INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY 
OF 
STEFAN CEL MARE UNIVERSITY 
OF SUCEAVA 
2021-2027
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List of abbreviation

AUF – Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (Francophone University Association)
ARACIS – National Council for Academic Evaluation and Accreditation
CEAC – Evaluation and Quality Assurance Commission
CSA – Asian Studies Club
SCTI – Communications and Information Technology Department
SRIAE – International Relations and European Affairs Department
SRPCI – Public Relations, Communication and Image Department
USV – Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava
ESN – European Student Network
CSUD – Doctoral Studies Council
CTTSC - Centre for Technology Transfer and Spin-off Companies
Established by the University Charter, the mission, basic principles and objectives of the Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava (USV) constitute the essential framework for the vision regarding internationalisation and the central axes of internationalisation development at USV, during 2021-2027.

USV’s identity is the consequence of a history that involves alignment with the objective regional context (political, social, economic, legislative, etc.), but also the permanent connection to international initiatives and strategies that reveal the permanent involvement in building its European identity and assuming a steady upward dynamics. USV’s desire to engage responsibly in the training of competent specialists for the society of the future is put into practice by the permanent orientation towards innovation, by adapting the educational offer and curricula to the constantly evolving level of knowledge and the needs identified in the labour market.

Promoting critical thinking and creativity, concerned with synchronising with new trends in Romanian and European education, aiming to create motivation and a culture of quality that generates knowledge, the university develops the free spirit, being actively engaged in local, regional and national development. The fundamental objectives that USV has assumed are to produce, promote and disseminate knowledge, directly support human development and provide services to the community to which it belongs.

According to the USV Charter, the university’s mission is to:

a) capitalise human potential by developing study programs in various fields: natural, engineering, biomedical and social sciences, humanities and arts, sports and physical education;

b) promote the values and traditions of the culture and civilisation of Bukovina, with its multicultural specificity;

c) support the fundamental European principles in an area where the credibility and identity of the European Union must be strengthened and expanded;

d) preserve and foster cultural diversity, strengthen ties with Romanians outside the country’s borders;

e) get involved in regional development to bridge the economic gaps with other EU member states, provide services to the community and internationalise USV through real affiliation with EU education policies and mechanisms;
f) train and develop qualified and highly qualified human resources in a regional, national and cross-border context;

g) develop critical thinking, personal and group initiative and the creative potential of members of the academic community;

h) promote scientific research, literary and artistic creation and sports performance;

i) assert Romanian culture and science in the world circuit of values\(^1\).

Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava is one of the most dynamic higher education institutions in Eastern Europe, with a tradition of over 50 years in the field. The ten faculties of USV provide 3-4-year undergraduate programmes, master studies, PhD and post-doctoral studies in areas such as humanities, technical, economic, natural and health sciences. The diversity of programs gives our academic institution the ability to meet the international challenges of an ever-changing society successfully.

USV aims to capitalise on students and teachers’ international experiences to contribute to developing an academic community capable of adapting to global changes and training specialists ready to integrate into an international labour market.

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1 The University's strategic plan for the period 2020-2024.
I. STEFAN CEL MARE UNIVERSITY OF SUCEAVA, AN INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

I.1. Context

Signatory of the Magna Charta Universitatum, Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava has adopted and implemented the Bologna Declaration on Higher Education principles. The university’s objectives focus on three fundamental functions (research, teaching/learning and training), which are carried out provided that institutional autonomy and academic freedom exist. The various fields of study give the main advantage of USV, the wide range of services in education, research, counselling, development, adapted to the students’ needs. The quality of education, research, infrastructure and community orientation services is certified by the High Degree of Confidence granted by ARACIS in 2019.

Over the past ten years, the main objectives of internationalisation have been to promote intercultural dialogue and harmonise academic and scientific standards with those of partner universities in Europe. Having a strategic position at the EU borders, the Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava is at the confluence of significant European cultures, assuming as core values the respect for multiculturalism and the acceptance of diversity of all kinds. Internationalisation transcends administrative borders. In this perspective, USV is committed to contributing to the educational, social and economic development of the community by providing accessible and internationally recognised academic programs, instilling civic engagement and responsible behaviour towards the environment society.

According to the Strategic Plan for the period 2020-2024, USV aims to strengthen the honorary positions obtained in national and international rankings by developing European networks, by opening up to new educational markets in the former Soviet Union, China, the Middle East and North Africa, by optimising actions on internationalisation and the activation of new sources and international projects.

The Erasmus+ program is the primary mechanism that facilitates staff and students’ mobility, training specialists for an international labour market and a diverse and demanding society. USV considers the recognition and encouragement of staff and students’ international experience as crucial points that serve to modernise the university and the academic community. The continuous adaptation to modern standards in research, education and training is based on the ambitious goals of the Erasmus+ program, and USV is ready to respond actively and proactively to new societal challenges.
and significant global trends. The Erasmus+ program implementation is also supported by all faculties, which in turn provide support to members of the academic community, at the administrative and educational level, under the supervision of Erasmus+ coordinators.

USV shares the vision of the European Education Area and supports the objectives by encouraging the free mobility of students and staff, recognising qualifications in higher education, encouraging multilingualism, through equal access to education, regardless of socio-economic status, by promoting the European Heritage, encouraging and implementing lifelong learning and digital skills (technological support for students to facilitate their access to digitalisation and online education).

I.2. Strategic vision

USV will be in 2027 an institution recognised for its excellence in education and research, open to international experience in the global education and research space, proactive and flexible in the face of societal challenges of the 21st century.

In a dynamic national and international environment, USV will respond proactively to the new challenges in science and education, improving the quality of its activities. Internationalisation will become a common goal of the academic community that will engage USV management at all levels.

The internationalisation strategy for the next period focuses on the following strategic directions:

1) Excellence in education, research and training through internationalisation

For the next period, international development will aim at constantly reviewing the academic offer following the requirements and results of the European labour market, promoting scientific research and researchers, ensuring a quality educational offer and supporting academic performance in all fields according to the latest changes by encouraging diversity, social inclusion and respect for the environment.

Special attention will be paid to PhD schools and doctoral training. To increase the quality of PhD students’ practice and increase the quality of doctoral theses, the commissions for public defence of postgraduate theses will include foreign experts, teachers from prestigious universities outside Romania.

2) Strengthen and expand international partnerships with EU and non-EU countries.

Capitalise the advantage given by USV’s strategic geographic position in international collaboration
USV will seek to strengthen partnerships with EU countries, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, as well as with countries of the former Soviet Union, China, the Middle East and North Africa.

The main criteria for choosing partners will be: prior cooperation in European or research projects, shared objectives and values, excellence in education, research and training, prospects for building solid and sustainable partnerships. The annual reviews of the operational plan on internationalisation also take into account the international context and trends in the fields of competence of the 10 USV faculties and their proposals for concluding new partnerships.

3) **Development of the administrative and organisational capacity to strengthen internationalisation at USV**

The implementation of a coherent policy that highlights all the structures of the university can only be achieved by holding all members of the academic community accountable for the internationalisation process and by their active involvement. All faculties’ solidarity supports this process by aligning their internationalisation strategies with the university strategy and elaborating operational plans at the faculty level. The measures to be implemented in the next period will strengthen the organisational conditions and prepare the framework for digitising administrative procedures under the Erasmus+ program, developing an optimal framework for combining on-site learning with online learning following European strategic directions.
II. STRATEGIC PLAN FOR USV INTERNATIONALISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The strategic internationalisation plan is structured on the strategic directions stated above, on relevant areas subordinated to the directions. Operational goals and objectives are formulated for each area. The strategic areas were outlined after consultation with all relevant stakeholders by analysing the current context and integrating the students and teachers’ proposals involved in the internationalisation activity.

Strategic Direction 1: Excellence in education, research and training through internationalisation

USV will encourage and support staff and student mobility in both directions, trying to connect with new trends, cultures and educational systems. Incoming and outgoing participants will act as “ambassadors” in promoting the university. USV wants to become a significant local player in implementing environmental protection policies, social inclusion, civic spirit and volunteering.

Area 1.1. Student Mobility

**Objective 1.1.1 Increase the number of international students wishing to pursue an entire course of study at USV by 10% until 2027**

Action 1.1.1.a. Increase the attractiveness of USV for international students who want to pursue an entire course of study by introducing at least 2 study programs and/or modules in foreign languages (English, Chinese);

Action 1.1.1.b. Easy access to information on the educational offer thanks to the English translation of USV and faculties’ web pages and until 2023;

Action 1.1.1.c. Development of training courses in Romanian (preparatory year) outside the borders of Romania, particularly in Ukraine and China (establishment of an implementation plan until 2022 and launch of a new partnership until 2024);

Action 1.1.1.d. Elaboration of a plan to promote the university and attract international students who want to follow a complete course of studies.

**RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Vice-Rector for Education and Academic Quality Assurance, Deans, SCTI**

**Objective 1.1.2. 10% increase in temporary outgoing study mobility**
Action 1.1.2.a. Organising at least two sessions annually to present the opportunities of international mobility programs;
Action 1.1.2.b. Increasing inter-institutional agreements with universities in countries that are most popular with students;
Action 1.1.2.c. Increasing the number of agreements for the mobility of doctoral students.
**RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus+ Coordinators, SRIAE**

**Objective 1.1.3. 10% increase in temporary outgoing traineeship mobility**
Action 1.1.3.a. Concluding agreements with economic agents that have fields of activity compatible with the study programs offered by USV;
Action 1.1.3.b. Creating a database with internship companies from abroad for each faculty, based on students’ positive experiences and an evaluation system for the Erasmus + training internship.

**RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus+ Coordinators, SRIAE**

**Objective 1.1.4. Increasing the quality of temporary outgoing study mobility**
Action 1.1.4.a. Creating an electronic mobility management guide, structured by countries and universities, based on the reports completed by former Erasmus students, with the presentation of good practices, listing the problems encountered and the means of solving them;
Action 1.1.4.b. Organising a training session held by ESN Suceava, in addition to the one organised by SRIAE, for each series of selected Erasmus+ students;
Action 1.1.4.c. Organising the event Erasmus Open Doors twice a year to promote Erasmus+ mobility.

**RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus+ Coordinators, SRIAE**

**Objective 1.1.5. Increasing the quality of temporary incoming student mobility**
Action 1.1.5.a. Improving the infrastructure and services offered on campus to incoming students;
Action 1.1.5.b. Optimising the reception and assistance services offered to incoming students, with the support of the ESN Suceava and of the faculties;
Action 1.1.5.c. Continuously updating the necessary information for incoming students (especially information related to the curriculum and courses description) on the SRIAE
website, based on the information sent by the ten faculties, until the beginning of July of each year;

Action 1.1.5.d. Implementing a satisfaction questionnaire on the quality of the mobility carried out by incoming students to formulate proposals for prompt optimisation of the quality of services provided;

Action 1.1.5.e. Organising *Erasmus Welcome Day* events to ensure the integration and orientation of Erasmus students at the beginning of the exchange mobility;

Action 1.1.5.f. Organising the *Bucovina Study Trip* events to promote the regional cultural heritage values according to the European Education Area’s objectives.

**RESPONSIBLE:** Vice-Rector for International Relations, General-Administrative Director, Erasmus + Coordinators, SRIAE in collaboration with ESN Suceava

Area 1.2. Staff mobility

**Objective 1.2.1. 10% increase in outgoing staff mobility**

Action 1.2.1.a. Increasing the degree of recognition of outgoing international mobility in annual evaluations;

Action 1.2.1.b. Dissemination of Erasmus+ experiences through meetings organised at the faculty level.

**RESPONSIBLE:** Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus+ Coordinators, SRIAE

**Objective 1.2.2. 10% increase in the number of incoming staff and increasing the quality of incoming mobility**

Action 1.2.2.a. Improving the quality of assistance provided to incoming staff by the counterpart department/host faculty and SRIAE;

Action 1.2.2.b. Involvement of incoming staff in the activities/events organised by USV included in the annual plan of events or by initiating workshops and round tables;

Action 1.2.2.c. Stimulating outgoing staff to act as *USV ambassadors* and to encourage teachers from abroad to come to USV.

**RESPONSIBLE:** Vice-Rector for International Relations, Erasmus+ Coordinators, Deans, SRIAE
Area 1.3. Internationalisation at home

Objective 1.3.1. Introduction of an international dimension in the curriculum, for all levels of study

Action 1.3.1.a. Increasing the internationalisation degree of the content of the courses by organising, at the faculty level, an annual meeting on the topic of curriculum internationalisation, starting with the academic year 2021-2022;

Action 1.3.1.b. Facilitating contacts between the USV students and incoming academic staff by organising open access courses.

RESPONSIBLE: Deans, Erasmus + Coordinators, CEAC and study program managers

Objective 1.3.2. Internationalisation of activities carried out on the USV campus

Action 1.3.2.a. Organising international events for USV students (minimum three such events/year) with the support of the Faculty of Letters and Communication Sciences and some student organisations or cultural associations;

Action 1.3.2.b. Promotion of international destinations through presentation events of partner countries, by incoming Erasmus+ students (one presentation / semester);

Action 1.3.2.c. Organising workshops and round tables within the faculties with incoming Erasmus+ teachers (Experience the World @ USV initiated in 2016).

RESPONSIBLE: General Administrative Director, Dean of the Faculty of Letters and Communication Sciences, SRIAЕ

Objective 1.3.3. Dissemination of international experience

Action 1.3.3.a. Participation of the beneficiaries of outgoing/incoming mobilities in shows organised by USV Radio station, at least one participation/month;

Action 1.3.3.b. Local media coverage of all USV international activities/events (SRIAЕ webpage, press releases in the local media).

RESPONSIBLE: SRPCI, Deans, Vice-Rector for International Relations

Objective 1.3.4. Internationalisation and training of staff

Action 1.3.4.a. Increasing the level of knowledge of at least two foreign languages among academic and non-academic staff, according to the objectives of the European Education Area (EEA), by organising courses and developing a system of...
incentives to encourage academic and non-academic staff to learn or to improve their knowledge of foreign languages;

Action 1.3.4.b. Improving the services provided by the administrative staff to international students by organising at least one meeting/year with the SRIAE department;

Action 1.3.4.c. Organising foreign language courses for USV teachers and administrative staff with the Synergia Linguarium Center of the Faculty of Letters and Communication Sciences (sponsored course from own funds or Erasmus+).

RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Erasmus+ Coordinators, Deans, SRIAE, General Administrative Director

Area 1.4. Internationalisation of research activity

Objective 1.4.1. Internationalisation of human resources and research partnerships

Action 1.4.1.a. Attracting teachers, researchers and PhD students from abroad in the research activity within USV laboratories;

Action 1.4.1.b. Increasing the number of international partnerships in the field of research and research projects carried out in international collaboration;

Action 1.4.1.c. Development of research projects in international collaboration and attracting international funding for USV research;

Action 1.4.1.d. Increasing the number of teachers and doctoral students who benefit from research internships abroad (minimum one month);

Action 1.4.1.e. Inclusion in the commissions for the defence of doctoral theses of specialists, researchers and teachers from prestigious universities outside Romania.

RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity, CSUD Director, Vice-deans for Scientific Activity, Project Management Office.

Objective 1.4.2. Increasing the international visibility of USV research results

Action 1.4.2.a. Protection of USV’s intellectual and industrial property at international level by increasing the number of filed patent applications and the number of patents obtained at the European Patent Office, as well as international copyright;

Action 1.4.2.b. Analysis of the international impact of USV’s research fields and promotion of international directions of excellence;

Action 1.4.2.c. Evaluating the contribution of USV research activity to the USV ranking in the international tops and stimulating contributions to the research indicators from international rankings;
Action 1.4.2.d. Development of an online platform in English to present USV research results and create promotional materials in foreign languages dedicated to USV research.

RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for Scientific Activity, Vice-deans for Scientific Activity, Project Management Office, Centre for Technology Transfer and Spin-off Companies (CTTSC), SCTI

Strategic direction 2: Strengthen and expand international partnerships with EU and non-EU countries. Capitalizing USV’s strategic geographic position in international collaboration

The main criteria for choosing partners are previous cooperation in European or research projects, common goals and values, excellence in education, research and training, and the prospects for building solid and sustainable partnerships. The identification of strategic partners will be considered to consolidate the existing collaboration based on the common areas of competence and specialisation. The openness to new cooperation that could benefit USV’s teaching and research activities will be maintained in line with USV’s institutional strategy.

Cooperation with non-EU partner countries has enriched multiculturalism and the education process. In the next period, the aim will be to increase the degree of internationalisation of USV in other markets than those of the Republic of Moldova or Ukraine, targeting countries in the former Soviet Union, China, the Middle East and North Africa.

Having a rich managerial experience obtained by running the former Socrates and Lifelong Learning Programs, USV wants to be part of European Universities networks within the European Universities project.

USV is open to transnational academic cooperation initiatives, being involved in 16 double degree programs. USV will continue to seek opportunities and use resources to develop joint or double degree programs, especially in the areas of future professions and smart specialisations.

Area 2.1. Partnerships and cooperation

Objective 2.1.1 Strengthen and actively maintain existing partnerships
Action 2.1.1.a. Better management of existing partnerships by creating a database containing all the activities carried out within each partnership, starting with 2021-2022;
Action 2.1.1.b. Identification of strategic partners at faculty and university level, depending on common objectives, geographical position, previous collaborations;
Action 2.1.1.c. Development of an action plan for activating at least one strategic partnership/year; Action 2.1.1.d. Strengthen cooperation with partners within the Collegium Carphaticum Consortium.

RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus+ Coordinators, SRIAE

**Objective 2.1.2. Increase the number of partnerships with EU and non-EU countries, especially with ex-Soviet countries, China, the Middle East and North Africa**

Action 2.1.2.a. Promote the educational offer and the research activity of USV in the regions of interest;
Action 2.1.2.b. Increase the number of partnerships with foreign companies, using the alumni community;
Action 2.1.2.c. Participation of USV teachers and students in events and actions organised by partners from the EU and non-EU countries (International Weeks, Summer Schools, workshops, etc.), where they have the opportunity to meet representatives of other universities with which USV does not have partnership agreements.

RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus+ Coordinators, SRIAE

**Objective 2.1.3. Strengthening cooperation with universities in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine**

Action 2.1.3.a. Extend collaboration in the field of research and education with partner institutions from the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine by jointly carrying out at least two projects per year;
Action 2.1.3.b. Increasing the number of double-degree study programs;
Action 2.1.3.c. An increased activity carried out within the Romanian Language Lectorates of USV in Chernivtsi and Odesa;
Action 2.1.3.d. Intensify cooperation with partners within the CUMRU Consortium and the Bucovina Universities Consortium.

RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus+ Coordinators, SRIAE

**Objective 2.1.4. Achieve at least one network of excellence within the European Universities program**

Action 2.1.4.a. Develop and strengthen cooperation within the European Interuniversity Consortium, of which USV is part;
Action 2.1.4.b. Carrying out at least one European Universities project by 2027.

RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus+ Coordinators, SRIA

Strategic direction 3: Development of the administrative and organisational capacity to strengthen the internationalisation of USV

A coherent policy that highlights all university structures can only be implemented by holding all academic community members accountable for the internationalisation process and by actively involving them in internationalisation efforts. Over the next period, USV will create the organisational conditions for digitising administrative procedures under the Erasmus + program and set the framework to facilitate the combination of technology-assisted learning and on-site learning through blended (combined) learning solutions. Every effort will be made to improve the quality of mobility through digital tools designed to support incoming and outgoing mobility.

Area 3.1. Administration and management of internationalisation activity

Objective 3.1.1. Improve the reception conditions for foreign guests/students and the working conditions of SRIA

Action 3.1.1.a. Allocation of adequate space for activities carried out by the SRIA (reception area for students and international guests and back-office);
Action 3.1.1.b. Consolidation of the positive image of USV through the continuous updating of the SRIA site;
Action 3.1.1.c. Provide promotional materials for incoming and outgoing services by creating personalised materials (Erasmus Welcome Kit), based on the concept developed in the previous strategic period.

RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, General Administrative Director, SRIA, SCTI

Area 3.2. Digitisation of internationalisation activity. Paperless education

Objective 3.2.1. Digital centralisation of all international activities

Action 3.2.1.a. creation of a digital platform to manage internationalization activities.

RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus+ Coordinators, SRIA, SCTI
Objective 3.2.2. Infrastructure development and staff training for the digitisation of courses and the possibility of combined and/or virtual international mobility (blended/virtual mobility)

Action 3.2.2.a. training of personnel in the field of digitisation;
Action 3.2.2.b. Equip the necessary technique to support the activity in digital format.
RESPONSIBLE: Rector, Deans, Vice-Rector Competency and CEAC

Objective 3.2.3. Implementation of the European Card Initiative, through training programs and information materials

Action 3.2.3.a. Organising training and develop digital information materials to familiarise Erasmus+ coordinators and Erasmus+ program beneficiaries with the digital platforms provided by the European Commission (Dashboard, Erasmus+ Mobile App and Online Learning Agreement);
Action 3.2.3.b. Develop the procedures needed to implement the Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) policy and digitisation.
RESPONSIBLE: Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus+ Coordinators, SRIAE

Objective 3.3.1. Increase the international visibility of USV

Action 3.3.1.a. involvement of staff and outgoing/incoming students in promoting USV, using specific promotion tools (information kit, video clip, etc.);
Action 3.3.1.b. Improve the attractiveness of the USV site through changes in content and image;
Action 3.3.1.c. Increase the visibility of USV by participating in educational fairs, with the involvement of USV teachers and students;
Action 3.3.1.d. Participation of SRIAE staff in international weeks and other actions organised by partner universities;
Action 3.3.1.e. Participation of teachers and administrative staff selected for Erasmus+ outgoing mobility at international weeks, to promote USV;
Action 3.3.1.f. Organisation of events to promote USV with international partners (an international month at USV, an international week at USV, etc.);
Action 3.3.1.g. Creation of a biannual newsletter in the field of internationalisation (disseminated internally within USV).
RESPONSIBLE: Rector, Vice-Rector for International Relations, Deans, Erasmus + Coordinators, SRIAE, SCTI, SRPCI
III. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE STRATEGY

The strategic plan will be periodically reviewed and updated according to changes that will occur locally, nationally and internationally. The pandemic effects will also impact the internationalisation process, and a review and alignment of objectives and activities to post-pandemic realities will likely be required. For all the objectives and actions mentioned above, the data will be collected in an electronic database to ensure an adequate assessment of the progress made and appropriate decisions at all management levels.

The implementation of the activities foreseen in the strategy will be based on the annual operational plans. The yearly evaluations will monitor the degree of achievement of the proposed objectives.

The final evaluation of the strategy will be made in 2027, and the operational/strategic plan will be analysed every year, following:

- identification of factors that block or hinder the achievement of results;
- elaboration of additional objectives and actions, following the identified needs;
- evaluation of the parties involved, responsible for the implementation of the actions;
- allocating the resources necessary for the performance of the business plan.

In the process of monitoring and readjustment, working groups for internationalisation will be involved: the Internationalization Commission of the USV Senate, the representative students and other relevant groups to ensure a transparent and accountable process.