

# The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain Sociology

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October 2021

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## I. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter, the following shall be summarized:

- the context in which this external evaluation report was drafted (**the type of evaluation, the period of the evaluation visit, the composition of the Experts Committee** etc.);
- details about the doctoral school(s) of which the doctoral domain under review is part (number of doctoral advisors, number of students, institutional context, short history etc.);
- details about the doctoral study domain under review (number of students, institutional context, short history etc.).

This is a report of my involvement as ARACIS International Expert Evaluator of the Doctoral Study Domain Sociology within IOSUD West, University of Timisoara. The evaluation was carried out by ARACIS from Monday October 11<sup>th</sup> till Friday October 15<sup>th</sup> 2021 as remote meetings (via Zoom) and on Thursday October 14<sup>th</sup> on the site. Zoom meetings were simultaneously translated into English. In addition to me, in the role of an external evaluator, the group consisted of professor dr. Maria Constantinescu, a coordinator from University of Pitești, and a PhD student Maria Cristina Bularca from University of Craiova. I wrote the report myself, there was minimal communication between us during the evaluation process and regarding the final report and the communication always started on my initiative. In this regard I cannot say that there was any team work of evaluators at all, which I consider to be an unusual departure from other European evaluations in which I have participated. Nevertheless, bellow are my results.

West University of Timisoara is the main higher education institution and research centre in Western Romania. Its community comprises roughly 16000 students and over 700 academic staff. It is a comprehensive university including 11 faculties with their respective departments, as well as a Department of Teacher Training. The

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<sup>1</sup> Each time when applicable the information shall be presented gender-wise.



faculties functioning within the framework of UVT offer nationally accredited study programmes at Bachelor, Master and Doctoral level in the following subject areas: Arts and Design; Chemistry, Biology, Geography; Economics and Business Administration; Law; Letters, History and Theology; Mathematics and Computer Science; Music and Theatre; Physical Education and Sports; Physics; Political Sciences, Philosophy and Communication Sciences; Sociology and Psychology. West University of Timisoara was established first with the Faculty of Philosophy in 1841 and then of the Faculty of Law (1845). Based on the Royal Decree no. 660 of December 30, 1944, signed by King Mihai I of Romania, West University of Timisoara, new alma mater studiorum, was able to offer university study programs in the fields of Law, Letters and Philosophy, Sciences, Human Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Pharmacy and Theology. Sociology was offered only after the events in 1989 when substantial changes in the structure of the university occurred. In 1990 the sociology existed in Sociology and Psychology department within the Faculty of Letters, from 1994 it existed as Faculty of Sociology and Psychology. The same year the institution received the current name – West University of Timisoara by the Decision of the Romanian Government no. 458 of 29.07.1994. The concept of doctoral school was created by Romanian Government Decision no. 567 of June 15, 2005 on the organization and conduct of doctoral studies, and with the application of the principles The Bologna Process, in the West University of Timisoara. The field of university doctoral studies of sociology is currently functional within IOSUD-UVT in Doctoral School of Philosophy, Sociology and Political Science.

## II. Methods used

This chapter will contain the methods and tools used in the external evaluation process, before and during the evaluation visit, including at least:

- The analysis of the internal evaluation report of the doctoral study domain under review and its Annexes;
- The analysis of documents made available by the IOSUD, in physical format, during the evaluation visit (if such documents have been requested);
- The analysis of documents, data and information available on the IOSUD/Doctoral School(s) website, in electronic format;
- Visiting the buildings included in the institution's property, comprising (indicative and non-exhaustive list, which shall be changed according to the context):
  - classrooms;
  - laboratories;
  - the institution's library;
  - research centers;
  - the Career Counselling and Guidance Center;
  - lecture halls for students;
  - the student residences;
  - the student cafeteria;
  - sports ground etc.;
- Meeting/discussions with doctoral students in the doctoral study domain under review;
- Meeting/Discussions with the graduates of the doctoral study domain under review;
- Meeting/Discussions with employers of the graduates in the doctoral study domain under review;
- Meeting/Discussions with the school officials of the Doctoral School(s) in which the doctoral study domain under review is operating;
- Meeting/Discussions with the doctoral advisors in the doctoral study domain under review;
- Meeting/discussions with the representatives of the various structures of the IOSUD/Doctoral School(s) in which the doctoral study domain under review is operating;



- The Council of the Doctoral School, the University Senate, the Board of Directors, the Quality Assessment and Assurance Commission, the Quality Assurance Department, the Ethics Commission (including with the student representatives of these structures);
- the Career Counselling and Guidance Center;
- student organizations;
- secretariats;
- various departments/administrative offices (Social/Student residences-Cafeterias etc.);
- Application of questionnaires to doctoral students or academic staff in the doctoral study domain under review.

The evaluation process started with signing the contracts with ARACIS and obtaining the relevant materials, such as the timetable, internal evaluation report (112 pages), report templates, the Doctoral Studies Code of June 29th, 2011 and the Order no. 3651/12.04.2021 for the approval of the Methodology on conducting the evaluation of university doctoral studies and of the systems of criteria, standards and performance indicators used in the evaluation, credentials and how to access the Internal evaluation reports and their annexes uploaded by the evaluated institution. The evaluation itself was held in a hybrid mode. I attended all the zoom meetings with all the stakeholders. I didn't get any information from the coordinator if anybody from our group was present on the meeting at the University on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> October and what were the results of such visit. Therefore, my report is based exclusively on written material and interviews with stakeholders, that is with the management staff from the university, teaching and research staff, students and student representatives, graduates of the doctoral study domain under review, faculty administration, ethics committee, quality assessment commission, employers of previous doctoral students. All questions I had were properly answered by the participants. I requested one additional document during the evaluation and the faculty sent in to me the same day and with all information I asked for (the document is enclosed to the report).

### III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

#### **Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY**

*\*general description of domain analysis.*

#### **Criterion A.1. The administrative, managerial institutional structures and the financial resources**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

*Standard A.1.1. The institution organizing doctoral studies (IOSUD) has implemented the effective functioning mechanisms provided for in the specific legislation on the organization of doctoral studies.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator A.1.1.1.** *The existence of specific regulations and their application at the level of the Doctoral School of the respective university doctoral study domain:*

*(a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;*

*(b) the Methodology for conducting elections for the position of director of the Council of doctoral school (CSD), as well as elections by the students of their representative in CSD and the evidence of their conduct;*

*(c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);*

*(d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;*



e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;

f) the contract for doctoral studies;

g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The institutional rule governing the structure and conduct of university doctorate studies complies with current legal regulations and is revised on a regular basis to reflect new legislative directives and laws. The evaluated institution submitted the methodology for conducting elections for the position of director of the Doctoral School Council, as well as the election of a student representative and evidence of their actions. The approaches for arranging and conducting doctoral studies (for doctoral student entrance, for doctoral study completion) were also submitted. Similarly, the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of a doctoral degree obtained abroad, as well as functional management structures (Council of the Doctoral School), with proof of meeting regularity and the contract for doctoral studies, were explained. Finally, the internal procedures for evaluating and approving requests for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies were also provided. The evaluated institution is judged to have provided all required specific regulations as well as verification of their application at the level of the Doctoral School. This performance indicator is determined to be met based on the facts, the results from the assessed institution's documentation, and the remote meetings.

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

There are **no recommendations** regarding the institutional, administrative and management structures.

**Performance Indicator A.1.1.2.** *The doctoral school' Regulation includes mandatory criteria, procedures and standards binding on the aspects specified in Article 17, paragraph (5) of the Government Decision No. 681/2011 on the approval of the Code of Doctoral Studies with subsequent amendments and additions.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This performance indicator is regarded fulfilled based on the facts, results from the reviewed institution's papers, and the evaluation remote meetings themselves.

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

There are **no recommendations** regarding the regulations of the doctoral school, its precedures, standards and criteria of doctoral studies.

**Standard A.1.2.** *The IOSUD has the logistical resources necessary to carry out the doctoral studies' mission.*

\*general description of the standard analysis.



**Performance Indicator A.1.2.1.** *The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

A computerized PhD IT system was presented in remote meetings and in printed documentation at the evaluated institution.

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

There are **no recommendations** regarding the existence and effectiveness of computer system.

**Performance Indicator A.1.2.2.** *The existence and use of an appropriate software program and evidence of its use to verify the percentage of similarity in all doctoral theses.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

There are **no recommendations** regarding the existence and use of the antiplagiatory system. The faculty uses two systems, and students can check the percentage of similarity of their texts on their own, which is a good thing because it allows them to constantly assess their methodological preparedness and integrity. Students who use an anti-plagiarism system, according to one philosophy professor, present at on-line meetings, are encouraged to cheat. My take on this is less negative; I believe that the ability to use the system encourages students to use sources with a greater consideration and critical thinking.

*Standard A.1.3. The IOSUD makes sure that financial resources are used optimally, and the revenues obtained from doctoral studies are supplemented through additional funding besides governmental funding.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator A.1.3.1.** *Existence of at least one research or institutional / human resources development grant under implementation at the time of submission of the internal evaluation file, per doctoral study domain under evaluation, or existence of at least 2 research or institutional development / human resources grant for the doctoral study domain, obtained by doctoral thesis advisors operating in the evaluated domain within the past 5 years. The grants address relevant themes for the respective domain and, as a rule, are engaging doctoral students.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself



- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

There are **no recommendations** in this regard.

I requested a list of current projects as well as grants awarded during the previous accreditation period (see: tabel proiecte si nivel de implicare) and discovered that supervisors were awarded funding from the area of study domain that addressed important issues and involved PhD students.

**Performance Indicator \*A.1.3.2.** *The percentage of doctoral students active at the time of the evaluation, who for at least six months receive additional funding sources besides government funding, through scholarships awarded by individual persons or by legal entities, or who are financially supported through research or institutional / human resources development grants is not less than 20%.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **partially fulfilled**.

The faculty has developed a set of tools for awarding PhD students in sociology, including a financial support strategy for teaching and research activities, a system for holding scientific project competitions, and a procedure for organizing action research project competitions. For all PhD students, an institutional framework was built for giving grants, scholarships, and funding scientific and research activity. Students are also involved in ongoing institutional development projects that are overseen by members of the Doctoral School. Nevertheless, the number of students involved in and funded by research or institutional/human resource development grants is less than 20%.

**Recommendation:** The department's grant-seeking activities should be strengthened. This proposal, however, is easier said than done, because the precarity of young and even experienced researchers is a problem throughout Europe. It should be noted that the agency's criterion is developed from a perspective that has little to do with reality. Professors are aware of the issue; they are working to secure projects; they also have results, but not in the quantitative sense that the state requires.

**Performance Indicator \*A.1.3.3.<sup>2</sup>** *At least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants obtained by the university through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system is used to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students (attending conferences, summer schools, training, programs abroad, publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.).*

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<sup>2</sup> The indicators marked with an asterisk (\*) hold a special status, referring exclusively to the evaluation of doctoral studies domains, as per Article 12 from the annex No.1 of the Order of the minister of education No. 3651/12.04.2021 approving the Methodology for evaluating university doctoral studies and the system of criteria, standards and performance indicators used in the evaluation. In case they are not met, the Agency extends a period of maximum 3 years to IOSUD to correct the respective deficiencies.



- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

*Recommendations:*

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **partially fulfilled**.

The faculty organizes trainings and professional development for doctoral students. It also organizes summer schools to support the professional development of teachers and PhD students through the training of the research skills. The faculty covers the costs of summer school.

Despite all the efforts, some students are unaware of the additional funding available for publishing scientific papers. In addition, from March 2020 to April 2021 the funds for conferences were rescheduled due to the pandemic, when most of academic events were on-line.

**Recommendation:** Because the problem is systemic and not limited to sociology, it must be addressed in its whole. As a result, it's important to clarify that this indicator is only partially met.

## **Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

*Standard A.2.1. The IOSUD has a modern research infrastructure to support the conduct of doctoral studies' specific activities.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator A.2.1.1.** *The venues and the material equipment available to the doctoral school enable the research activities in the evaluated domain to be carried out, in line with the assumed mission and objectives (computers, specific software, equipment, laboratory equipment, library, access to international databases etc.). The research infrastructure and the provision of research services are presented to the public through a specific platform. The research infrastructure described above, which was purchased and developed within the past 5 years will be presented distinctly.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

*Recommendations:*

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **fulfilled**

In terms of allocated spaces and available auxiliary services the research facilities accessible to PhD students meet all modern needs. The research infrastructure is well-equipped, which may assist and motivate students to appropriately engage in their research activities.

Some students are unaware of the library's remote access capabilities.

**Recommendation:** Professors should give or highlight this option more frequently, in my opinion. However, because this was noted by only one student who is studying abroad at the same time, it's possible that the information was given accurately but was forgotten.



### **Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resources**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

*Standard A.3.1. At the level of each domain there are sufficient qualified staff to ensure the conduct of doctoral study program.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator A.3.1.1.** *Minimum three doctoral thesis advisors within that doctoral domain, and at least 50% of them (but no less than three) meet the minimum standards of the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU) in force at the time when the evaluation is carried out, which standards are required and mandatory for obtaining the enabling certification.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*Recommendations:*

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The minimum standard is achieved. The documentation contains all necessary information on the employment of the professors.

There are **no recommendations** regarding this indicator.

**Performance Indicator \*A.3.1.2.** *At least 50% of all doctoral advisors have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*Recommendations:*

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This indicator is **fulfilled** and I have **no recommendations** to it.

**Performance Indicator A.3.1.3.** *The study subjects in the education program based on advanced higher education studies pertaining to the doctoral domain are taught by teaching staff or researchers who are doctoral thesis advisors / certified doctoral thesis advisors, professors / CS I or lecturer / CS II, with proved expertise in the field of the study subjects they teach, or other specialists in the field who meet the standards established by the institution in relation with the aforementioned teaching and research functions, as provided by the law.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*Recommendations:*





**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This indicator is **fulfilled** and I have **no recommendations** to it.

**Performance Indicator \*A.3.1.4.** *The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than 12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs<sup>3</sup> does not exceed 20%.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This indicator is **fulfilled** and I have **no recommendations** to it.

*Standard A.3.2. The Doctoral advisors within the domain are carrying out a scientific activity visible at international level.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator A.3.2.1.** *At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in the evaluated domain have at least 5 Web of Science- or ERIH-indexed publications in magazines of impact, or other achievements of relevant significance for that domain, including international-level contributions that indicate progress in scientific research - development - innovation for the evaluated domain. The aforementioned doctoral thesis advisors enjoy international awareness within the past five years, consisting of: membership on scientific boards of international publications and conferences; membership on boards of international professional associations; guests in conferences or expert groups working abroad, or membership on doctoral defense commissions at universities abroad or co-leading with universities abroad. For Arts and Sports and Physical Education Sciences, doctoral thesis advisors shall prove their international visibility within the past five years by their membership on the boards of professional associations, membership in organizing committees of arts events and international competitions, membership on juries or umpire teams in artistic events or international competitions.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This indicator is **fulfilled** and I have **no recommendations** to it.

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<sup>3</sup> 3 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 159, paragraph (3), respectively 4 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 174, paragraph (3) of the Law of national education No.1/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions, with additional extension periods approved as per Article 39, paragraph (3) of the Code of doctoral studies approved by the GD No. 681/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions.



**Performance Indicator \*A.3.2.2.** *At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in a specific doctoral study domain continue to be active in their scientific field, and acquire at least 25% of the score requested by the minimal CNATDCU standards in force at the time of the evaluation, which are required and mandatory for acquiring their enabling certificate, based on their scientific results within the past five years.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The doctoral coordinators assigned to the field of sociology obtained at least 25 % of the score required by minimum CNATDCU standards at the date of evaluation.

This indicator is **fulfilled** and I have **no recommendations** to it.

## **Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

*\*general description of domain analysis.*

### **Criterion B.1. The number, quality and diversity of candidates enrolled for the admission contest**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

*Standard B.1.1. The institution organizing doctoral studies has the capacity to attract candidates from outside the higher education institution or a number of candidates exceeding the number of seats available.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator \*B.1.1.1.** *The ratio between the number of graduates of masters' programs of other higher education institutions, national or foreign, who have enrolled for the doctoral admission contest within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget, put out through contest within the doctoral domain is at least 0.2 or the ratio between the number of candidates within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget put out through contest within the doctoral studies domain is at least 1,2.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

According to the self-evaluation report, the ratio for this indication is 1,5.

This indicator is **fulfilled** and I have **no recommendations** to it.



Standard B.1.2 Candidates admitted to doctoral studies demonstrate academic, research and professional performance.

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator \*B.1.2.1.** Admission to doctoral study programs is based on selection criteria including: previous academic, research and professional performance, their interest for scientific or arts/sports research, publications in the domain and a proposal for a research subject. Interviewing the candidate is compulsory, as part of the admission procedure.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled**

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

Admission to PhD programs is governed by institutional regulations as well as doctoral school regulations. Only one generation in the last five years has had an abandonment rate greater than 30%, according to the self-assessment report, while the average for the entire evaluation period is 18,91%. Non-compliance with legal and contractual responsibilities, as well as non-payment of tuition, were the reasons for abandoning.

Some professors reported poor prior knowledge among their students, necessitating the inclusion of additional, more basic lists of literature in order for these students to make up for their lack of knowledge.

**Recommendation:** I propose stricter criteria for enrolment in doctoral studies with prior knowledge testing or selection of the best students at the undergraduate level.

**Performance Indicator B.1.2.2.** The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission<sup>4</sup> does not exceed 30%.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **partially fulfilled**.

This expel rate is very high since some students are unable to deal with the study due to financial constraints or a lack of prior knowledge (see above). The percentage of withdrawn or expelled students hit a record high of 59% in 2016-2017. Almost all students were assigned to two professors, and were of African/East Asian origin as evidenced by the evaluation report. Between 2016 and 2021, the average rate of abandonment was 19%.

**Recommendation:** The faculty should investigate the cause of the deviation. I urge that the faculty keeps a careful eye on the situation and investigates the causes of any further deviations. Professors should pay more attention to how students from other cultures integrate in academic environment, the speed with which they absorb information and urge them to study as hard as they can. They are unable to go any further. They can't write a dissertation or take students' exams. I propose that the faculty monitor difficulties that cause students to drop out more frequently

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<sup>4</sup> 3 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 159, paragraph (3), respectively 4 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 174, paragraph (3) of the Law of national education No. 1/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions.



and take appropriate actions, such as financial aid or more in-depth individual work with mentors. As tutors, students should be involved and assist their colleagues with cultural sensitivity situations.

## **Criterion B.2. The content of doctoral programs**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

*Standard B.2.1. The training program based on advanced university studies is appropriate to improve doctoral students' research skills and to strengthen ethical behavior in science.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.1.** *The training program based on advanced academic studies includes at least 3 disciplines relevant to the scientific research training of doctoral students; at least one of these disciplines is intended to study in-depth the research methodology and/or the statistical data processing.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*Recommendations:*

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This indicator is **fulfilled** and I have **no recommendations** to it.

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.2.** *At least one discipline is dedicated to Ethics and Intellectual Property in scientific research or there are well-defined topics on these subjects within a discipline taught in the doctoral program.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*Recommendations:*

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This indicator is **fulfilled** and I have **no recommendations** to it.

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.3.** *The IOSUD has mechanisms to ensure that the academic training program based on advanced university studies addresses „the learning outcomes”, specifying the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy that doctoral students should acquire after completing each discipline or through the research activities<sup>5</sup>.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

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<sup>5</sup> Or by what the graduate should know, understand and to be able to do, according to the provisions of the Methodology of 17 March 2017 regarding inscription and registration of higher education qualifications in the National Register of Qualifications in Higher Education (RNCIS) approved by the Order No.3475/2017 with subsequent amendments and additions.



- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

Curricula include between 3-5 courses, consisted of practical courses and seminars.- One third of them are intended for the formation of general research skills., such as academic writing, scientific research, research methods, ethics, and two thirds are dedicated to specialized courses to obtain advanced research skills.

The indicator is **fulfilled**. I have **no recommendations** to it.

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.4.** All along the duration of the doctoral training, doctoral students in the domain receive counselling/guidance from functional guidance commissions, which is reflected in written guidance and feedback or regular meeting.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This indicator is **fulfilled** and I have **no recommendations** to it.

Each doctoral supervisor after consulting with the student, proposes a steering committee consisted of three other members who may be part of a research team of a doctoral supervision, or other persons affiliated to doctoral school. Doctoral coordinators are available to meet the doctoral students on daily based. The time frames of these consultations are in the afternoon or late in the evening at a time when doctoral lectures are also being given.

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.5.** For a doctoral study domain, the ratio between the number of doctoral students and the number of teaching staff/researchers providing doctoral guidance must not exceed 3:1.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This indicator is **fulfilled** and I have **no recommendations** to it.

The ratio between students and number of affiliated teacher is 53/24 or 2,2. The number does not exceed the allowed ratio.

### **Criterion B.3. The results of doctoral studies and procedures for their evaluation.**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

*Standard B.3.1. Doctoral students capitalize on the research through presentations at scientific conferences, scientific publications, technological transfer, patents, products and service orders.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*



**Performance Indicator B.3.1.1.** For the evaluated domain, the evaluation commission will be provided with at least one paper or some other relevant contribution per doctoral student who has obtained a doctor's title within the past 5 years. From this list, the members of the evaluation commission shall randomly select 5 such papers / relevant contributions per doctoral study domain for review. At least 3 selected papers must contain significant original contributions in the respective domain.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This indicator is **fulfilled**.

26 PhD students gave public lectures in the period between 2016-2021. The complete list of doctoral student's publications is available in the evaluation documentation. There are no other information about their original scientific papers in the self-evaluation report. Since I was not present on site to be able to see their research papers and since I did not get any information about it from the coordinator, I cannot comment this issue any further and have **no recommendations**.

**Performance Indicator \*B.3.1.2.** The ratio between the number of presentations of doctoral students who completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years), including posters, exhibitions made at prestigious international events (organized in the country or abroad) and the number of doctoral students who have completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years) is at least 1.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

The documentation is enclosed as a table. The ratio is higher than 1.

I have **no recommendation**.

**Standard B.3.2.** The Doctoral School engages a significant number of external scientific specialists in the commissions for public defense of doctoral theses in the analyzed domain.

\*general description of the standard analysis.

**Performance Indicator \*B.3.2.1.** The number of doctoral theses allocated to one specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the evaluated IOSUD should not exceed two (2) in a year for the theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis advisor.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself



- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **partially fulfilled**.

Between 2016 and 2021, 26 doctorate theses were defended. In a single year, two professors participated in more than two commissions for thesis defense (5 and 6 commissions, respectively). In 2019, the same professors served on six and seven commissions. The problem arose as a result of an increase in the number of PhD students who prolonged or re-enrolled their studies, resulting in overlaps and violations of the rules.

Because such circumstances were exceptional, I merely **recommend** that responsibilities be more evenly allocated in the future and that students be directed to other professors.

**Performance Indicator \*B.3.2.2.** *The ratio between the doctoral theses allocated to one scientific specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the institution where the defense on the doctoral thesis is organized, and the number of doctoral theses presented in the same doctoral study domain in the doctoral school should not exceed 0.3, considering the past five years. Only those doctoral study domains in which minimum ten doctoral theses have been presented within the past five years should be analyzed.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **partially fulfilled**.

In the last five years, there were just two rare situations with two professors where the ratio was higher (0.42, 0.62). Of course, the needs of students in relation to the content of their doctorates cannot be predicted ahead of time, so this variance is not significant.

**Recommendation:** If the ratio exceeds the allowable limit, students should be sent to other specialists.

## **Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

*\*general description of domain analysis.*

### **Criterion C.1. Existence and periodic implementation of the internal quality assurance system**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

*Standard C.1.1. There are an institutional framework and procedures in place and relevant internal quality assurance policies, applied for monitoring the internal quality assurance.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator C.1.1.1.** *The Doctoral school in the respective university study domain shall demonstrate the continuous development of the evaluation process and its internal quality assurance*



following a procedure developed and applied at the level of the IOSUD, the following assessed criteria being mandatory:

- (a) the scientific work of Doctoral advisors;
- (b) the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out the research activity;
- (c) the procedures and subsequent rules based on which doctoral studies are organized;
- (d) the scientific activity of doctoral students;
- (e) the training program based on advanced academic studies of doctoral students;
- (f) social and academic services (including for participation at different events, publishing papers etc.) and counselling made available to doctoral students.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

This indicator is **fulfilled**.

Every two years, internal reports of the doctorate schools are generated in order to improve the complete doctoral activity. Supervisors and PhD students' scientific activities are monitored, infrastructure and logistics, regulations and procedures are examined, PhD students' advanced doctorate program and social and academic support systems are analyzed, and PhD students' counseling services are evaluated.

I have **no recommendations** to this indicator.

**Performance Indicator \*C.1.1.2.** Mechanisms are implemented during the stage of the doctoral study program to enable feedback from doctoral students allowing to identify their needs, as well as their overall level of satisfaction with the doctoral study program in order to ensure continuous improvement of the academic and administrative processes. Following the analysis of the results, there is evidence that an action plan was drafted and implemented.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

Professors and students are encouraged to have official and informal dialogues at doctoral school, and the necessity of honesty is emphasized. The board members endeavor to find a constructive solution whenever displeasure is expressed. Doctoral school also use anonymous questionnaires to solicit feedback from doctoral students, albeit due to the small number of students, this is not the greatest option.

**Recommendation:** I urge that professors and student representatives work together more closely. Students can technically seek assistance from student organizations, but in practice, they have stated that faculty emails containing information are of little interest to them, and that some have set them up as spam in advance. They don't seem to see why this knowledge and collaboration would be beneficial to them. I propose that the faculty keeps providing various channels of information. Personally, I believe the most appropriate approach is that professors encourage their students to be proactive, as well as the student representatives to be more assertive.





## **Criterion C.2. Transparency of information and accessibility of learning resources**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

*Standard C.2.1. Information of interest to doctoral students, future candidates and public interest information is available for electronic format consultation.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator C.2.1.1.** *The IOSUD publishes on the website of the organizing institution, in compliance with the general regulations on data protection, information such as:*

- (a) the Doctoral School regulation;*
- (b) the admission regulation;*
- (c) the doctoral studies contract;*
- (d) the study completion regulation including the procedure for the public presentation of the thesis;*
- (e) the content of training program based on advanced academic studies;*
- (f) the academic and scientific profile, thematic areas/research themes of the Doctoral advisors within the domain, as well as their institutional contact data;*
- (g) the list of doctoral students within the domain with necessary information (year of registration; advisor);*
- (h) information on the standards for developing the doctoral thesis;*
- (i) links to the doctoral theses' summaries to be publicly presented and the date, time, place where they will be presented; this information will be communicated at least twenty days before the presentation.*
  - description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*
  - analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*Recommendations:*

***The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.***

**This indicator is fulfilled.**

Nevertheless, not all information, particularly English translations, is available online. On the other side, the school uses social media to disseminate information (Facebook).

**Recommendation:** The doctoral program's website should be updated on a regular basis. Annual updates are insufficient.

*Standard C.2.2. The IOSUD/The Doctoral School provides doctoral students with access to the resources needed for conducting doctoral studies.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator C.2.2.1.** *All doctoral students have free access to one platform providing academic databases relevant to the doctoral studies domain of their thesis.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*



*Recommendations:*

***The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.***

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

Several academic databases are available to all PhD students for free. One student, on the other hand, stated that she was unaware of the possibility of remote access to the library databases until lately.

**Recommendation:** Professors should bring up this type of information more frequently. Obviously, writing the rules isn't enough; they must be reiterated frequently enough for the students to remember them.

**Performance Indicator C.2.2.2.** *Each doctoral student shall have access, upon request, to an electronic system for verifying the degree of similarity with other existing scientific or artistic works.*

- *description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

- *analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*Recommendations:*

***The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.***

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

Two similarity checking programs are used by students and students have access to them.

I have **no recommendations** to it.

**Performance Indicator C.2.2.3.** *All doctoral students have access to scientific research laboratories or other facilities depending on the specific domain/domains within the Doctoral School, according to internal order procedures.*

- *description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

- *analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*Recommendations:*

***The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.***

The indicator is **fulfilled**.

The students have free access to the library and research laboratories.

I have **no recommendations** to this indicator.

### **Criterion C.3. Internationalization**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

*Standard C.3.1. There is a strategy in place and it is applied to enhance the internationalization of doctoral studies.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator \*C.3.1.1.** *IOSUD, for every evaluated domain, has concluded mobility agreements with universities abroad, with research institutes, with companies working in the field of study,*



aimed at the mobility of doctoral students and academic staff (e.g., ERASMUS agreements for the doctoral studies). At least 35% of the doctoral students have completed a training course abroad or other mobility forms such as attending international scientific conferences. IOSUD drafts and applies policies and measures aiming at increasing the number of doctoral students participating at mobility periods abroad, up to at least 20%, which is the target at the level of the European Higher Education Area.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **partially fulfilled**.

There was no Erasmus + mobility in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. If we exclude the "dead" corona year 2020, when Erasmus activities were essentially non-existent, the prior two years' opportunities still remain unfulfilled. However, while the proportion of mobility is still more than the necessary 5%, this indicator isn't critical as long as the situation doesn't recur.

**Recommendation:** Continue to monitor and encourage students to take advantage of international mobility opportunities.

**Performance Indicator C.3.1.2.** In the evaluated doctoral study domain, support is granted, including financial support, to the organization of doctoral studies in international co-tutelage or invitation of leading experts to deliver courses/lectures for doctoral students.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**

The indicator is **partially fulfilled**.

Doctoral studies encourage co-supervision, and one such example is noted in the self-evaluation report for political sciences.

**Recommendation:** The area of sociology should encourage joint supervisions as well.

**Performance Indicator C.3.1.3.** The internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by IOSUD through concrete measures (e.g., by participating in educational fairs to attract international doctoral students; by including international experts in guidance committees or doctoral committees etc.).

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

Recommendations:

**The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.**



The indicator is **fulfilled**.

During the past evaluation period, WUT participated in 19 higher-education fairs. Foreign researchers were also included in the doctoral school's work. A co-supervised European doctorate methodology was also established.

This indicator has been met, and I have **no recommendatons** for it.

#### IV. SWOT Analysis

<p><b><u>Strengths:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the strengths identified throughout the report will be resumed as part of the indicators' analysis. Other general strengths that do not fall within a particular indicator may be formulated.</li> </ul> <p>The following are some of the advantages of a doctoral degree in domain sociology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PhD Supervisors who are qualified and highly engaged</li> <li>- Accessible, flexible and dedicated teaching staff</li> <li>- Excellent research infrastructure</li> <li>- Excellent connections for PhD students' future jobs</li> <li>- Strong internationalization activities</li> <li>- Appealing study topics</li> <li>- The visibility of sociology PhD studies in the local community</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the weaknesses identified throughout the report will be resumed as part of the indicators' analysis. Other general weaknesses that do not fall within a particular indicator may be formulated.</li> </ul> <p>The following are the primary shortcomings of a PhD degree in domain sociology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student-to-professor ratio is too high for numerous professors</li> <li>- A high proportion of students drop out</li> <li>- Lack of cultural sensitivity toward African and Asian students who had previously been expelled in high numbers</li> <li>- Students' lack of interest for cooperation in faculty management</li> <li>- Insufficient number of women in the governing bodies of the faculty</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- possible lines of action for the development of the institution under review shall be identified;</li> <li>- examples of opportunities: a favorable economic environment in the proximity of the assessed institution, the uniqueness of the study programs and their relevance to the local/national market, the overall attractiveness of the study programs etc.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Study program with a practical focus</li> <li>- Collaboration with external stakeholders</li> <li>-Increasing the number of co-supervisors</li> <li>- International mobility of students</li> <li>- Digitization of administration</li> <li>- Strengthen the flow of information between management and students</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the possible causes of the deficient aspects (the causes of the identified weaknesses), which are practically the threats to the proper functioning of the institution, shall be identified;</li> <li>- besides, there may be external threats, such as: the inopportune economic environment in the proximity of the assessed institution, the conduct of low attractiveness study programs for both candidates and the labor market etc.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of research projects and researchers employed on the projects</li> <li>- Continuation of the trend of dropping out of study among students</li> <li>- Students' lack of awareness of additional funding for publishing scientific papers and conferences</li> </ul>

#### V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1.	PI	<p><b>A.1.1.1.</b> The existence of specific regulations and their application at the level of the Doctoral School of the respective university doctoral study domain:</p> <p>a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;</p> <p>b) the Methodology for conducting elections for the position of director of the Council of doctoral school (CSD), as well as elections by the students of their representative in CSD and the evidence of their conduct;</p> <p>c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);</p> <p>d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;</p> <p>e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;</p> <p>f) the contract for doctoral studies;</p> <p>g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.</p>	<i>fulfilled</i>	There are no recommendations regarding the institutional, administrative and management structures
2.	PI	<p><b>A.1.1.2.</b> The doctoral school' Regulation includes mandatory criteria, procedures and standards binding on the aspects specified in Article 17, paragraph (5) of the Government Decision No. 681/2011 on the approval of the Code of Doctoral Studies with subsequent amendments and additions.</p>	<i>fulfilled</i>	There are no recommendations regarding the regulations of the doctoral school, its precedures, standards and criteria of doctoral studies
3.	PI	<p><b>A.1.2.1.</b> The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.</p>	<i>fulfilled</i>	There are no recommendations regarding the existence and effectiveness of computer system.
4.	PI	<p><b>A.1.2.2.</b> The existence and use of an appropriate software program and evidence of its use to verify the percentage of similarity in all doctoral theses.</p>	<i>fulfilled</i>	There are no recommendations regarding the antiplagiatory system. The faculty uses two systems, and students can check the percentage of similarity of their texts on their own, which is a good thing because it allows them to constantly assess their methodological preparedness and integrity. Students who use an anti-plagiarism system, according to one philosophy professor, present at on-line

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
				meetings, are encouraged to cheat. My take on this is less negative; I believe that the ability to use the system encourages students to use sources with a greater consideration and critical thinking.
5.	IP	A.1.3.1. Existence of at least one research or institutional / human resources development grant under implementation at the time of submission of the internal evaluation file, per doctoral study domain under evaluation, or existence of at least 2 research or institutional development / human resources grant for the doctoral study domain, obtained by doctoral thesis advisors operating in the evaluated domain within the past 5 years. The grants address relevant themes for the respective domain and, as a rule, are engaging doctoral students.	<i>fulfilled</i>	There are no recommendations in this regard. I requested a list of current projects as well as grants awarded during the previous accreditation period (see: tabel proiecte si nivel de implicare) and discovered that supervisors were awarded funding from the area of study domain that addressed important issues and involved PhD students.
6.	PI *	A.1.3.2. The percentage of doctoral students active at the time of the evaluation, who for at least six months receive additional funding sources besides government funding, through scholarships awarded by individual persons or by legal entities, or who are financially supported through research or institutional / human resources development grants is not less than 20%.	<i>Partially fulfilled</i>	<p>The faculty has developed a set of tools for awarding PhD students in sociology, including a financial support strategy for teaching and research activities, a system for holding scientific project competitions, and a procedure for organizing action research project competitions. For all PhD students, an institutional framework was built for giving grants, scholarships, and funding scientific and research activity. Students are also involved in ongoing institutional development projects that are overseen by members of the Doctoral School. Nevertheless, the number of students involved in and funded by research or institutional/human resource development grants is less than 20%.</p> <p>Recommendation: The department's grant-seeking activities should be strengthened. This proposal, however, is easier said than done, because the precarity of young and experienced researchers is a problem throughout Europe. It should be noted that the agency's criterion is developed from a perspective that has little to do with reality. Professors are aware of the issue; they are working to secure projects; they also have results, but not in the quantitative sense that the state requires.</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
7.	PI *	<b>A.1.3.3.</b> At least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants obtained by the university through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system is used to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students (attending conferences, summer schools, training, programs abroad, publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.).	<i>Partially fulfilled</i>	<p>The faculty organizes trainings and professional development for doctoral students. It also organizes summer schools to support the professional development of teachers and PhD students through the training of the research skills. The faculty covers the costs of summer school.</p> <p>Despite all the efforts, some students are unaware of the additional funding available for publishing scientific papers. In addition, from March 2020 to April 2021 the funds for conferences were rescheduled due to the pandemic, when most of academic events were on-line.</p> <p>Recommendation: Because the problem is systemic and not limited to sociology, it must be addressed in its whole. As a result, it's important to clarify that this indicator is only partially met.</p>
8.	CPI	<b>A.2.1.1.</b> The venues and the material equipment available to the doctoral school enable the research activities in the evaluated domain to be carried out, in line with the assumed mission and objectives (computers, specific software, equipment, laboratory equipment, library, access to international databases etc.). The research infrastructure and the provision of research services are presented to the public through a specific platform. The research infrastructure described above, which was purchased and developed within the past 5 years will be presented distinctly	<i>fulfilled</i>	<p>In terms of allocated spaces and available auxiliary services the research facilities accessible to PhD students meet all modern needs. The research infrastructure is well-equipped, which may assist and motivate students to appropriately engage in their research activities.</p> <p>Some students are unaware of the library's remote access capabilities.</p> <p>Recommendation: Professors should give or highlight this option more frequently, in my opinion. However, because this was noted by only one student who is studying abroad at the same time, it's possible that the information was given accurately but was forgotten.</p>
9.	CPI	<b>A.3.1.1.</b> Minimum three doctoral thesis advisors within that doctoral domain, and at least 50% of them (but no less than three) meet the minimum standards of the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU) in force at the time when the evaluation is carried out, which standards are required and mandatory for obtaining the enabling certification.	<i>fulfilled</i>	<p>The minimum standard is achieved. The documentation contains all necessary information on the employment of the professors.</p> <p>There are no recommendations regarding this indicator.</p>
10.	PI *	<b>A.3.1.2.</b> At least 50% of all doctoral advisors have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.	<i>fulfilled</i>	<p>This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
11.	PI	<p><b>A.3.1.3.</b> The study subjects in the education program based on advanced higher education studies pertaining to the doctoral domain are taught by teaching staff or researchers who are doctoral thesis advisors / certified doctoral thesis advisors, professors / CS I or lecturer / CS II, with proved expertise in the field of the study subjects they teach, or other specialists in the field who meet the standards established by the institution in relation with the aforementioned teaching and research functions, as provided by the law.</p>	<i>fulfilled</i>	This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
12.	PI *	<p><b>A.3.1.4.</b> The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than 12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs does not exceed 20%.</p>	<i>fulfilled</i>	This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
13.	CPI	<p><b>A.3.2.1.</b> At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in the evaluated domain have at least 5 Web of Science- or ERIH-indexed publications in magazines of impact, or other achievements of relevant significance for that domain, including international-level contributions that indicate progress in scientific research - development - innovation for the evaluated domain. The aforementioned doctoral thesis advisors enjoy international awareness within the past five years, consisting of: membership on scientific boards of international publications and conferences; membership on boards of international professional associations; guests in conferences or expert groups working abroad, or membership on doctoral defense commissions at universities abroad or co-leading with universities abroad. For Arts and Sports and Physical Education Sciences, doctoral thesis advisors shall prove their international visibility within the past five years by their membership on the boards of professional associations, membership in organizing committees of arts events and international competitions, membership on juries or umpire teams in artistic events or international competitions.</p>	<i>fulfilled</i>	This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.



No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
14.	PI *	<b>A.3.2.2.</b> At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in a specific doctoral study domain continue to be active in their scientific field, and acquire at least 25% of the score requested by the minimal CNATDCU standards in force at the time of the evaluation, which are required and mandatory for acquiring their enabling certificate, based on their scientific results within the past five years	<i>fulfilled</i>	The doctoral coordinators assigned to the field of sociology obtained at least 25 % of the score required by minimum CNATDCU standards at the date of evaluation. This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
15.	PI *	<b>B.1.1.1.</b> The ratio between the number of graduates of masters' programs of other higher education institutions, national or foreign, who have enrolled for the doctoral admission contest within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget, put out through contest within the doctoral domain is at least 0.2 or the ratio between the number of candidates within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget put out through contest within the doctoral studies domain is at least 1,2.	<i>fulfilled</i>	According to the self-evaluation report, the ratio for this indication is 1,5. This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
16.	PI *	<b>B.1.2.1.</b> Admission to doctoral study programs is based on selection criteria including: previous academic, research and professional performance, their interest for scientific or arts/sports research, publications in the domain and a proposal for a research subject. Interviewing the candidate is compulsory, as part of the admission procedure.	<i>fulfilled</i>	Admission to PhD programs is governed by institutional regulations as well as doctoral school regulations. Only one generation in the last five years has had an abandonment rate greater than 30%, according to the self-assessment report, while the average for the entire evaluation period is 18,91 percent. Non-compliance with legal and contractual responsibilities, as well as non-payment of tuition, were the reasons for abandoning. Some professors reported poor prior knowledge among their students, necessitating the inclusion of additional, more basic lists of literature in order for these students to make up for their lack of knowledge. I propose stricter criteria for enrolment in doctoral studies with prior knowledge testing or selection of the best students at the undergraduate level.
17.	PI	<b>B.1.2.2.</b> The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral	<i>Partially fulfilled</i>	This rate is very high since some students are unable to deal with the study due to financial constraints or a lack of prior knowledge (see above). The percentage of

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		students 3, respectively 4, years after admission does not exceed 30%.		<p>withdrawn or expelled students hit a record high of 59% in 2016-2017. Almost all students were assigned to two professors, and were of African/East Asian origin as evidenced by the evaluation report. Between 2016 and 2021, the average rate of abandonment was 19%.</p> <p>Recommendation: The faculty should investigate the cause of the deviation. I urge that the faculty keeps a careful eye on the situation and investigates the causes of any further deviations. Professors should pay more attention to how students from other cultures integrate in academic environment, the speed with which they absorb information and urge them to study as hard as they can. They are unable to go any further. They can't write a dissertation or take students' exams. I propose that the faculty monitor difficulties that cause students to drop out more frequently and take appropriate actions, such as financial aid or more in-depth individual work with mentors. As tutors, students should be involved and assist their colleagues with cultural sensitivity situations.</p>
18.	PI	<b>B.2.1.1.</b> The training program based on advanced academic studies includes at least 3 disciplines relevant to the scientific research training of doctoral students; at least one of these disciplines is intended to study in-depth the research methodology and/or the statistical data processing.	<i>fulfilled</i>	This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
19.	PI	<b>B.2.1.2.</b> At least one discipline is dedicated to Ethics and Intellectual Property in scientific research or there are well-defined topics on these subjects within a discipline taught in the doctoral program.	<i>fulfilled</i>	This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
20.	PI	<b>B.2.1.3.</b> The IOSUD has mechanisms to ensure that the academic training program based on advanced university studies addresses „the learning outcomes”, specifying the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy that doctoral students should acquire after completing each discipline or through the research activities.	<i>fulfilled</i>	Curricula include between 3-5 courses, consisted of practical courses and seminars.- One third of them are intended for the formation of general research skills., such as academic writing, scientific research, research methods, ethics, and two thirds are dedicated to specialized courses to obtain advanced research skills. This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
21.	PI	<b>B.2.1.4.</b> All along the duration of the doctoral training, doctoral students in the domain receive counselling/guidance from functional guidance commissions, which is reflected in written guidance and feedback or regular meeting.	<i>fulfilled</i>	Each doctoral supervisor after consulting with the student, proposes a steering committee consisted of three other members who may be part of a research team of a doctoral supervision, or other persons affiliated to doctoral school. Doctoral coordinators are available to meet the doctoral students on daily based. The time frames of these consultations are in the afternoon or late in the evening at a time when doctoral lectures are also being given. This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
22.	CPI	<b>B.2.1.5.</b> For a doctoral study domain, the ratio between the number of doctoral students and the number of teaching staff/researchers providing doctoral guidance must not exceed 3:1.	<i>fulfilled</i>	The ratio between students and number of affiliated teacher is 53/24 or 2,2. The number does not exceed the allowed ratio. This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
23.	CPI	<b>B.3.1.1.</b> For the evaluated domain, the evaluation commission will be provided with at least one paper or some other relevant contribution per doctoral student who has obtained a doctor's title within the past 5 years. From this list, the members of the evaluation commission shall randomly select 5 such papers / relevant contributions per doctoral study domain for review. At least 3 selected papers must contain significant original contributions in the respective domain	<i>fulfilled</i>	26 PhD students gave public lectures in the period between 2016-2021. The complete list of doctoral student's publications are available in the documentation. There are no other information about their original scientific papers in the self-evaluation report. Since I was not present on site to be able to see their research papers and since I did not get any information about it from the coordinator, I cannot comment this issue any further and have no recommendations.
24.	PI *	<b>B.3.1.2.</b> The ratio between the number of presentations of doctoral students who completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years), including posters, exhibitions made at prestigious international events (organized in the country or abroad) and the number of doctoral students who have completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years) is at least 1.	<i>fulfilled</i>	The documentation is enclosed as a table. The ratio is higher than 1. This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
25.	PI *	<b>B.3.2.1.</b> The number of doctoral theses allocated to one specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the evaluated IOSUD should not exceed two (2) in	<i>Partially fulfilled</i>	Between 2016 and 2021, 26 doctorate theses were defended. In a single year, two professors participated in more than two commissions for thesis defense (5 and 6 commissions, respectively). In 2019, the same professors served on six and seven

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		a year for the theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis advisor.		commissions. The problem arose as a result of an increase in the number of PhD students who prolonged or re-enrolled their studies, resulting in overlaps and violations of the rules. Because such circumstances were exceptional, I merely recommend that responsibilities be more evenly allocated in the future and that students be directed to other professors.
26.	PI *	<b>B.3.2.2.</b> The ratio between the doctoral theses allocated to one scientific specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the institution where the defense on the doctoral thesis is organized, and the number of doctoral theses presented in the same doctoral study domain in the doctoral school should not exceed 0.3, considering the past five years. Only those doctoral study domains in which minimum ten doctoral theses have been presented within the past five years should be analyzed.	<i>Partially fulfilled</i>	In the last five years, there were just two rare situations with two professors where the ratio was higher (0.42, 0.62). Of course, the needs of students in relation to the content of their doctorates cannot be predicted ahead of time, so this variance is not significant. Recommendation: If the ratio exceeds the allowable limit, students should be sent to other specialists.
27.	PI	<b>C.1.1.1.</b> The Doctoral school in the respective university study domain shall demonstrate the continuous development of the evaluation process and its internal quality assurance following a procedure developed and applied at the level of the IOSUD, the following assessed criteria being mandatory: a) the scientific work of Doctoral advisors; b) the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out the research activity; c) the procedures and subsequent rules based on which doctoral studies are organized; d) the scientific activity of doctoral students; e) the training program based on advanced academic studies of doctoral students; f) social and academic services (including for participation at different events, publishing papers etc.) and counselling made available to doctoral students.	<i>fulfilled</i>	Every two years, internal reports of the doctorate schools are generated in order to improve the complete doctoral activity. Supervisors and PhD students' scientific activities are monitored, infrastructure and logistics, regulations and procedures are examined, PhD students' advanced doctorate program and social and academic support systems are analyzed, and PhD students' counseling services are evaluated. This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
28.	PI *	<b>C.1.1.2.</b> Mechanisms are implemented during the stage of the doctoral study program to enable feedback from doctoral students allowing to identify their needs, as well as their overall level of satisfaction with the doctoral study program in order to ensure continuous	<i>fulfilled</i>	Professors and students are encouraged to have official and informal dialogues at doctoral school, and the necessity of honesty is emphasized. The board members endeavor to find a constructive solution whenever displeasure is expressed. Doctoral school also use anonymous questionnaires to solicit

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		improvement of the academic and administrative processes. Following the analysis of the results, there is evidence that an action plan was drafted and implemented.		<p>feedback from doctoral students, albeit due to the small number of students, this is not the greatest option.</p> <p>I urge that professors and student representatives work together more closely. Students can technically seek assistance from student organizations, but in practice, they have stated that faculty emails containing information are of little interest to them, and that some have set them up as spam in advance. They don't seem to see why this knowledge and collaboration would be beneficial to them. I propose that the faculty keeps providing various channels of information. Personally, I believe the most appropriate approach is that professors encourage their students to be proactive, as well as the student representatives to be more assertive.</p>
29.	<b>CPI</b>	<p><b>C.2.1.1.</b> The IOSUD publishes on the website of the organizing institution, in compliance with the general regulations on data protection, information such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the Doctoral School regulation;</li> <li>b) the admission regulation;</li> <li>c) the doctoral studies contract;</li> <li>d) the study completion regulation including the procedure for the public presentation of the thesis;</li> <li>e) the content of training program based on advanced academic studies;</li> <li>f) the academic and scientific profile, thematic areas/research themes of the Doctoral advisors within the domain, as well as their institutional contact data;</li> <li>g) the list of doctoral students within the domain with necessary information (year of registration; advisor);</li> <li>h) information on the standards for developing the doctoral thesis;</li> <li>i) links to the doctoral theses' summaries to be publicly presented and the date, time, place where they will be presented; this information will be communicated at least twenty days before the presentation.</li> </ul>	<i>fulfilled</i>	<p>This indicator is met; nevertheless, not all information, particularly English translations, is available online. On the other side, the school uses social media to disseminate information (Facebook). Recommendation: The doctoral program's website should be updated on a regular basis. Annual updates are insufficient.</p>
30.	<b>PI</b>	<b>C.2.2.1.</b> All doctoral students have free access to one platform providing academic databases	<i>fulfilled</i>	Several academic databases are available to all PhD students for free. One student, on the other hand, stated that she was

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		relevant to the doctoral studies domain of their thesis.		unaware of the possibility of remote access to the library databases until lately. Recommendation: Professors should bring up this type of information more frequently. Obviously, writing the rules isn't enough; they must be reiterated frequently enough for the students to remember them.
31.	PI	<b>C.2.2.2.</b> Each doctoral student shall have access, upon request, to an electronic system for verifying the degree of similarity with other existing scientific or artistic works.	<i>fulfilled</i>	Two similarity checking programs are used by students and students have access to them. This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
32.	PI	<b>C.2.2.3.</b> All doctoral students have access to scientific research laboratories or other facilities depending on the specific domain/domains within the Doctoral School, according to internal order procedures.	<i>fulfilled</i>	The students have free access to the library and research laboratories. This indicator is fulfilled and I have no recommendations to it.
33.	PI *	<b>C.3.1.1.</b> IOSUD, for every evaluated domain, has concluded mobility agreements with universities abroad, with research institutes, with companies working in the field of study, aimed at the mobility of doctoral students and academic staff (e.g., ERASMUS agreements for the doctoral studies). At least 35% of the doctoral students have completed a training course abroad or other mobility forms such as attending international scientific conferences. IOSUD drafts and applies policies and measures aiming at increasing the number of doctoral students participating at mobility periods abroad, up to at least 20%, which is the target at the level of the European Higher Education Area.	<i>Partially fulfilled</i>	There was no Erasmus + mobility in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. If we exclude the "dead" corona year 2020, when Erasmus activities were essentially non-existent, the prior two years' opportunities still remain unfulfilled. However, while the proportion of mobility is still more than the necessary 5%, this indicator isn't critical as long as the situation doesn't recur. Recommendation: Continue to monitor and encourage students to take advantage of international mobility opportunities.
34.	PI	<b>C.3.1.2.</b> In the evaluated doctoral study domain, support is granted, including financial support, to the organization of doctoral studies in international co-tutelage or invitation of leading experts to deliver courses/lectures for doctoral students.	<i>Partially fulfilled</i>	Doctoral studies encourage co-supervision, and one such example is noted in the self-evaluation report for political sciences. Recommendation: The area of sociology should encourage combined supervisions as well.
35.	PI	<b>C.3.1.3.</b> The internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by IOSUD through concrete measures (e.g., by participating in educational fairs to attract international doctoral students; by including international experts in guidance committees or doctoral committees etc.).	<i>fulfilled</i>	During the past evaluation period, WUT participated in 19 higher-education fairs. Foreign researchers were also included in the doctoral school's work. A co-supervised European doctorate methodology was also established. This indicator has been met, and I have no suggestions for it.



*The recommendations contained in the report shall be resumed in the indicators' analysis. Other general recommendations may be made that do not fit within a particular indicator.*

*VERY IMPORTANT!!! – Each identified weakness must be correlated with at least one recommendation to improve the situation!*

## **VI. Conclusions and general recommendations**

*Several important issues raised during the evaluation are resumed and some general conclusions are drawn on the quality of the education provided within the doctoral study domain under review; the Experts' Panel also presents general assessments about the institution. Other general recommendation may also be presented, which cannot be related to a specific indicator and have not been presented at point V.*

*A decision is proposed, together with the reasons for granting it (if the Experts' Panel members do not reach a consensus, each of them can propose and argue his/her own decision).*

*The university has progressed in terms of new project applications, extra research incentives, stakeholder networking, and international mobility of personnel and students. Professors' careers have progressed since the institution's beginnings, and progress has been made since the previous accreditation. However, the research should be intensified, and students should not be dropped too frequently.*

## **VII. Annexes**

*The following types of documents shall be attached:*

- *The detailed schedule of the evaluation visit – MANDATORY.*
- *The survey questionnaire applied to doctoral students or academic staff in the doctoral study domain under review, the results - optional (e.g., in graphic form) and their interpretation - if applicable.*
- *Scanned documents – any document requested from the IOSUD during the evaluation visit and received, which is not found in the internal evaluation file received before the visit and referred to in the report.*
- *Pictures – if relevant issues are raised regarding the condition of the student residences, cafeterias, premises for teaching and learning activities, library etc.*
- *Screenshots/Print screens of the Doctoral School/IOSUD website proving specific claims in the report, accompanied by the date when they were accessed and saved.*
- *Any other documents relevant to the evaluation process referred to in the report.*