
- Preparation and implementation of projects in cooperation with external entities outside the academic sphere.
- Promoting communication with the public regarding the university's activities.
- Support of cooperation with graduates.
- Promoting the popularization of scientific and artistic results.

### **Indicators**

The following indicators will be used within the Silesian University in 2016-2020 to monitor the achievement of the strategic objective:

- Number of cooperating entities.
- Number of specialized workplaces created and supported.
- Number of final theses prepared in cooperation with external bodies.
- Number of prepared and launched projects in cooperation with other academic institutions.
- Number of prepared and launched projects in cooperation with external entities outside the academic sphere.
- Number of contracts.
- Number of events and publishing and media outputs aimed at communicating with the public in the area of the university's activities.
- Number of cooperating graduates.
- Number of outputs (events, publications, lectures, etc.) in the context of popularization of scientific and artistic results.

### **Strategic objective**

**To ensure a reliable, functioning and, in particular, transparent quality assessment system in all areas of activity of the Silesian University.**

A system will be established at the Silesian University in Opava to ensure and evaluate the quality of activities carried out by the university, in accordance with the expected legislative changes and required standards for accreditation of study programmes and for institutional accreditation. In preparation and development of a unified internal quality assessment system, both in the field of educational activities and in the field of scientific and artistic activities, internationalisation or the third role of the university, emphasis will be placed on an objective and transparent evaluation of the achieved outputs, taking into account the specificities of the individual disciplines.

### **Measures**

In order to successfully implement the above strategic objective, it is necessary that the following measures be taken at the Silesian University in Opava during the years 2016-2020:

- Implementation of a university-wide accepted and transparent system of evaluation of the quality of educational and creative activities, taking into account the specificities of individual disciplines.
- Creating a mechanism for continuous evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of support activities.
- Ensuring consistent projection of the results of all evaluations into the functioning of the university.
- Introduction of measures for the continuous recording of the results of creative activities as a support tool for the implementation of evaluations.
- Creation of mechanisms to ensure objectivity and control of internal evaluation.
- Setting up and codification of intra-university processes to monitor compliance with standards for accreditation of study programmes.
- Consistent use of feedback from students, graduates and employers in the evaluation of educational activities.

### **Indicators**

The following indicators will be used within the Silesian University in 2016-2020 to monitor the achievement of the strategic objective:

- System of quality assurance and evaluation of educational and creative activities according to applicable legislation and the needs of the accreditation process.
- Internal standards for evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of support activities, at university-wide level or at constituent level.
- Internal regulations or standards, or a revision of existing internal standards and regulations, ensuring consistent projection of the results of all evaluations into the functioning of the university and setting up processes to ensure objectivity and control of internal evaluation.
- Measures for the continuous recording of results of creative activities or other data necessary for the quality of the evaluation.

- A system for evaluating educational activities by students, graduates and employers.
- Setting up processes for continuous monitoring and evaluation of compliance with standards for accreditation of study programmes.

## **Priority Strategic Area 5: Internationalization**

### **Strategic objective**

**To strengthen the international dimension of educational, scientific and creative activities and academic environment at the university.**

The Silesian University in Opava will be an open university institution, seeking to increase its attractiveness to foreign students, educators and scientific researchers, including taking into account these steps in the preparation and implementation of study programmes. It will continue to strive to maintain and expand the international character of its educational, scientific and creative artistic activities, including direct cooperation with foreign universities, research institutes and business entities and institutions of public administration. It will support the involvement of individual training and research teams in international scientific networks and international projects.

### **Measures**

In order to successfully implement the above strategic objective, it is necessary that the following measures be taken at the Silesian University in Opava during the years 2016-2020:

- Expansion of the offer of subjects taught in a foreign language for both domestic and exchange students.
- Expansion of the number of study programmes accredited in a foreign language, with an emphasis on doctoral study programmes.
- Increase in the number of foreign scientific and academic staff employed at SU.
- Support of short-term and long-term hosting of foreign academics at SU and domestic academic and scientific staff at foreign institutions.
- Systematic use of the possibilities of obtaining quality students and educators from outside the EU.
- Increase in the number of foreign students enrolled in study programmes at the university.
- Expansion of international scientific cooperation and international cooperation in the field of creative artistic activities by participating in international scientific networks and international projects.
- Motivation to receive foreign scientific grants.
- Support for the development of existing and other joint- and double-degree programmes with partner universities abroad.

- Reflection of study stays abroad in study plans, which will enable to ensure to the maximum extent that credits obtained under mobility are recognized as replacement of subjects from the study plan at the SU.
- Support for international student mobility.
- Improvement of the language skills of academic, scientific and administrative staff.
- Consistent use of the possibilities of cross-border cooperation.
- Creation of at least one position of pedagogical or scientific worker regularly occupied by internationally open competition at each constituent.
- Improving the conditions for integration of international students and educators at the SU.

### **Indicators**

The following indicators will be used within the Silesian University in 2016-2020 to monitor the achievement of the strategic objective:

- Number of subjects taught in a foreign language for both domestic and exchange students.
- Proportion of study programmes in which at least one subject is offered in a foreign language.
- Number of study programmes accredited in a foreign language.
- Scholarship programme for international students.
- Number of foreign scientific and academic staff employed at the SU.
- Number of visiting foreign academics and scientists at the SU.
- Number of academic and scientific staff of the SU temporarily visiting institutions abroad.
- Proportion of publications of foreign workers and publications with foreign co-authors in the total number of publications of core SU employees.
- Number of formally or informally cooperating foreign institutions.
- Number of international projects in which the university is involved.
- Number of international grants received.
- Number of implemented joint- and double-degree programmes or joint training (cotutelle).
- Percentage of bachelor and master's graduates who have been sent for a study stay or internship abroad lasting for at least 14 days.
- Measures defining the mechanism for replacing subjects acquired under mobility for completing subjects from the study plan at the SU.
- Proportion of credits imported from student mobilities that have been recognised as a substitute for the student's home study plan subjects.
- Number of foreign partners and projects focused on cross-border cooperation.
- Number of jobs regularly occupied by internationally open competitions.

## **Priority Strategic Area 6: Human resources**

### **Strategic objective**

**To develop human resources with an emphasis on the growth of their qualification structure and strengthening their professional skills, and to consolidate the association of academic and non-academic staff with the Silesian University as a whole.**

The Silesian University in Opava will be an open higher education institution characterized by a high degree of belonging among its employees. The university will provide decent conditions for all staff and a targeted social policy will be used to achieve this. The university will systematically support its staff, help their personal and professional growth and appreciate their results. The management of the university and its components will be open to different opinion streams and activities that are in line with the basic principles on which the Czech public higher education is based. Within the academic self-government, the university will apply the elements of strategic management accordingly.

### **Measures**

In order to successfully implement the above strategic objective, it is necessary that the following measures be taken at the Silesian University in Opava during the years 2016-2020:

- Creation and implementation of career rules as a transparent tool for human resources management, career progression rules and the selection and classification of scientific and academic staff.
- Creation and application of incentive remuneration policies supporting the development of scientific and research work.
- Creation and support of the system of establishment of postdoctoral posts.
- Establishing transparent and generally accepted human resources management principles.
- Improving the qualification structure and professional skills of employees and enhancing their working environment.
- Increase in the proportion of associate professors and professors in the total number of academics.

### **Indicators**

The following indicators will be used within the Silesian University in 2016-2020 to monitor the achievement of the strategic objective:

- Internal standard focused on the career rules.
- Internal standard focused on incentive remuneration policies.
- Internal standard aimed at promoting the establishment of postdoctoral posts.
- Internal standard focused on the principles of human resources management.
- Number of actions carried out to increase the professional skills of employees.
- Number of associate professors and professors.

### **Strategic objective**

**To achieve long-term economic stability of the Silesian University in Opava based on both the principle of streamlining economic processes and on raising funds that are not directly tied to the contribution to educational activities.**

The Silesian University in Opava will be an economically stable institution. To achieve this, the university will continue to streamline economic processes. The management of the university and its constituents will make every effort to achieve greater diversification of resources, which will ensure greater independence of the university from the state budget and public resources as such. The rules for the distribution of funds to individual parts of the university will be further improved within the internal distribution system while maintaining a maximum degree of objectivity. Last but not least, the university will support further development of infrastructure and communication technologies.

### **Measures**

In order to successfully implement the above strategic objective, it is necessary that the following measures be taken at the Silesian University in Opava during the years 2016-2020:

- Establishment and implementation of a system for monitoring the financial profitability of individual study programmes and disciplines in relation to teaching and operational capacities, economic performance coefficient, number of students and employment of graduates.
- Establishment and implementation of a system for monitoring the financial profitability of individual departments, institutes and other workplaces in relation to the educational, scientific-research and creative activities of the workplace.
- Improvement of rules for the distribution of funds to individual parts of the university while maintaining a maximum degree of objectivity.
- Introduction of measures to address extraordinary economic problems of individual constituents.
- Systematic motivation of employees to raise funds from external sources, particularly projects and special purpose sources.
- Creation and implementation of a system for monitoring the efficient use of operational and teaching capacities.
- Continuous expansion and modernisation of the infrastructure for educational, scientific and service activities, particularly information and communication technologies, library and archive services, including online resources.

### **Indicators**

The following indicators will be used within the Silesian University in 2016-2020 to monitor the achievement of the strategic objective:

- Methodologies for monitoring financial profitability.
- System of distribution of funds among constituents, draft measures to solve extraordinary economic problems.
- Internal standard focused on incentive principles for raising external funds.
- Infrastructure modernisation and development plan, including information and communication technologies, library and archive services and online resources.

## Priority Strategic Area 8: Image

### Strategic objective

**Building the image of the Silesian University in Opava as a successful modern educational and scientific research institution, which plays an important role in the region of Northern Moravia and Silesia and also has a significant national and international reach.**

The Silesian University in Opava will be understood as one of the institutions that are significantly involved in the shaping of domestic educational and scientific-research policy. The university will be characterized by open communication both inwards and towards its surroundings, which will in turn create positive awareness of it both with the professional and lay public. The SU will be an institution attractive to students and academics, business entities or public administration institutions. Significant changes will be made to its internet presentation, new media will be used and the visual style of the university will be unified. The university will build on successful cooperation with both national and regional media, which are the main creators of the university's media image in the eyes of the public. It will continue to work to strengthen its reputation not only in the North Moravian and Silesian region and throughout the Czech Republic, but also in the countries of our immediate neighbourhood, i.e. Slovakia and Poland.

### Measures

In order to successfully implement the above strategic objective, it is necessary that the following measures be taken at the Silesian University in Opava during the years 2016-2020:

- Creation and subsequent implementation of a long-term marketing strategy based on modern public relations trends.
- Building a university-wide working group to actively address public relations issues.
- Increasing the effectiveness of promotional and information campaigns carried out by both the Silesian University and its individual constituents.
- Unification of the visual style of the Silesian University based on the completion of the SU's graphic manual.
- Active performance of university academics in regional and national media.
- Strengthening communication with graduates of the Silesian University through the Graduate Portal.

### Indicators

The following indicators will be used within the Silesian University in 2016-2020 to monitor the achievement of the strategic objective:

- Marketing strategy of the Silesian University.
- University-wide working PR group.

- Analysis of the effectiveness of the SU-made promotional and information campaign in the given years.
- Graphic manual of the Silesian University.
- Number of appearances of academics in the media.
- Graduate portal.

## CONCLUSION

LTP of the SU is the result of a consensus of all constituents of the SU in Opava. It was discussed at the Rector's Council on 29. 9. 2015, by the Board of Directors of SU in Opava on 19. 10. 2015., Scientific Council of the SU on 6. 10. 2015 and approved by the Academic Senate of the SU in Opava on 13. 10. 2015.

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