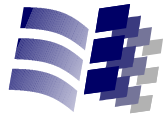**MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION**

**UNIVERSITATEA**
**Petru Maior**
**T Â R G U - M U R E Ş**

**1, Nicolae Iorga street, Tîrgu-Mureş - 540088, ROMANIA**
Rector: Tel./Fax: 004 0265 – 262275
Didactic Vice Rector: Tel./Fax: 004 0265 – 215958;
Scientific Vice Rector: Tel./Fax: 004 0265 – 211838
**www.upm.ro**

# "Petru Maior" University of Tîrgu-Mureş

# SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

## November 2013

## LIST OF APPENDIX

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

**UPM** - "Petru Maior" University of Tirgu-Mures
**SEG** - Self-Evaluation Group
**IEP –** Institutional Evaluation Programme
**MEN** - Ministry of National Education
**EUA** - European University Association
**ENQA -** European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
**ARACIS** - The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
**ANCS** - National Authority for Scientific Research
**HE** - Higher Education
**PTEC** - Part Time Education Centre
**TTD** - Teacher Training Department
**CCE** - Centre for Continuous Education
**QMC** - Quality Management Centre
**CCGC** - Counselling and Career Guidance Centre
**PRPEOC** - Public Relations and Promotion of Educational Opportunities Compartment
**RIGRPFMC** - Research-Innovation-Grants and Research Projects Funding Management Centre
**QMS –** Quality Management System
**QAEC** - Quality Assurance and Evaluation Committees
**ECTS** - European Credit Transfer System

# INTRODUCTION

The international evaluation of "Petru Maior" University of Tîrgu-Mureş, hereinafter referred to as UPM, through the Institutional Evaluation Programme of the European University Association (EUA), is performed according to the University Administrative Council Decision of 19.11.2012, within the framework of the POSDRU project entitled *Ready to innovate, better prepared to respond to local needs. Quality and diversity in universities of Romania, developed at national level.*

The present Self-Evaluation Report is the result of the process that took place within the institution under the coordination of the self-evaluation group (SEG), assigned by the Rector's Decision of June 14, 2013, following the validation by the University Senate on June 12, 2013. The SEG consists of 10 members:

1.  Prof. dr. eng. Liviu Moldovan - Vice-Rector for Scientific Research and International Relations, Quality Evaluation coordinator and contact person for the IEP evaluation team;
2.  Prof. dr. Tatiana Dănescu, Vice-Rector for Didactic Activities;
3.  Assoc. Prof. dr. eng. Mircea Dulău, Director of the Quality Assurance Office, IEP secretariat;
4.  Prof. dr. eng. Alexandru Morar -  Quality Assurance responsible within the Faculty of Engineering;
5.  Lector dr.  Giordano Altarozzi  - Quality Assurance  responsible within the Faculty of Sciences and Letters;
6.  Assoc. Prof. dr. Szabo Zsuzsana -  Quality Assurance responsible within the Faculty of Economics, Law and Administrative Sciences;
7.  Eng. Radu Boarescu, General Administrative Director;
8.  Irina Birsan,  Quality Assurance responsible within the University registrar;
9.  Sâncelean Andreea, PhD candidate,  graduate student of the Faculty of Sciences and Letters, member of the Student league;
10. Nicolae-Marius Culda, student of the Faculty of Engineering, president of the Students League – the students' representative in the Senate.

For the data collection supporting the self-evaluation report, SEG collaborated with all the institutional structures involved: rector's and vice-rectors' offices, secretarial offices, faculties, administrative and support structures and services. The data were further analysed by SEG, with prior consultation of those responsible for the specific processes.

The SEG met on a weekly basis between October and December 2013, according to a previously arranged schedule. The elaboration of the self-evaluation report was carried out according to the following methodology: (1) a draft of each section was written by a small group from the SEG; (2) a discussion of the proposed text was held with the whole group; (3) changes were operated to the draft; (4) SEG organised information and consultation meetings on different topics and at different levels: faculty/department management structures - to analyse the academic management and quality assurance/quality evaluation processes; students and representatives of academic staff - for the self-assessment of the educational process; representatives of the scientific research council, research centres and doctoral school - for the self-assessment of the research process; representatives of administrative and technical staff - for the university's support services. The participants were invited to disseminate the information within the group they represented and to formulate feedback on the issues discussed; (5) the collected inputs have allowed the final formulation of the self-evaluation report; (6) the validation of the final version by the SEG was performed.

The institutional leadership strongly supported the whole process by outlining the aim and the responsibility of the SEG towards the entire university community. Consequently, the work of the self-evaluation group was supported by all institutional structures. The SEG also benefited from the fact that self-evaluation reports have been elaborated every year since 2007 according to ARACIS requirements. In 2009 UPM underwent an institutional evaluation performed by ARACIS, the evaluation period being 2005-2009. The executive summary of the ARACIS external institutional evaluation is presented in *appendix 2.4*, and the foreign evaluator report is presented in *appendix 2.5*. Following this evaluation UPM was granted the maximum rating, namely "**high confidence**" (*appendix 2.6*).

The transparency of the ongoing international evaluation process is ensured by public information available on the university website.

As a positive aspect of the self-evaluation exercise, there was a general positive feeling about the opportunity of discussing quality issues in UPM as well as of consolidating a reflection group on these matters. Due of the time constraints, the involvement of large groups of UPM staff members was limited. Time constraints for a wider discussion, as well as the difficulty to involve and integrate large groups of UPM staff members with the same degree of motivation could be pointed out as negative aspects of the process.

# INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

## Historical overview

UPM acquired its current name following the Government Decision 676/1996. It was founded in the year 1960 by the Ministry of Education and Culture under the name of Pedagogical Institute of Tîrgu-Mureş and with a constant activity under different names and structures of higher education (see Table 1) "Petru Maior" University now celebrates 53 years of existence.

**Table 1.** *Stages of UPM evolution*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1960 | Foundation of the Pedagogical Institute of 3 years (*Order of the Ministry of Education and Culture no. 3243/1960*) |
| 1977 | Institute of Higher Education of Tirgu-Mures  (*Decree of the Council of State no. 209/1977*) |
| 1984 | Institute of College Engineers of Tirgu-Mures, subordinated to the Polytechnic Institute of Cluj Napoca (*Decree of the Council of State no. 213/1984*) |
| 1990 | Institute of Higher Education of Tîrgu-Mureş  (*Order of the Ministry of Education and Science no.7751/1990*) |
| 1991 | Technical University of Tîrgu-Mureş (*Order of the Ministry of Education and Science nr. 4894/1991*) |
| 1995 | University of Tîrgu-Mureş (*Government Decision no. 568/1995*) |
| 1996 | "Petru Maior" University of Tîrgu-Mureş (*Government Decision no.676/1996*) |

Since then, the university has continuously developed, currently being the largest and the best reputed higher education institution in technical, law, economics, humanities in Mures County, consisting of 3 faculties, a centre for part-time education, a department for teacher training, and a centre for continuous education, with 3609 students and 145 academic staff members in the academic year 2013/2014.

The spiritual patron of the university is the learned scholar Petru Maior (1760-1821), who was one of the most outstanding personalities of the Transylvanian Enlightenment.

## Legal status

UPM, as part of Romania's education system, is an accredited public institution for higher education and scientific research. UPM takes full advantage of the academic autonomy, according to the provisions of the Education Law No. 1/2011. UPM operates based on the Charter approved on the 6th of September 2011 (two previous editions of the Charter were approved in 1995 and 2009).

The charter specifies that UPM is a non-profit entity with legal personality, of public interest, independent of ideologies, religions and political doctrines, adhering to free thinking, academic freedom, recognising the fundamental human rights and freedoms and the principle of the supremacy of the law.

In achieving its aims in education and research, UPM relies on several principles among which the most important is considered to be the academic autonomy, understood as the legal capacity of the University to organise and run itself in an independent manner, at the same time being accountable for this, but also a specific manner of self-management by internal decisions and regulations in agreement with the legal framework defined in the Romanian Constitution and the Law of Education. UPM shares the principles stated in the *Magna Charta Universitatum* (Bologna 1988, signed by the university in 2005).

## Geographical position

UPM is located in the city of Tîrgu-Mureş, a major regional centre, seat of Mureş County, which is situated in the province of Transylvania and belongs to the Region of Development Centre - 7, according to EU standards.

With a population of approximately 130,000 inhabitants, Tîrgu-Mureş is currently ranked the 16th among the cities of Romania. Tîrgu-Mureş is a multicultural and multiethnic city, with impressive historical and cultural heritage. This is a real opportunity for UPM for attracting students. Tîrgu-Mureş is placed at the intersection of three geographic and economic areas: the Transylvanian Plane, the Valley of Mureş River, and the Valley of Niraj River, which is a real opportunity for cooperation with the companies and communities in these areas.

Due to its geostrategic position, not far from the mountains, close to other major Transylvanian cities, Tîrgu-Mureş is considered *Pole of Urban Development* and *Pole of Regional Importance* according to the Concept of Strategic Territorial Development – Romania 2030, in the centre of triangle form by the most important towns in the county: Reghin, Sighisoara and Tarnaveni. (*appendix 9*).

UPM is the most representative university in the Mures County, considering the diversity of the study offer, the number of students, the research activities, its active role in the community life and international connections. At the same time, UPM is the most important higher education provider in the Mures County offering study programs according to the labour market needs in a wide diversity of specializations.

## Current regional and national labour-market situation

The Romanian labour market was strongly affected by the transition from the centralised to the market economy which led to a decrease in industrial activities. The characteristics of the Romanian labour market, in comparison with other European states, place Romania outside the critical area, but in an area that is vulnerable nevertheless.

The Romanian market is characterised by the highest level of informal workforce in Europe, brain drain as a consequence of the crises of professions, the temporary migration for work at the level of low-qualified labour force, with no university degree, the low level of part-time employment, the decrease in the number of jobs with more than 40 work-hours per week since the beginning of the crisis, the lowest percentage of employment with temporary contract among the European countries. Unemployment among people under 25 years in comparison with the total number of long-term unemployed is decreasing compared to previous years. At national level, about half of the university graduates get a job in their field of specialisation.

In Mures County industrial activities have been reoriented from large factories to small and medium size enterprises. At present, the structure of the local economy is very diverse, comprising industry, services, construction and agriculture. Out of the total of working civil population, in the year 2011, 39.71% works in services, 30.06% in agriculture, 24.45% in industry and 5.78% in constructions. In the Mures County, the registered unemployment rate increased from 4.7% in 2008 to 6.2% in 2012 and the civil employed population decreased from 232.6 to 220.3 thousand people.

According to the National Statistics Institute in Mures County, the work resource comprises 366 thousand people (63% of the County's population), of which 249.4 thousand persons are active population (43% of the total) and 116.6 thousand are pupils, students and unemployed.

The structure on activity fields of the employees shows that the service sector is on the first place (56.1%) followed by industry (35%), constructions (7.3%) and agriculture (1.6%). The Index of Human Development in Mures County is 0.824 and the enrolment ratio is of 73.9% (*appendix 9*).

## Structure, students and staff

UPM (organisational chart in *appendix 3.1*) consists of 3 faculties: the Faculty of Engineering (organisational chart in *appendix 3.2*), the Faculty of Sciences and Letters (organisational chart in *appendix 3.3*), the Faculty of Economics, Law and Administrative Sciences (organisational chart in *appendix 3.4*), organised in 8 departments. Table 2 shows the structure and educational process regarding bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programmes (the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycles), as

full-time and part-time programmes but also teacher training. The activities of the 3rd cycle are managed by the Doctoral School, established in 2007. In the academic year 2013-2014, 3609 students are enrolled at UPM, in bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programmes. Detailed information about the distribution of students is presented in *appendix 5.1*.

*Table 2 – UPM structure and number of students in the academic year 2013-2014*

| No | Faculty | Number of departments | Number of students Bachelor's degree | Number of students Master's degree | Number of doctoral students | Total number of students |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Engineering | 2 | 748 | 128 | | 876 |
| 2 | Sciences and Letters | 3 | 654 | 149 | 31 | 834 |
| 3 | Economics, Law and Administrative Sciences | 3 | 1361 | 393 | | 1754 |
| 4 | Teacher training | | | | | 154 |
| | Total number of students | | | | | 3609 |

In the academic year 2013-2014 the specific processes and activities in UPM are carried out by 296 employees: 145 full time academic staff, 14 external collaborators for teaching, plus a number of 86 auxiliary staff and 51 non-academic staff.

Detailed information about the distribution of academic staff is provided in *appendix 5.2*.

## Section I. NORMS, VALUES, MISSION AND GOALS

UPM defines itself as a university for the community, open to cultural pluralism in its philosophy, ideology and academic studies.

**The mission** of UPM is: (a) to train specialists at all three levels of higher education: bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctorate; (b) to search for the truth, materializing in papers of fundamental, practical and dedicated research; (c) to promote the spirit of free thinking; (d) to promote a 'Life Long Learning' type of educational offer; (e) to spread knowledge in a society which should sustain the regional development.

**The vision** of UPM is: (a) to create a European future for the academic staff and the graduates through international cooperation and partnerships; (b) an institution of national interest with its credibility based on the programmes, specialisations and services offered, adaptable to the changes in the current socio-economic environment; (c) to offer specialised services in quality conditions according to national and international norms.

**Strategic aims:** UPM is an academic institution founded 53 years ago which must continue its ascending evolution, fully adhering to its motto of "A university for the community", considering both the regional and the national community. It should become a university with a modern and entrepreneurial management activity, a simple and dynamic structure, efficient research work, a faculty of high academic level and students satisfied with the training process and the social conditions offered by the university.

Main goal: Mobilizing the entire academic community of UPM for the institution to be included in the category "University of education and research".

*a) Education: Strategic aim 1:* to consolidate our identity on the national and international market and our leading position on the local market in those fields of specialisation that are included in the educational offer; *Strategic aim 2:* to ensure the efficiency of the teaching process while providing a university education adapted to the knowledge-based society; *Strategic aim 3:* to constantly adapt the educational offer of UPM depending on the beneficiaries of the training programme; *Strategic aim 4:* to improve the quality of the teaching process.

*b) Research: Strategic aim 1:* to increase the number of scientific papers while at the same time improving the quality of research in UPM by establishing performance indicators in research, congruent with the standards of universities of education and scientific research; *Strategic aim 2:* to establish certain strategic areas of research that would ensure a good scientific visibility at national and international level; *Strategic aim 3:* to actively involve staff members in the scientific research; *Strategic aim 4:* to organise research groups which transpose into didactic activities the results of their

own research and provide specialised services for the benefit of the community; *Strategic aim 5:* to carry out valuable scientific and cultural research for the benefit of the regional community.

    *c) Management and support services: Strategic aim 1:* to implement competitive, efficient and effective management; financial decentralisation down to the level of the faculties and departments; to define and promote the organisational culture; to devise a coherent strategy for the university's development; *Strategic aim 2:* to provide the required infrastructure and resources to ensure the optimum conditions for education, research and innovation.

    *d) Services towards the community: Strategic aim 1:* to extend the role of the university as the main factor in culture and education; *Strategic aim 2:* to increase the university's involvement in the community.

## I.1 Governance and management

    The organisation and structure of the institution are regulated in accordance with the applicable legal provisions stated in the Charter, which is guided by the principle of academic autonomy.

    The University Senate is the main decision forum at institutional level. The University Senate consists of faculty representatives (teaching staff and students) and representatives of administration and employees. The University Senate is organised into Commissions. The UPM Senate holds monthly ordinary sessions, according to an agenda agreed upon at the beginning of each academic semester, and extraordinary sessions, upon request.

    The strategic plans were drafted starting with 1998 and referred to the following periods of time: 1998-2003, 2004-2007, 2008-2012 respectively 2013-2016. The Strategic Plan for 2013-2016 (*appendix 1*) was devised by the University Senate. On a yearly basis, the UPM Operational Plan is drafted and implemented with the approval of the University Senate, together with the Operational Plan Evaluation for the previous year. The Faculty Operational Plan is drafted annually and, following its approval by the Faculty Council, is disseminated to all faculty departments and units.

    The Rector, as the head of the UPM, is elected by all members of teaching staff and the representatives of students for a term of four years and s/he can be re-elected once. The Rector proposes the candidates for the positions of Vice-rectors to the Senate for approval. At present there are two Vice-rectors.

    UPM has a high degree of autonomy in decision-making, administration and financial management. It is led by an Administrative Council consisting of the Rector (who is the Chairman), the Vice-rectors, the Deans of faculties, the General Administrative Director, the President of the Students League. The operational management is the responsibility of the Rector and the Administrative Council, which holds weekly meetings. UPM promotes the decentralisation of administrative decisions towards faculties, granting them a certain measure of financial autonomy.

    The Charter, together with the UPM Student Status guarantees students the right to represent and be represented. The University Charter allows for a 25% student representation in the structure of the Senate. In the Senate, all students are represented, based on the principle of representation of all faculties and all lines of study. The leader of the students' representatives in the University Senate and the Administrative Council is the President of the Students League. He attends the meetings of the Administrative Council and is fully entitled to vote. UPM has a student organisation that formulates proposals for decisions pertaining to student issues: learning conditions, accommodation, scholarships. The student senators are elected by all the students and any student may apply. The President of the Students League is elected from among the student senators and only they can vote and run for these elections. At faculty level, through their elected representatives for every department, students become members of the Faculty Council, and benefit from a 25% membership in this structure.

    Through its staff, trained in different fields of activity (social and economic, administrative and technical), the Administrative Department coordinates the entire administrative, technical and financial-accounting activities of the University. The Division for Internal Public Audit assesses the activity of administrative services. The UPM Senate evaluates the administrative division's activity on a yearly basis.

    The organisational chart of UPM (*appendix 3.2*) shows the academic structure, the research structure, the administrative/ support structures and services; it is formulated in agreement with the legal framework and with the requirements for an efficient management.

UPM has a high degree of autonomy in setting the university policy. UPM is an autonomous public university, but depends heavily on national policies regarding staff management. The **Human Resources Policies** in UPM mainly focus on the following issues:

- Permanent increase in the quality of the academic staff by: recruitment of highly qualified young specialists, full utilisation of the extensive array of expertise of academic staff and promotion based exclusively on professional performance criteria;
- Continual improvement of competencies for the academic, non-academic and administrative staff, including specific courses offered by UPM (i.e. teaching, IT, foreign languages, quality management, etc.), and support for staff mobility and experience exchange;
- Acknowledgment and reward of excellence for all categories: academic, non-academic and administrative staff, students.

However, the selection, appointment, and promotion of academic staff follow the national regulations, combined with severe budgetary constraints. This creates serious obstacles for the academic staff management policy, especially in regard of recruiting from the international job market. UPM does not have a formal gender policy, but we consider that the principle of equal opportunities is upheld.

The university elaborated and implemented ethical codes inspired by European and American universities and required by real issues that occurred throughout the years; moreover, the university took action against the violation of moral and intellectual integrity. Any member of the academic community may submit complaints or suggestions. A new Ethical Code and Academic Deontology of UPM was adopted in 2011 based on the following values: integrity and academic loyalty, academic freedom, non-discrimination and equal opportunity, conflict of interest, intellectual honesty, respect and tolerance, transparency. The institutional structure responsible for the monitoring of its due implementation and the compliance with the provisions included in this code is the Ethics Commission of UPM, which is totally independent in its activity.

The **Quality Assurance Policy** (*appendix 10a*) is developed by the Rector and available to the entire academic community, online. It is the framework of the internal quality assurance and evaluation processes. The Rector bears the responsibility for the quality assurance strategy, implemented through organised actions, by involving the management structures at all levels.

UPM has created and is continually consolidating the framework and the adequate tools for the internal quality assurance and evaluation of the study programmes, of research and of the services provided to society. The reference documents guiding the university in this process are the: (a) ENQA *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*; (b) *ARACIS methodology for external evaluation, standards, reference standards and list of performance indicators* and the (c) *ISO 9001:2008 standard: Quality Management Systems. Requirements*.

Within UPM all the activities take place by assuring quality. This required the documentation of the Quality Management System (QMS) in the Quality manual (3rd edition), 6 system procedures and 27 process procedures. The QMS documentation structure is presented in: *appendix 10a*: Quality policy; *appendix 10b*: Process matrix; *appendix 10c*: Supervisors of processes and procedures of the QMS; *appendix 10d*: Matrix for ENQA standards implementation in QMS procedures.

Some critical issues can also be pointed out: some decisions could be made at a lower level, and the Senate should focus on strategic subjects; however, this also depends on national legislation, which often leads to heavy bureaucracy; due to the legislative changes, within the institution, the roles of the different structures in the decision process still need clarification.

## I.2 Academic profile

The UPM has *full autonomy* in defining and implementing the teaching and research profile in order to be nationally and internationally competitive.

Consequently, the restructuring process developed during the past years focused on the institutional development, integrating high level teaching and learning with research. Further on, UPM aims to join the category of *Education and Scientific Research* ranked universities, providing a quality teaching process, with a special emphasis on practically oriented research transposed in study programmes. The data provided by UPM for the process of university classification in 2011 is presented in *appendix 2.1*, and hierarchisation of UPM programmes is presented in *appendix 2.2*. All the study programmes provided by UPM are accredited (*appendix 2.3*).

An academic priority is the continuous improvement of the study programmes. The master's degree programmes are the link between teaching and research, their orientation being for professionalisation according to the market needs.

UPM emphasises the importance of *foreign languages* as prerequisite for student and teacher mobility, as well as of *entrepreneurial skills*, both needed for the successful access of the graduates on the labour market and for efficient cooperation of the university with the extra-academic entities. All bachelors, master and doctoral degree programmes offered by UPM are *in line with the Bologna process*, which offered UPM the chance to *re-assess the content* of its educational programmes and to widely implement a student-centred approach. In the teaching process a *diversity of educational approaches are employed*: project-based learning, mobile learning, applied education and problems adapted to the specific needs of the students. At the same time, a wide range of non-compulsory courses is offered in the curricula, aiming to contribute to the students' personal development and sense of civic responsibility (i.e. "Curriculum and career orientation").

UPM supports teaching programmes that present financial viability and are able to attract students, maintaining a correlation with the labour market. In this sense, UPM carries out a continuous updating of its programmes, regarding the skills of its teachers. At the same time, it pays particular attention to the lines of study that provide encouraging results from the scientific research.

UPM is focused on achieving excellence in education, by providing student-centred teaching and learning programmes. The **student-centred teaching** is ensured by the implementation of the following concrete principles: transparency in the training process; training activities based on the needs of students and the requirements of the knowledge-based society; ensuring the active participation of students in the consolidation of knowledge; diversifying and differentiating academic teaching and assessment methods and tools; focus on flexible, experiential and reflexive learning; supporting a mutual respect relationship between students and teachers.

## I.3 Academic-related activities

Starting from the defining slogan "A UNIVERSITY FOR THE COMMUNITY", UPM is currently providing study programmes, lifelong education, practical oriented research, expertise, consultancy and various other services, that constitute society-oriented activities.

The COUNSELLING AND CAREER GUIDANCE CENTRE (CCGC) is an integral part of the structure of the university. In the period between 2004-20013 CCGC has organised, in accordance with its mission, the institutional requirements and the students' needs, a large range of activities. These were meant to meet in a prompt and efficient way the demands instituted by the Bologna system, by ARACIS in the matter of the quality of education, authorisation and accreditation, as well as the competitive challenges in the academic environment (*appendix 11*).

The CENTRE FOR CONTINUOUS EDUCATION (CCE) in the domain of staff instruction and improvement at all managerial levels is an integral part of the university. CCE promotes the instruction and improvement of the highly educated staff through lifelong learning programmes or modules of continuous formation in the field of engineering, international relations, information technology and communication, that are offered to the community at local/ regional and national levels. The Centre is also accredited to develop a consortium with the economic environment in the Mures region which should run regional development programmes in education, professional formation and technology transfer (*appendix 12*).

PART-TIME EDUCATION CENTRE (PTEC) offers a viable alternative to academic training for different categories of students, according to their needs and availability. Young people as well as adults who wish to continue their studies, receive further training or obtain a professional re-qualification have the possibility to study without discontinuing or giving up their jobs or other activities.

TEACHER TRAINING DEPARTMENT (TTD) – organises the activity of psycho-pedagogical instruction for the initial training of future teachers, as well as the subsequent further training. By the programme of psycho-pedagogical studies the certification for the teaching profession is achieved, at the initial level and further training.

Other activities, ensuring the interface between the university and the regional economic environment are developed and coordinated by the Cultural Scientific Centre of UPM, whose activities are: analysis of business opportunities in the Centre Region from the perspective of sustainable development; professional training and assistance for initiating business ventures and increasing the

competitiveness of small and medium enterprises SMEs; to promote female entrepreneurship and to enable senior citizens to lead an active life, etc.

UPM is involved in the regional debate being a full member of the CENTRE Regional Committee of strategic evaluation and correlation. In this capacity UPM regularly attends the meetings of public debate organised in rotation by county councils in the CENTRE Region (http://www.adrcentru.ro/) where the strategies for regional development are discussed.

For the current period, the goals of UPM for its relation with the community are:

- Enhancing the relationships, collaborations and partnerships with economic agents and with the cultural environment at a local, regional and national level;
- Stimulating the institutional framework created for the relationship of the University with the economic and socio-cultural environment by means of the Stakeholders Council of UPM;
- Enhancing the productive partnerships with local and regional authorities, as well as with various institutions, organisations and agents with a view to carrying out joint projects;
- Stimulating the partners' involvement in the development of the master programmes devised to satisfy the demands of the economic and socio-cultural environment;
- Finding the means to periodically measure the degree of professional satisfaction of the employers and to trace the graduates' career;
- Setting up and implementing together with the local authorities a strategy aimed at turning Tîrgu-Mureş into a digital city;
- Promoting the image of the University at regional, national and international level, which should bring candidates and international students/exchanges (*appendix 8*);
- Permanently developing the ALUMNI and involving the members more actively in the development of UPM;
- Better informing the potential candidates with respect to the educational offer of the University;
- Developing partnerships with the School Inspectorate of Mures County and of the neighbouring counties in order to regularly promote the University and to aid the recruitment of new students through the annual colloquiums "Innovative school and the perspective of academic studies" and "Creativity and innovation in education".

## I.4 Funding

UPM is a public university and according to the Romanian legislation, the activities are financed through governmental/ public funds and funds attracted by teaching, research, sponsorship, etc. Romanian public universities receive government funding according to criteria based on the number of students enrolled and various quality indicators. There is also a competition for research grants offered by several public bodies. Details about sources of funding in the interval 2008-2012 are presented in *appendix 6*.

Taking into account the current underfinanced status of the Romanian higher education from public sources, UPM has a comprehensive policy of financing, and our concerns are closely related to the following objectives: increasing the funding; diversification of income sources; efficient use of resources; the financial sustainability of each faculty. The focus is on diversifying financing sources by encouraging faculties to come up with initiatives in order to attract funds, so as to enhance their financial autonomy. Extra-budgetary funds attracted by faculties have the following structure: tuition fees (undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, post-doctoral level and postgraduate courses); contract-based research and services (courses, consultancy and expertise, national and international); small production; donations and sponsorships.

UPM has been successfully involved in a significant number of projects financed by European structural funds, European Economic Area financial mechanism, etc., carefully selected to support the development strategy of UPM. As for the ongoing projects, there have been no conflicts or requests to return funds, the contracts have been carried out by achieving the indicators.

## I.5 UPM positioning at various levels

UPM is well aware that, as public university, it is the beneficiary of the societal investments and is expected to contribute to the welfare of the only legitimate beneficiary: the society.

UPM short-term strategy aims to train professionals in order to satisfy the local/ regional needs (allow people to find employment in companies, agencies, healthcare, culture, education, etc.), the national needs (economic competitiveness through applied research), as well as to provide solutions to international issues, contributing to the joint effort for development, according to the slogan "A university for the community". Citizenship and civic engagement is currently promoted by student associations, UPM being focused on developing social responsibility campaigns in order to strengthen the partnership with the local and regional community.

UPM students and teachers are involved in projects for the conservation of the local and regional patrimony at archaeological sites like Potaissa (Turda), Brancovenesti (Mures County), the Citadel of Tirgu-Mures, in archaeological campaigns followed by procedures of registration, conservation and restoration of the material found. They also take part in the project for digitizing the stock of historic specialty books at the Mures County Library (an AFCN project), as well as the conservation and cataloguing of the precious stones at the Teleki Library.

UPM, a well-*reputed university in Romania,* aims at *international competitiveness and recognition* in the didactic and research field, various activities that support internationalisation being presented in *appendix 13*. Our teachers and students are part of international exchanges and we also receive students from abroad.

To these we can add a number of 69 foreign students from outside the EU who study at UPM, in collaboration with universities from other countries based on inter-university conventions, the development of joint study programmes for master's degrees in public administration.

## I.6. UPM positioning in the HE landscape

The international cooperation has always represented a major priority for UPM, materializing in policies and programmes created in accordance with the 1999 Bologna Declaration, the Romanian legislation and the principles of university autonomy.

The university joined the International Association of Universities- IAU - (2003); Magna Charta Observatory (2005); Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie – AUF- (2007); European University Association - EUA – (2008);  Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency of European Commission - EACEA - (2007-2013 Erasmus Charter Extended); Heads of University Management & Administration Network in Europe - HUMANE - (2008), assuming the principles laid down in the Charta of European Universities (Bologna, 1988), signed in September 2005.

In this context, the participation of UPM in European programmes specific to higher education like Tempus, Socrates / Erasmus, Minerva, Leonardo da Vinci, Jean Monnet has known every year a relevant dynamics with positive results both in the quality of teaching and in the increase of the number of contracts. UPM has 51 international bilateral agreements within the Erasmus programme for mobilities of students, teaching staff, administrative personnel, as well as several other international bilateral agreements, presented in *appendix 13*.

The vision of UPM regarding its position in the broader international landscape of higher education is to continue and constantly increase its involvement in international activities a) at didactic level through mobilities of students, teaching staff, and administrative personnel and by developing joint study programmes with different universities; b) at scientific level – through research programmes, scientific events and scientific publications.

## I.7 Strategic choices made by the institution

UPM is part of the European Higher Education and Research Areas and thus is promoting the values and action lines of the EU restructuring processes defined by the Bologna and Lisbon Declarations, within the frame of the Romanian legislation. Global changes in higher education along with local/regional/national needs were sensed by UPM and embedded in its development strategy.

A thorough analysis of the UPM traditional values, of the internal resources, of the short- and medium-term needs of society, of the international and global development trends represented the starting point in formulating the UPM vision for Excellence, Competitiveness and Social Responsibility.

For implementing the UPM Strategic plan for development with a duration of 4 years (2013-2016), the Operational Plan is elaborated annually. The strategic choices of UPM formulated in the Strategic plans for development and actively supported beginning with 2004, aim at:

2004 - Ensuring the quality of the academic processes;

2006 - Stimulating young researchers in order to increase the competitiveness of UPM;

2006 - Efficient use of funds – a prerequisite for progress and development;

2007- "A university for the community", considering both the regional and the national community, becoming a university with a modern and entrepreneurial managerial activity;

2008 - Restructuring research for competitiveness, by promoting excellence;

2009 - National evaluation of the University;

2008 - Restructuring the education offer at diploma level to adapt to the needs of the society;

2012 - International evaluation of the University

# II. GOVERNANCE AND ACTIVITIES

## II.1 Governance and management

The UPM governance and management are formulated according to the strategic goals and objectives, fully respecting the university vision and mission, the specific of each faculty and the general national and international context.

The management structures of UPM are as follows, *appendix 3.2*: the University Senate, the Administrative Council, the Faculty Council and the Department Council.

Since 2011, the election procedure in Romanian higher education institutions has been changed. Members of the University Senate, Faculty and Department Councils as well as the Department Directors are elected through a bottom-up process (successive elections at department/ faculty/ university levels), according to the legal regulations in force and the internal regulations stated in the *Methodology for organising and managing elections in UPM* and *the Regulation for students' representatives*. According to the same regulations, the rector has been elected by the entire academic community (in February 2012) and has appointed the two vice-rectors.

The deans gained their position as a result of a public contest organised by the rector and appointed the management team (vice-deans) at faculty level.

The University Senate, with democratically elected representatives from each faculty and department (academic staff 75% and students 25%), is the decision-making body of UPM; it also includes, as invited member, the representative of the employees.

The executive management structure of UPM is the Administrative Council, consisting of: rector, two vice-rectors, general administrative director, three deans, president of the Students League and the president of the Senate, as invited member.

The University Senate represents the academic community and acts as the leading and decision-making body. Seven commissions, consisting of specialised working groups, have been set up: Teaching Commission, Research Commission, Budget and Administrative Commission, Strategy Commission, Quality Assurance Commission, Student Commission and Ethics Commission. According to the new Education Law, the Senate decides upon the major issues concerning UPM organisational structure, internal regulations, funding matters and development. The decisions are made following a consultation process, involving the entire academic community.

To support the decision-making process and the implementation of the strategic objectives, as well as the quality assurance of the management activities, the following structures operate at university level: **Committees**: Quality Council; Council for Scientific Research; Curriculum Council; **Support structures**: Quality Management Centre, Counselling and Career Guidance Centre, Office of International Relations, Part Time Education Centre, Teacher Training Department, Public Relations and Promotion of Educational Opportunities Compartment; - Research-Innovation-Grants and Research Projects Funding Management Centre; Computer Sciences Department,  Centre for Continuous Education, UPM Cultural and Scientific Centre; **University services:** Rector's Office, Registrar, University Library, Human Resource, Finance and Accounting, Technical and Administrative, Internal Audit, Study Documents Compartment. The subordination relations are regulated through the Organisational chart, *appendix 3.2*.

Since 2013 the *Curriculum Council* has been created at institutional level, aiming to assess the continuous improvement of the curriculum of study programmes and to judge to what extent the

UPM's objectives are promoted whenever the curriculum is modified. It consists of academic experts in education and it is coordinated by the Vice-Rector for Didactic Activities.

Since 2012 the *Council for Scientific Research* has been created under the coordination of the Vice-Rector for Scientific Research, with the specific role of defining and implementing the key issues in the university's research strategy.

There are also processes regarding the entire institution, such as selection and promotion of administrative staff and development of services towards society, for which the Administrative Council formulates proposals. All the proposals are discussed and validated by the University Senate.

**Communication** in the academic community is of utmost importance for implementing the university strategy. The weekly decisions formulated by the Administrative Council are delivered, on the university intranet, to the entire community, by posting them on the website.

UPM complies with the principle of representativeness of all regulations issued centrally and locally. According to the internal regulations, the students are considered partners in the academic process, being represented in all management structures: Faculty Council, University Senate, and Administrative Council. In addition, the Quality Assurance and Evaluation Committees – with the subdivisions at faculty and study programme levels – include members of the student community.
The 10 senator students have been elected according to Law 1/2011 and their activity is stated in a regulation for student representatives issued by the University Senate. They actively participate in the Senate sessions, formulating proposals and amendments.

Students are actively involved in promoting the university and the Students' Caravan travels yearly in the region, organizing meetings with the prospective students in high-schools.

A cooperation structure, *the Stakeholders Council*, has been developed since 2008 by involving external partners into the university life at a consistent, strategic and organisational level.
However, when considering the employability of the graduates and their chances on the labour market according to their competencies, there still are actions to be taken in relation with the stakeholders. Periodic surveys on the degree of satisfaction of graduates and employers regarding the quality of education provided by UPM could be interesting and useful inputs for the process of quality improvement. Although a system for collecting the graduates' opinion on their studies was implemented a few years ago, we cannot say it has been entirely efficient. UPM admits it as being a weak point and aims to identify ways to improve the situation.

**Human Resources:** The UPM specific processes and activities are carried out by 282 employees: 145 academic staff (*appendix 5.2*) and 137 non-academic and administrative staff, quite balanced in terms of gender and age. Over the last years, the number of academic staff has been preserved within certain limits, allowing a balance between the quality assurance of the academic processes and the financial efficiency.

UPM annually estimates the current and future need of human resources. The recruitment and the promotion of teaching staff is done within the framework of the national legislation, according to the internal Regulation and Procedure for teaching staff appointment. The UPM human resource policy encourages the development of highly qualified professionals, by doctoral and post-doctoral programmes, as future full time researchers or academics. The UPM goals to become a research and higher education institution at national level implies the development of the 3rd cycle in *all* the study fields of the first two cycles and this is an ongoing process. However, the ratio between the professors entitled to Ph.D. coordination and the total number of academic staff possessing the title of professor is still low comparing to other top Romanian universities. Lack of PhD coordinators is a risk for accreditation of master degree programmes. This aspect has been identified as a weak point; consequently the university implements a policy, stimulating the professors to become PhD coordinators. This is of particular importance since a significant percentage of the current Ph.D. coordinators will retire in the near future.

**The selection of students** is organised with admission exams at all academic levels. The admission to UPM is organised according to the general average grade (or of the number of points) obtained by candidates, in compliance with the selection rules, the candidate's option for a certain field and the number of positions granted for the exam. If more candidates on the last spot have the same average, additional criteria are applied. The criteria for establishing the hierarchy of candidates are set up in order to ensure complete transparency. General averages obtained by candidates (or the general score) are assessed only for establishing the hierarchy for the faculty and specialisation according to the options made by the candidate on the application form.

Faculties have autonomy in establishing the admission criteria. The following cannot be considered selection criteria for candidates: age, sex, ethnicity, mother tongue, religion, race, political affiliation, affiliation to legal organisations (or organisations that are not in breach of Romanian legislation) or chronic illnesses which present no risks for the community, including AIDS.

The admission to higher education is organised on places subsidised from grants (only for full-time attendance) and on places with the tuition fee paid by the student, for full-time attendance, part-time attendance. The number of subsidised places is established annually, by order of the Romanian Minister of Education, according to the schooling numbers previously approved through a Government decision. The non-subsidised places are established in compliance with the autonomy of universities, by the Senate of UPM, at the proposal of the faculties and in compliance with the Romanian law. The hierarchy is formed in decreasing order. For each programme of study there is a maximum number of students who can be enrolled (at both Bachelor and Master level). This number is approved by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS) and it cannot be exceeded for the first year of study.

In the last years, the admission to the Bachelor level was generally based on the high-school and baccalaureate grades, without the requirement of an admission exam. This procedure led to a large number of students entering programmes for which they did not have the required basic knowledge, resulting in some dropout rate after the first year of study.

For the master level each programme decides on its admission criteria. These include, besides the results at the Bachelor exam, a written exam and/or an interview.

The admission to doctoral studies is made on the basis of an annual competition organised by UPM, through Doctoral School. The annual competition takes place before the beginning of the academic year. Only the holders of a master degree diploma or of an equivalent diploma have the right to participate in the admission exam.

**Development of services to society** is performed by UPM as a large university in Mures County, and one of the most significant socio-economic players in the community. Continuous cooperation is developed with the Tîrgu-Mureş City Hall, the Mures County Council, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mures, the County School Inspectorate, the Teachers House Mures along with many other local entities, enabling a fast response to the community needs; UPM has played an active part in formulating the local and regional Sustainable Development Strategies – and is involved in the effort for local economic growth, SMEs and Romanian companies through technology transfer.

## II.2 Academic profile

### Education:

The main policy of UPM in terms of studying, training, pedagogical and methodological activities is that they matched with the students' university experience and they are continuously adapted to the needs of the country. Within the Bologna Process, the higher education system in Romania has undergone major changes. UPM joined the Bologna System starting with the 2005/2006 academic year, reorganizing and restructuring university programmes within the three cycles, namely undergraduate, master and doctoral programmes, according the provisions of the law (*appendix 4.1*). The UPM educational activity is managed by the didactic vice-rector.

The *Curricula* documents the structure and content of each study programme. It gives an overview of ECTS distribution. The courses within the curricula are documented through the syllabus, which defines the content, the outcomes, the evaluation method and the assigned ECTS. Curricula are presented as a collection of documents consisting of: education plans; syllabi; description of the specialisation; graduate competences. Education plans are conceived in order to offer students enough time for individual study, proper assimilation of bibliography and initiation in scientific research. They are elaborated on a yearly basis by the Council of each faculty, for each specialisation and are approved by the UPM Senate. Content wise, education plans are made up of fundamental, speciality and complementary courses. From the organisational point of view, education plans for each specialisation contain compulsory, optional and non-compulsory courses. These characteristics offer flexibility to the curricula. Evaluation methods provided in the education plans are the following: full examination, colloquium, mid-term assessment. Both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, syllabi of all courses are elaborated according to the model approved by the Curricular council and must contain the following information: general information about the course, seminar, practical or laboratory activity; information about the tutor of the course, seminar, practical or laboratory activity;

description of the course; compulsory bibliography; materials used within the educational process of the course; evaluation method; organisational details, optional bibliography. Both the description of specialisations and the competences of the graduate are elaborated by faculties and approved by the Council for Curriculum of UPM. The Curriculum Council and Senate Commission for Didactics have internal accreditation competences for curricula. All programmes – undergraduate, master, doctoral and lifelong learning – are subject to approval.

The European Credit Transfer System – ECTS - is applied in students' assessment. The credit system is regulated by a special regulation approved by the Senate of the University, in accordance with Education Law nr.1/2011, and Petru Maior University Charter.

Undergraduate programmes correspond to a number of 180 or 240 transferable credits, according to ECTS. At the master level, education plans correspond to a number of 60 or 120 transferable credits (30 credits for each semester).

An academic year consists of fall and spring semesters, of 14 weeks each, followed by a three week examination period; there is a supplementary one week period after each semester for re-examinations, but also three-weeks re-examination period in September.

The learning content, outcomes and evaluation methods are presented to the students at the beginning of each semester. Usually one final examination is scheduled for measuring the learning outcomes of a course. Besides, complementary evaluation methods (projects, homework, etc.) are used. Optional courses are offered, as one of the characteristics of student-centred teaching. UPM supports the faculties to increase the extent of the student-centred education and to improve the curricula by modernised didactical approaches (blended learning, mobile learning, multi-media, team work, project/problem based learning), by collecting the feedback from students' surveys and by benchmarking with other, national and European high level universities.

In the academic year 2013-2014, UPM offers *23 bachelor degree programmes* (18 full-time, 5 part-time), *21 master's degree programmes* (20 full-time, 1 part-time) and *1 accredited PhD field,* that are listed in appendix 4.1, also with the time of graduation. Among these, actual enrolment takes place in 39 programmes. We admit that a weak point is the low level of some students admitted to the university due to the lack of severe admission criteria.

The number of graduating students for the past 5 years is presented in *appendix 5.1*, which shows a slight decline in the student population due to the downward demographic trend in Romania.

*Educational programmes* correspond to an opportunity which is usually identified at department level. A proposal for a new degree programme has to be supported by a feasibility study, proving its relevance to the labour market and its compatibility with similar programmes in European universities. Usually faculties involve in this process external advisers from industry/professional sector. Once the proposal is completed, it is discussed and assessed by the department. The new degree programmes are designed according to the ARACIS general quality criteria, in addition to the specific standards developed at study fields and institutional levels. The curricula proposal is submitted to the Faculty Council and, after approval, to the University Senate. Since recently, there is an additional structure between the Faculty Council and University Senate, the Curriculum Council. If the University Senate approves the programme, the ARACIS external evaluation follows. The relevance of a new programme is validated, among others, by the number of candidates requesting admission. In the end, the programme is validated by the number of graduates able to access the labour market. In this respect, The graduates' career is traced by CCGC, but we appreciate that there is a limited information on duet o the difficulty in collecting information. *Appendix 11* shows a study about graduates career track in the past 5 years. However, the decision for suspending a study programme as not attractive, at a certain moment, for the prospective students, is still considered a sensible one and it has to be taken after a thorough evaluation of its consequences on long term.

The local industries were the basis for the University's growth until 1989, the educational offer being addressed only to engineering. Following the trend in the whole country, the centralised industries have eroded. Consequently, UPM reshaped its educational offer, in order to meet the new labour-market requirements. Programmes in industrial management, industrial engineering, electroenergetics, and industrial automation have tradition and a good national reputation. There is also a strong connection with companies as Durkop-Adler, Hirschmann, CIE-Matricon, Procam, Compa, Schaeffler, Dacia-Renault, Siemens, etc. UPM is the major provider of graduates in the ICT area. The region is known for the number of SMEs companies in computer science and communications sector with a graduates' employment of over 70% in the first year after graduation.

The Social Sciences, Humanities, Economics and Law programmes have also good impact, considering the significant number of admission requests. They are the main human resources providers on the regional labour-market assuring good quality professionals: teachers, translators, economists, lawyers, public administrators.

The regulation for doctoral programmes is in line with the Law of Education, No. 1/2011 and these are organised according to Government Decision no. 681/2011 regarding the approval of the Code of Doctoral Studies. This activity is managed by the Doctoral School of the university (*appendix 4.2*). The doctoral studies are planned for a period of 3 academic years and comprise two components which are conducted under the supervision of a doctoral coordinator: the training programme based on advanced academic studies, and the individual programme of scientific research / artistic creation.

Study programmes taught in foreign languages represent an initiative under development. UPM analyses the possibility of enrolling students from abroad in such programmes. The first programme under development is the Computer Sciences specialty that is under development as a joint study programme with a foreign university in Turkey.

The *IT and multimedia infrastructure* is vital for the UPM didactic approach. Currently this infrastructure satisfies the needs but, considering the dynamic nature of the field, UPM will continue to update these education resources, and train the technical staff accordingly. One strong point in UPM is represented by *the teaching staff* with broad international experience, using modern teaching/ learning/ evaluation methods: blended learning, mobile technology.

UPM has a *modern library* with free access to books and to information and data bases (*appendix 14*). The high quality library services for information-documentation result in: rapid access to information, methodological guidance, information/ research bibliographic data base, using national and international information resources through the Internet, etc. The library has a large number of publications, for all study programmes in the university, which is continuously enriched and supplemented by subscriptions to scientific and educational publications. The University library allows access to scientific data bases, like: ScienceDirect, Thomson ISI, SpringerLink, etc. Scientific documentation resources purchased through grants and projects (located in the departments) is also purchased by the university library, expanding the resources available for students.

### Research

Scientific research is a fundamental component of the university's activity, being one of the main criteria of evaluation of qualification and of assessment of academic performance. According to the principles of academic freedom and university autonomy, while following the ethical and professional deontological norms, scientific research is free from any restraints or limitations.

Research in UPM is measured in terms of visibility, technological impact (research must solve problems) and student cooperation (relevant research always attracts gifted students). Our policy is to leave the research centres to plan their own research activities. The research output in UPM is constantly monitored. These analyses have led to the identification of certain problems (insufficient representation at the international level in terms of international research contracts; insufficient international articles and books published at prestigious publishing houses, small number of students involved, the lack of technological impact). The following measures have had a visible impact: initiating activities in order to enhance international visibility; promoting a higher concern for the identification and contacting of criteria and prestigious institutions involved in the assessment and promotion of scientific research; stimulating scientific research activities within faculties which fail to make full use of their potential; identifying and activating unused resources.

The research activity is assisted by the Research-Innovation-Grants and Research Projects Funding Management Centre, which integrates all the actions promoting research, with the departments' active involvement and consent.

Sensing the international trends, the process for scientific research restructuring was started in UPM. An initial analysis, evaluating the resources and the results, lead to an increasing coherence in the use of the scientific research resources existent and further developed (human, infrastructure, information, documentation, and partnership resources). The supporting frame consists of the research centres, accredited by CNCISS and institutionally, and the research groups (*appendix 4.3*).

*Human resources in research*. A decisive factor in increasing the quality of the research activity at UPM is the human resource. According to the university mission and national legislation, the academic staff has to perform research activity as a current obligation. The involvement of specialists from abroad in the research carried out at the university was achieved through collaboration based on mobilities or on research stages spent by the researchers (academics, doctoral students and

master students) at foreign universities. Funding was ensured either from projects or from scholarships/awards won through national and international competitions. The cooperation projects contributed to the development of relationships with universities from Spain, Italy, Norway, Germany, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Belgium, Turkey, France, Italy, etc.

The development of human resources in research was carried out at UPM also through the projects funded through the European Social Funds within the Sectoral Operational Programme - Human Resources Development 2013 within the field Doctoral and Postdoctoral Programmes, the target groups consisting of approximately 11 doctoral students and 23 post-doctoral students.

*Research funding* is obtained at UPM in two ways: (1) direct allocation, from public or private financial sources; and (2) competition, from public or private sources. After the National Plan for Research - Development - Innovation was launched, the main instrument for the implementation of the National Strategy for Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) for the period 2007 - 2013, the personnel of the university successfully took part at internal and international competitions for projects, which lead to the increase of scientific results (numerous international publication and placing on top positions in various rankings).

The dynamics of the participation of UPM at various national / international project competitions was also conditioned by economic factors. Thus, the budget austerity from the year 2009, when the National Authority for Scientific Research (ANCS) suspended the launching of national competitions of research, as an effect of the economic crisis, affected deeply research in Romania and implicitly from UPM, the funding of national programmes and the number of projects being reduced significantly. This situation determined a reorientation to the cooperation with economic environment, but also with international partners. Also, UPM felt a difficulty in attracting funds from industrial environment due to the effects of the crisis affecting them.

UPM financially supports the activity of scientific research by allocating a fund intended for turning the results to good account (attendance fees at conferences, the publication of books, inventions, etc.), the amounts being granted according to the Regulation for supporting research.

*Promoting research activity*. Increased international visibility is achieved by attending and (especially) organizing high level scientific events. Yearly, international conferences are organised by UPM in various fields: engineering, philology, history, economics, law, with the participation of researchers, international professional bodies and decision makers. The presentation of research results is done also in the 5 UPM scientific journals, all of them indexed in relevant scientific databases.

The complex of actions that support the strategic research objectives resulted in the patents developed in the past three years, main stream publications, books, book chapters, etc.

Externally, UPM has designed a set of measures supporting the academic community by involving them in the decision making processes and by developing cooperative structures: Involvement of UPM representative staff members in the national decision making and evaluation bodies (CNFIS, ARACIS, CNADTCU); Active involvement in scientific events; International cooperation by integrating in Framework consortia; Member of international scientific societies, etc.

*Evaluation of the research activity*. Research activity is subjected to annual evaluation in accordance with national and European standards, at individual level, department and research centres, carried out by the Council of Scientific Research. The evaluated results are subjected for debate and approval to the Senate. The IT department developed the *Research Management* software allowed for the recording and analysis of scientific results, making available for the academics, researchers and managers from UPM instruments for declaring, evaluating and synthetising the research activity. Development of such instruments ensures relevant information for designing research strategies, being a real Data Base of the research activity within UPM.

## II.3 Academic-related activities

UPM conceives its relationship to society as a way of both contributing to the technical, economic, scientific, social, and cultural development of the surrounding communities and of identifying new challenges and opportunities for the institution, especially with regard to the adaptation of its education programmes to respond to new social needs.

UPM has signed over 40 agreements with local and national, NGOs in the last 3 years in order to offer both students and academic staff the opportunity to engage in various activities, causes and volunteer actions in the region. UPM also partnered with important companies in the region (Matricon, Azomures, Hirschmann, Romcab, Durkopp-Adler, etc.) to reward students' community engagement

through a dedicated scholarship programme. However, UPM is aware of the weak point related to organising and running the students' practical training. Thus, through partnerships with companies at regional/national and international level, the University aims to achieve practical training that is genuinely integrated in the economic, social and cultural environment characteristic of the student's qualification.

UPM has also offered cultural activities as a part of its engagement with the local community (exhibitions, book presentations, international conferences, etc). No less than 34 cultural activities have been organised by the institution in the past 3 years, with over 1200 people attending them.

**The transfer of research results** to the companies is an important element of innovation by the collaboration between companies and research centres. The strengthening of the innovative and applicative character of scientific research and the identification of the potential beneficiaries of the applied research is a main concern of the university. In the last 6 years, an increased interest was shown for patenting and there are remarkable results, the increase of the number of inventions, thus 2 patent request have been submitted in 2008, then 2 patents request have been submitted in 2010, 2 invention patents were granted by the OSIM in 2011, in 2012 an additional 25 patent requests have been submitted and for 3 of them the summary was already published in the Official Bulletin of Industrial Property and the patents will be shortly granted, in 2013 – 11 new patents applications were submitted.

The transfer of technology is achieved through the large number of contracts signed with economic agents (24 contracts in 2010, 20 contracts in 2011, 5 contracts in 2012) but also through entrepreneurial activities undertaken by the Faculty of Economics, Law and Administrative Sciences.

**Lifelong learning** represents another field continuously developed during the last years. Since 2005 this process is coherently coordinated by the Centre for Continuous Education which has adopted the correct strategy for promoting and strengthening the UPM lifelong learning offer. Thus, the threat of demographic decrease and, as a consequence, the diminishing of young student population, may be balanced by a wise lifelong learning policy, attracting students for completing and/ or updating their education by different specialised courses. Currently UPM offers 16 courses (*appendix 12*).

In 2004 the **Alumni Association UPM -** was set up, aiming at initiating activities to support and guide recent graduates as well as to develop a legal framework to promote relationships with the university graduates (*appendix 15*). UPM is aware of its limitation in this direction; there still is plenty of work to do in order to reach a stable relation with our ALUMNI. For an efficient communication with the graduates and an increased visibility of the university, additional resources should be involved, for significant, long-term benefits.

The Public Relations and Promotion of Educational Opportunities Compartment has significantly contributed to increasing visibility, but UPM still needs to develop extended promotional information for the prospective students.

UPM is a **RoEduNet** centre, based on Government Decision no 515/1998. It is an organised communication centre whose purpose is to develop and support the good functioning of the informational system at the level of the whole institution. The management of the period of instruction is a particularly important component within the university management application, which is realised with dedicated software.

## II.4 Student support services

The University has a number of student support services and is constantly striving to improve and add to these, according to the strategic objectives.

The website www.uniweb.ro, developed as a comprehensive database, is available to all students. Here they can find useful information relating to: courses, schedule, grades, etc. and other opportunities and services offered by the university.

The Library of UPM allows free access to all students, regardless of the programme of study. The UPM library's patrimony includes: monographs, textbooks, periodicals and series, micro-formats, cartographic, audio-video, graphic and electronic documents. The library users also have access to the scientific databases the university has subscribed to.

The UPM library offers 53843 titles, of which 51171 monographs, 1394 textbooks, 1278 periodicals, 926 audio-video documents, and 188 CDs/ DVDs. The UPM library operates as the central unit and has three subordinate faculty branches: Library of the Sciences and Letters Faculty, Library of the Faculty of Economic, Legal and Administrative Sciences, Library of the Engineering

Faculty, with a surface of 538 square metres in their three study rooms and loan departments, and 197 square metres of storage facilities (*appendix 14*).

**Student services**

The university offers various services and facilities to students and has special programmes meant to ensure a quality student life that is regularly monitored and evaluated with the contribution of students' representatives: study scholarships for students, performance scholarship, free urban transport and 50% discount for train travels, cafeterias, student restaurants offering meals at low prices; student camps, etc.

- The University is constantly investing in increasing the comfort of the students' hostels: Grigorescu (332 places), Caprioarei (49 places), Livezeni – under construction (432 places) (*appendix 7*). The student hostels have been fully refurbished in the past four years, with TV cable systems and internet connection in each room. However, the students request a new internet infrastructure, Wi-Fi hotspots available campus wide and throughout the university buildings. The degree of satisfying the accommodation demand is of 95% in September and 100% in January. In these hostels students attending full-time courses are accommodated, from all the university's faculties. If we compare the 2439 undergraduate students with the number of places in hostels we get an availability ratio of 15.6% accommodation places.

- STUDENTS' ORGANISATIONS – The University has allocated rooms for the activities of the students' organisations: Room A011 Students' League and Room C16 for AISEC. Student organisations are active components of the support services provided for students. They are self-funded through student programmes and provide a wealth of information, communication sessions, competitions, debates, cultural activities, trainings, festivals and cultural exchanges. They are flexible organisations in which any student can be part. The student associations offer information on professional and career development, mainly through career events in which companies participate. It is felt, however, that the University could support these associations even more, maybe through a more active involvement of the faculties and study programme tutors. After graduating, students are in contact with the university, some of them becoming members of the Alumi Association UPM.

- *International exchange programmes* support students to acquire experience abroad, within the Erasmus programme LLP frame or other programmes, *appendix 13-* Internationalisation is presenting the flux of exchange students.

- *The sports facilities* are constantly developed. The sports activities of the students for the classes stipulated in the curriculum and outside this are performed in Building B – the sports facilities, P-ţa Republicii no. 38, which is a very modern building, constructed in the past 4 years. Nautical activities are performed at Building E within the "Muresul" recreation complex.

- The University developed the *Counselling and Career Guidance Centre* (CCGC) as an integral part of its structure offering career advice and specialised consultancy (e.g. the Student Guide in relation to career opportunities), and organises periodical Job Fares; still, the students ask for more support in career and professional orientation services. Students have identified the necessity of their involvement in assisting other students in needs, especially the ones in the first year of study.

We consider that the student organisations do not have enough power and struggle to represent students. The University must develop their activities and students should be encouraged to join structures that fit their aspirations and concerns.

## II.5 Funding

UPM is financed based on public funding and on funds resulted from students' fees, RTD and education & training grants and contracts, sponsorship, etc. The public financing is yearly allocated based on: (1) the number of budgetary students and (2) on quality criteria. The public share of the university budget is carefully designed according to the number of budgetary students completed with fee-paying students according to the maximum number of students allowed by ARACIS.

Due to the competition on the educational market and the downward demographic trend, in the past years the tendency has been to preponderantly occupy the subsidised places. Thus in the academic year 2013-14 the total of allocated places (subsidised and non-subsidised) was of 2055 and 1269 students enrolled, occupying the places in a proportion of 61.75%. If we only refer to non-subsidised places, 1375 of these were allocated and 627 students enrolled, that is, a proportion of 45.6%.

The amount of governmental funds attracted as UPM base financing continuously decreased in the past years. There are also dedicated funds for investments in infrastructure and refurbishing, based on concrete projects, which have been stopped in 2013.

The university funds are used for covering the regular expenditures (personnel costs, utilities, investments in infrastructure development and refurbishing, etc.) and for financing strategic priorities. In 2012, the total university budget was of 20,355,509 lei, out of which 43.47% from governmental financing for education; 24.25% from school fees and sponsorships; 1.47 % from research activities; 7.79% from external programmes; 20.36% from the government with special destination and 2.66% from other activities. The evolution of financing during 2008-2012 is detailed in *appendix 6.*

The funds attracted through grants and contracts are dedicated to the projects' activities and are spent according to the Budgetary File of each project.

UPM has an analytical accounting systems and developed instruments for a clear calculation of the teaching and research activities. The financial situation of the university is monitored through the e-Budget management accounting software, and the accountancy of the university is managed through the SICOB financial accounting software – a system integrated for budget accounting.

Yearly, the Rector presents a Report on the state of the university where financing and funds distribution are included, along with the results (expected/obtained). The Report is validated by the Senate and it is considered in the decision-making process for the next year.

UPM as a public university depends on public funding which represents a continuous risk of under-financing and of limited progress if there are no other sources of financing. Therefore, UPM management decisions are to increase the amount and share of attracted funds.

## III. QUALITY ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

UPM paid special attention to quality assurance and developed the concept of quality according to international guidelines. A concern for quality exists since 2000 when, within the CNFIS programme financed by World Bank, there were organised training sessions on quality management with the participation of specialists from University Liege.

In 2005 the Quality Management Centre was set up, coordinating the process of quality evaluation within the university. It is conducted by the Quality Director. The Scientific Vice-rector, which is the quality management representative, is coordinating the quality assurance activity in the university. Starting from 2006 the Quality Council has been functioning.

In agreement with the Quality Law requirements and UPM quality assurance strategy the Quality Assurance and Evaluation Committees (QAEC) were established at university level which subordinates commissions at faculty/department level. QAEC's are composed of academic staff members, students, and employers' representatives. These bodies provide input for the quality management system on a constant basis and establish programmes for educational quality improvement in accordance with the stakeholders' requirements. Each year, on the university level, general quality objectives are being established and included in the Operational Plan.

In spite of the existing quality structures, difficulties are faced in making them truly functional. This might be a consequence of the length of time needed for the expected improvements to become noticeable, which gives the impression of fruitless efforts. Due to this, the university aims to more intensely emphasise the outcomes achieved by these bodies, by focusing on implementing the corrective and preventive actions suggested by them.

Due to the teaching, research and administrative workload, the teaching staffs who are usually members of these internal bodies face difficulties in managing the supporting report documents, accusing the system of overburdening them with bureaucracy. Some of the strategies considered are: (a) to more carefully assess the type of reports required by the university, and (b) to train and specialise the administrative staff in assisting the academics in preparing the supportive documents.

### III.1. Quality assurance policy and handbook

In order to ensure a quality approach to its processes and being aware of its advantages UPM remained concerned on establishing and implementing a Quality Management System (QMS). It was successfully implemented in the first edition in 2004, based on the EN ISO 9001:2001 standard. It cannot be claimed that at that time QMS was efficient in education and scientific research, due to the

general structure of the ISO 9001 standard, but its implementation provided the premises for a systematic quality approach within the university and the promotion of the principles, values and norms specific to quality management.

After promulgation of the Quality Law and ARACIS specific higher education legal requirements, in 2005, the UPM Senate has decided the introduction of the Quality Management System by Decision no. 13/08.02.2005. As a consequence, the QMS was revised in the second edition in order to meet both requirements: *ARACIS standards and performance indicators* but also *ISO9001: 2008 standard*. In 2013 QMS was renewed in the third edition in order to meet *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area,* 3rd edition, ENQA 2009. In this way the university approach to quality has acquired a new relevance and dimension and its efficiency and effectiveness have been extended and increased.

Processes, mechanisms, procedures and instruments for quality planning, management and assurance have been developed and documented. The QMS processes have been defined, covering all the activities of the university: education, research, administration, relations with the extra-academic environment, students' services and last, but not least, the management processes. The priority has been addressed to the teaching/learning and research processes. The documentation of the Quality Management System presented in *appendix 10* contains: a) The Quality Policy; b) The Process Matrix for 6 system procedures, 27 process procedures; c) Supervisors of QMS procedures; d) Matrix for implementing ENQA standards in the procedures of the quality management system.

The quality mission is stated in the Quality Policy of the university, and the quality management system is regulated by the Quality Handbook. Both of them were shared across the institution, but still, the university further needs to increase staff awareness with regard to their content and to the internalisation of the quality values. When necessary, new procedures are completed and the existing ones are updated/ improved.

## III.2. Internal evaluation

A thorough internal evaluation is periodically carried out across the university in all areas: teaching and learning, research, administrative services, and services for the community.

An important role in quality assurance is played by the *assessing and quality auditing processes*, which are instruments for measure and control allowing information of management about QMS performances. They are support for the measures of educational quality improvement. They are carried on in multiple ways, by data collection, processing and analysis on quality evaluation:

**a**)-**Institutional internal assessment/evaluation** performed each year by QAEC with the support of QMC, which prepares the annual *quality self-evaluation report* (since the academic year 2005/2006). This report refers to the following areas: strategy and management, infrastructure, research, teaching and learning, administrative services, services towards the community, quality assurance, and communication. The report is presented and approved by the University Senate. It can be consulted in a printed format at the rector's office and is published electronically on the internet page of the university. It contains also "Proposals for improving the educational quality".

**b)-Internal audits** are accomplished effectively, periodically at an institutional level and at departmental levels and concerns all the domains. It is performed by internal auditors with adequate qualification and approved by the Senate. Finalizing internal audit takes place by the elaboration of a "Report of academic internal audit" which is presented to the University Senate and published on the website. The conclusions are further used by the top management in developing a SWOT analysis, aiming to address the identified weak points within the action plan, for quality improvement. Than the "Plan of quality improvement consequent to the internal audit" is elaborated.

**c)-**With respect to internal evaluation of the study programmes, the Curriculum Council represents the competent authority for the internal accreditation of the study programmes. Thus, before submission to external accreditation, each study programme granting degree certificates or diplomas is subject to the internal accreditation performed by the Curriculum Council, according to international best practices and the internal guidelines and standards.

**d)-**Scientific research is undergoing a process of quantitative evaluation. The results of the research activity are recorded in an internal database which allows a constant track of the number of publications, as well as the level of national and international recognition (prizes, distinctions, Academy memberships, professional organisation memberships, etc.). By using an on-line tool, evaluation of the exploitation of scientific research is annually performed by the RIGRPFMC, and

approved by Senate. The efforts to implement the *scientific research strategy* had an impact on the increase of scientific production. This leads to a great focus on the number of publications against research quality. We are aware that the number of publications is important for both national and international rankings, but in the same time, we acknowledge the importance of emphasizing a more in depth assessment of the quality of the research output.

**e)-**It is common practice for students to take part in the evaluation process and quality assurance. Evaluation of the academic staff by students is done yearly with support of CCGC; At the end of each semester, students may assess the quality of the teaching activity by filling in a survey. After the exam period, the faculty members have access to their own evaluation results, while the deans and head of departments have access to all evaluation results. A rather weak involvement of students in evaluating teachers/ courses performance is still registered.

**f)-**The overall evaluation of teaching staff is annually performed within the university departments, by the head of the department, including self-assessment, peer review and assessment by students. According to their position, teachers are assessed with a standard multi-criteria evaluation form. Individual assessment results are used at the department, faculty and university level, to establish corrective measures and decisions on teaching staff reward/ forfeit.

**g)-**In what regards the internal evaluation of the services provided by UPM, the responsibility of the *Public Internal Audit Office* is to ensure internal public auditing. It plans the audit, the domains that are to be audited and the components of the auditing process. The audited domains are represented by the budgetary and legal obligations. The results of internal auditing are communicated to the Senate. In what concerns the efficiency of the internal audit activity, there is the need to change the auditing system, which is currently based on verification activities into a modern internal audit based on risk management and internal control system.

**h)-**Self-evaluation of the study programmes performed, under the coordination of the study programme coordinator and with the support of the QMC. It is the support for external evaluation performed by ARACIS every 5 years. All the university degree programmes are accredited/ authorised to function (*appendix 2.3*).

**i)-**Self-evaluation of the institution performed under the coordination of the QMC and with support from QAEC and Quality Council. The Institutional self-evaluation report is the support for institutional external evaluation performed by ARACIS every 5 years. In the institutional evaluation performed in 2009/2010, UPM was granted the maximum rating, namely "**High Confidence**", the highest possible ranking given by ARACIS to an institution of higher education. (*appendix 6*).

The measures of educational quality improvement are implemented at an institutional level and within each faculty/department, on study programmes, as follows:

**a)-**The improvement of the educational quality at an institutional level: "The plan of measures for the educational quality improvement at UPM as a result of the internal institutional self evaluation, plan that is presented, discussed and approved in each year during the Senate meeting.

**b)-**The improvement of the educational quality within the faculties, on study programmes: as result of the analysis of the annual reports of self evaluation of the study programmes at the faculty level a plan of actions is prepared.

## III.3. European Guidelines implementation

The ENQA standards are highly recognised at both national and institutional level and represent a reference tool for the quality assurance system. These constitute a referential point for the quality management system, their application in the procedures of this system being presented in: The matrix of applying ENQA standards in the procedures of the quality management system *appendix 10d*.

These standards are applied in procedures referring to teaching and learning, but also examine monitoring and enhancement processes of other activities, such as administrative processes, services to society and research activities, through the procedures Monitoring client satisfaction, cod: PP-8.2.01, Carrying out benchmarking activities in UPM cod: PP-8.2.03, Management of communication, cod: PP-7.2.02, etc.

## III.4. Data gathering and evaluation results impact on activities

The QMS has created an organisational framework and the tools necessary to implement the strategies adopted by the UPM. The results presented below follow the main areas of activity:

***Educational Processes.*** Procedures for initiating, designing, monitoring and periodic evaluation of study programmes have been implemented, as well as instruments for: communication with the economic, social and cultural organisations; evaluation of financial efficiency for the didactic processes with the software instrument e-Budget; feedback from students/graduates/employers, etc.

***Research Processes.*** In the field of research, the university QMS consists of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and instruments for: (i) identifying the quality indicators for the research of excellence at university level adopting all indicators used at national and international level, based on a benchmarking principle with the top classified domains in the national ranking; (ii) Quality assurance of research resources and supporting research results; (iii) Exploitation of the research results at institutional/ departmental/ individual level, research quality evaluation.

***Human resources***. Quality assurance and improvement of human resources is achieved by processes and instruments for: planning the personnel structure according to the specific needs at university/ faculties/ departments/ students services levels; competences development; promotion of academic staff and of other categories of personnel; performance evaluation.

***Infrastructure.*** From the quality management perspective, during the past five years the focus has been on developing instruments for: planning the resources required considering the existent ones; performing public acquisitions according to the regulations in force; quality evaluation. For ensuring the efficient use of  infrastructure, management instruments were developed: procedures for acquisition progress and control, software application for monitoring the load of each lecture/seminar/laboratory room in order to get an efficient use of the spaces with an optimal schedule for students (between 8-14 for bachelor studies, 16-20 for master studies). Computer systems are implemented within all the structural units of the university so as to facilitate their use in the institutional quality assessment. The IT subsystems for the educational process uniweb.upm.ro allow archiving and monitoring of all the information necessary for the quality management system.

***Cooperation with the extra‑academic community.*** The development of mechanisms and instruments supporting the development of an interface between the university and the economic, social and cultural environment has been one of the QMS priorities during the past years. The frame provided by the new CCE structures, allows complex activities, with positive effects on the quality of the educational process in the field of lifelong learning. At the same time, graduate tracing mechanisms should be extended to all study programmes, since they provide valuable information.

## III.5. Evaluation results and institutional planning

Performed at least yearly, the internal evaluation processes allow extended analysis of the results (state of the art), and highlight the strengths and the weaknesses, thus they represents tools for management decisions. This path was followed for:
- Updated educational and training offer according to the requirements of the labour market;
- RTD restructuring, by organising research groups and research centres;
- Extended cooperation with extra-academic entities, at regional/national and international level;
- Developing students' facilities and increasing the students' involvement in decision-making;
- Developing management tools and paths, capable of supporting the university strategy.

This is an on-going process. The development of the society, the economic growth and the competition in the Higher Education and Research Areas continuously raise new challenges.

## III.6. Current practices and strategic choices relation

Being permanently updated in what concerns the quality assurance process at international level, UPM seeks to develop the best practices in relation to quality and to develop the competitiveness of the University at international level through joint projects, national and international events concerning quality assurance. These activities contributed to the development and implementation of the best practices and other innovative elements within quality assurance.

# IV. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

The UPM strategy (2013-2016) is based on a realistic SWOT analysis. This approach, considering the internal resources and the weaknesses, the opportunities and the unavoidable threats, is

yearly updated and supports the formulations of the Action Plans, with a focus on minimizing the risks in implementing the UPM Strategic Plan.

**Education -** As a university for the community, one of the main goals of the UPM is to increase the importance of its programmes. The master programmes curricula have to be adapted to a larger extent to the needs of the labour market. For fulfilling this purpose, a more efficient consultation with the representatives of the employers is necessary. The lack of sufficient doctoral scientific coordinators for some fields will be solved by the habilitation of some of our academic staff. We plan to increase the international visibility of our university in order to increase the incoming student mobility and the number of international students.

**Scientific Research -** In order to improve the quality of the research activity and to increase the research visibility of UPM, we need to decrease the bureaucracy by sending the specific documents in digital format and by reducing the number of required approvals. Research activity must be internationalised by participating in the European open-calls, participation of academics as evaluators, etc. It is necessary to develop the activity of innovative research through technological transfer.

**Community involvement -** In terms of improvements that can be made in the process of community involvement, UPM could encourage more the voluntary contribution of its staff in non-profit organisations as well as direct service to external partners by offering annual awards to faculty members and internal promotion through special sections on the university's website.

**Students Services -** We can say that students are pleased by the facilities and material base offered by UPM (student hostels, scholarships, leisure, public transport) but there are still some problems which should be attended to. The social scholarships do not fully cover the food and accommodation expenses. A higher formal involvement of the students' organisation is needed in decisional forums in each faculty and at University level.

**Management and support services -** In order to increase the efficiency and efficacy of the teaching-administrative process, we continue its improvement via ITC equipment. We aim at increasing the value of the public-public partnerships (with Tirgu-Mures City Hall, with the Centre Development Agency) and public-private partnerships.

**Quality management system** - We plan to make better use of the structures existing on quality assurance, by involving the members on a regular basis in the institutional monitoring process.

## The SWOT Analysis

**STRENGTHS**

*1. Teaching/training resources*

- *The teaching-training frame and instruments* include a permanently updated educational offer, adapted to the labour market needs and according to the Romanian and European standards;
- *The academic diversity of the university*, involving a wide range of study programmes (engineering, fundamental sciences, social sciences and humanities, law, economics) enables us to satisfy the regional/ national labour market needs;
- *Study programmes following the local economical needs at bachelor and master levels* developed for the major fields of competence within the university, allowing gradual knowledge acquiring and the students' personal development for research and for the high-tech labour market;
- *UPM provide alternative forms of education*: part-time; It has the CCE – a 'Lifelong Learning' centre, whose activity could be extended and promoted more publicly;
- *Students are well represented* in the decision structures of the university;
- *Students exchange with EU universities and practical placement* in companies allow future graduates to complete their portfolio of knowledge and skills in order to successfully start their careers;
- *The substantial investments in the teaching/training infrastructure* allowed the development of modern classrooms;
- *The information and documentation resources*, publication and subscriptions to data basis offered by the University Library are permanently renewed;
- *The Inter-regional centre for distance learning*, is able to organise meetings with worldwide partners and deliver/receive education at/from a distance;

- *Continuously improving the links* with high-schools, the school inspectorate, Teachers House (CCD), promoting the educational offer via staff and students associations.

## 2. Research resources

- *A coherent research approach* developed within the university and action plans, the support structures, the monitoring procedures and the evaluation tools supporting the research staff;
- *Efficient exploitation of the scientific results* by publications and by patents for technology transfer towards companies;
- *Advanced knowledge transfer towards the community*, by the development of an entrepreneurial culture in the university, within a core of specially devised courses;
- *Organizing high level scientific events*, open to the international research community represents one path for increasing the research visibility and international networking;
- *UPM is editing open access journals with high level of indexation*, a source for publishing our own research results at reasonable costs visible for the international community.

## 3. Social, cultural and sports facilities for the students

- *There are many facilities* for the academics, auxiliary staff and students for learning, research and leisure;
- *UPM provides modern accommodation* for its students in student hostels, the university campus has three locations for student residences refurbished during the past five years;
- *A modern sports facility* is open to the students;
- *The students and the students associations are supported by the university* for getting involved in major community actions and for raising the awareness of university values and resources.

## 4. Management resources for quality assurance of the education, training and research processes

- *The university has a modern, flexible organisational structure*, able to comply quickly with the requirements sensed on the labour market and in the community;
- *The Strategic Plan and the yearly Action Plans* highlight the points of major interest in developing the university by coherent and integrated actions;
- *The university departments* are able to provide information and complete data facilitating correct management decisions;
- *The management in the university is, at all levels, transparent* and the academic community is welcome to contribute to the development and implementation of the management decisions;
- *The Administrative Council and Senate decisions are communicated* on-line to the academic community and the website offers public updated information;
- *There are internal mechanisms for monitoring and internal evaluation* of the academic processes and of the university services;
- *Increased emphasis* on university's cooperation with the business environment and the local industry;
- *The University has teaching and research facilities* in new and renovated buildings;
- *Internet access* for students and university staff is provided;
- *UPM has implemented* for many years ongoing quality assurance mechanisms;
- *The organisation's openness* towards change.

## WEAKNESSES

- *Limited information on the labour market needs and on the graduates' career track*, but steps forward were taken by involving CCGC in collecting market needs and collection of information/tracking about graduates also by activating the ALUMNI Association;
- *Relatively high abandon rate from students suspending or leaving the university* before graduating, resulted from a complex of economic, social and personal factors. Therefore, a tutorship programme is implemented and CCGC plays an important role in this action;
- *Students have an average or low implication in the decision making process* due to the limited information provided about different actions that students can take. The university management structures act for improving the communication and for developing strong and functional links with the students' representatives;

- *An insufficient number of Ph.D. supervisors* relative to the number of full professors active in the university. Consequently, a set of stimulating measures is necessary recognizing and rewarding the effort for Ph.D. supervision;
- *Insufficient local, national and international visibility* of the university that may cause, on short term, a decrease of candidates accessing the university programmes and, on mid-term may endanger the university competitiveness. Therefore, international networking in education, training and research projects is highly supported;
- *There still is need for further organisational/ management procedures*, especially at administration level. The QMC is working for improving procedures that is an on-going process;
- *The share of public funding in* the university budget represents a sensitive point, especially during economic crisis. Therefore, further opening to national and international inter- and extra-academic cooperation and developing an attractive and adapted academic offer in pursued;
- *Reduced capacity to attract international students in study programmes*, particularly aiming the countries with an increased demographic growth;
- *The dropout rate is quite high* - 15.8% in the 2012-2013 academic year;
- *Reduced  number of permanently employed researchers*,
- *Insufficient structured stakeholder involvement* in the academic activity, which affects curricula content and the process of addressing market needs.

**Opportunities**
- *The national strategy for higher education and research* is nowadays supported by a set of strategic projects aiming to develop a unitary frame, and the instruments for evaluation and ranking, targeting quality assurance, according to the European Higher Education and Research Areas;
- *The new Law of Education*, promoting quality in higher education, by specific actions and by supporting universities to redesign their structure, for quality, efficiency and competitiveness;
- *UPM has a long tradition and a good reputation* in the country, so it can attract the best students;
- *Various possibilities for international* student and teacher mobility;
- *UPM could develop master programmes* which could even more efficiently meet the training needs of BSc graduates;
- *Enhancing the cooperation with the business environment*;
- *Existing community engagement* should be maintained and used as a competitive advantage;
- *European programmes for higher education and training* and European research priorities and programmes with topics of interest for UPM;
- *The location of UPM in the central part of Romania*, in a historic and multicultural area, thus favourable for attracting students from Central region, different country areas and from abroad;
- *Accessing European Funds* provide an opportunity to improve infrastructure and income for university staff;
- *The new EU funding programme* for research and innovation-Horizon 2020 (2014-2020).

**Threats**
- *Governmental financing for higher education and research,* has been decreasing in the past years and may result in insufficient funds for the academic processes. UPM is in a permanent effort to develop specific activities for attracting funds, exploiting the resources;
- *UPM is aware on the open competition* at national and international level, for attracting students, quality resources and funds. UPM is in a permanent effort for increasing the quality of the educational and training offer, in launching new study programmes requested by the labour market and with European correspondence, in opening towards the economic, social and cultural environment, in developing research programmes;
- *National legislation* which is not stimulating for attracting foreign non EU students;
- *Human resources development* is limited in attracting young academic staff, with competences for education and scientific research. The low remuneration of young beginners in higher education is lower than in companies and financial effort that are subject to complete doctoral theses for promotion in grades teachers contribute to the low attractiveness of academic careers;
- *Brain drain* of the highly qualified academic staff represents a potential risk, especially for the young staff members;

- *Limited access of the graduates on the labour market* represents a threat due to the economic crisis and due to the lack of real stimulation of national programmes for supporting the young graduates' employment. UPM considers that this threat can be diminished by organising yearly "Job Offer" and by involving the students in practical placement in companies;
- *Reduced competition at the university admittance* due to the decreased number of high-school graduates and reduced interest for high education of some graduates;
- *Legislative instability*;
- *Excessive centralisation* at the level of the Ministry of admission to higher education for international students;
- *The value of the master degree* on the labour market is unsure;
- *Legislative changes* in the manner of functioning of the doctoral schools;
- *Decrease in the quality of graduates'* training has a negative impact on research;
- *Lack of attractiveness* of a career in research;
- *Excessive bureaucracy* in managing research projects;
- *Research infrastructure* difficult to maintain and update;
- *Decreasing numbers of people* aged between 19-25 years (traditional students);
- *Mandatory retirement* for academic at 65;
- *Low wages for academics* in higher education, namely assistant lecturers, lecturers, research staff, teaching and administrative auxiliary staff, which causes the phenomenon of brain drain;
- *Global economic crisis*;
- *Decrease of income* of the public, which can cause a decrease in the amounts spent for education;
- *Increasing unemployment* and reduced job offer;
- *Competition of other universities* from Europe.

## CONCLUSION

Throughout its 53 years of history, *"Petru Maior" University of Tîrgu-Mureş* has developed into an important academic institution, at regional and national level.

The University strategy is formulated every four years, and the targets set for 2013-2016 continue in the same line of Excellence, Competitiveness, Accountability to Society and Integration in the community, in order to fulfil its mission of teaching and research and to obtain the state of "Teaching and scientific research university" offered by the national ranking of universities.

The university's top management develops periodic surveys for identifying the emergent weaknesses, those that might be strongly amplified by external factors. Insufficient effective communication among the staff, management and students represents a reason for concern and leads to a rather limited involvement of the students in the decision-making processes, although the frame for this exists and is respected. Meeting the students' representatives, giving feed-back on the problems identified constitute a path that will be further explored.

Other risks are linked with factors related to the national legislation for higher education, labour, economy, etc. Deriving from this, UPM has taken specific actions to diminish the risks related to the public funding, human resources and brain drain, the economic crisis and unemployment.

The strategic decisions UPM has adopted over the last years have promoted an institutional framework allowing the smooth implementation of the new Education Law No. 1/2011.

Given the available resources and taking advantage of the opportunities identified, **UPM aims** to: **a)** provide education adapted to the current global level of the knowledge-based society; **b)** conduct scientific research on a general scale for the benefit of the community in order to provide a classification of UPM among the education and research universities in the country; **c)** increase the natural integration of the university in the economic and social environment; **d)** manage its activities in accordance with the academic tradition of democracy, university autonomy and the demands of modern society; **e)** maintain a properly-sized infrastructure, capable of supporting at the same time education, research and innovation.

Aiming to further develop the quality culture, scientific research relevant to the needs of our society and the student-centred educational process, the self-evaluation process revealed within faculties, teaching staff and students a strong orientation towards high standards and the preservation of the university as a prestigious institution at national and international level.