

The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

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I. Introduction

The overall objective of the periodical external evaluation of the Institution Organising Doctoral Study Programs (IOSUD) and of the doctoral study fundamental domains (Social Science, Sport and Physical Education Sciences, Humanistic Sciences and Arts, and Mathematics and Natural Sciences) within the West University of Timisoara has been the assessment on the fulfilment of the standards and criteria,¹ which are needed in view of the maintaining of accreditation. The periodical external evaluation has been carried out by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS).

This Report refers to the evaluation made in my capacity as international expert involved in the periodical external evaluation of the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara. I have been a member of the team coordinated by PhD Livia-Alina Nicu (associate professor of Law at the Craiova University) and made up by Mr. Ioan-Dumitru Apachitei (PhD student in Law at "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iasi) as well. The evaluation period has been from 11 to 15 October 2021. Due to the pandemic context caused by the COVID-19, the Zoom program was used for each meeting in which I was involved.

The external evaluation process of the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara is based on the provisions of: (1) the Romanian Law of National Education No 1/2011, with subsequent amendments and additions; (2) the Romanian Government Decision No 681 of 29 June 2011 on the approval of the Code of Doctoral Studies, with subsequent amendments and additions; (3) the Romanian Government Emergency Ordinance No 75/2005 on Quality Assurance of Education, approved with amendments and additions by Law No 87/2006, with subsequent amendments and additions; and (4) the Order 3651 of 12.04.2021 of the Romanian Minister of Education to approve the Methodology for evaluation of doctoral studies and the systems of criteria, standards and performance indicators used in the evaluation and the systems of criteria, standards and performance indicators used in the evaluation. Furthermore, the ARACIS Guides have been especially useful, namely: the Guide on conducting the

¹ As set out in Annex No. 4 of the Guide on conducting the process of Periodic External Evaluation of Doctoral Study Domain.



process of periodic external evaluation of institution organizing doctoral study programs (IOSUD), the Guide on conducting the process of periodic external evaluation of doctoral study domains, and the Guide for external evaluation of doctoral studies in hybrid mode.

The IOSUD at the West University of Timisoara has 12 doctoral schools in 19 fields of doctoral studies, namely: Doctoral School of Arts, Doctoral School of Chemistry, Doctoral School of Law, Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, Doctoral School of Physics, Doctoral School of Geography, Doctoral School of Informatics, Doctoral School of Mathematics, Doctoral School of Music, Doctoral School of Psychology, Doctoral School of Philosophy, Sociology and Political Sciences, and Doctoral School of Humanities. The most recently confirmed fields of doctoral studies are: Theater and Performing Arts (within the Doctoral School of Music) through OMEN 4209 / 31.07.2018, Education Sciences (within the Doctoral School of Psychology) through OMEN 5154 / 23.07.2018, Sports Science and Physical Education (within the Doctoral School of Psychology) through OMEN 5472 / 14.11.2018.

The Doctoral School of Law within IOSUD- West University of Timisoara became functional based on the Order of the Minister of Education, Research and Youth no. 3004 / 07.01.2004, as a result of the conferment by Order of the Minister of Education, Research and Youth no. 3003 / 07.01.2004 of the authority to supervise PhDs to professors Ioan Vida and Viorel Pașca (both reconfirmed by the Order of the Minister of Education, Research and Youth no. 1805 / 20.08.2007), respectively of the approval by the Order of the Minister of Education, Research and Youth no. 3022 / 12.01.2004 of the transfer of the doctoral management activity in the field of Law from the „Babeș-Bolyai” University Cluj-Napoca to the West University of Timișoara of professor Radu I. Motica (confirmed by the Order of the Minister of Education, Research and Youth no. 5415 / 28.11.1997 and reconfirmed by Order of the Minister of Education, Research and Youth No. 1805 / 20.08.2007).

At present, there are 11 PhD supervisors within the Doctoral School in Law, who have been successively appointed by the Romanian Ministry of Education from 2007 onwards, as follows: 6 PhD supervisors are full-time teachers and 5 PhD supervisors are associate professors of West University of Timisoara. During the period assessed by this evaluation, 2015-2021, they have been in charge with the supervision of 98 PhD students, of which 25 already have a PhD title in law. In relation to this, it is worth mentioning that 54 PhD students were enrolled in the 2015/2016 academic year, 64 PhD students were enrolled in the 2016/2017 academic year, 64 PhD students were enrolled in the 2017/2018 academic year, 66 PhD students were enrolled in the 2018/2019 academic year, 68 PhD students were enrolled in the 2019/2020 academic year, and 65 PhD students were enrolled in the 2020/2021 academic year.

Against this background, since 2004 (when it became functional based on the Order of the Minister of Education, Research and Youth No 3004 on 7 January 2004) the Doctoral School in Law of the West University of Timisoara has consolidated itself in the Romanian academic landscape of PhD studies as a solid and prestigious academic institution in the field of law at both national and international level.

II. Methods used

Due to the pandemic context caused by the COVID-19, the external evaluation process has been conducted virtually. As required by Article 2 of the civil agreement signed with the ARACIS on 31.08.2021, I had to use my own knowledge, skills and experience in order to prepare this Report.



Moreover, I used the qualitative and quantitative data available in the documents provided by the ARACIS and the Doctoral School of Law for this external evaluation.

The online meetings through the zoom platform (with the contact person for the doctoral study in Law under review and the team who drafted the internal evaluation report; with the Commission for Quality Evaluation and Assurance (CEAC) members / Quality Assurance Department; with the doctoral supervisors within the Doctoral School of Law; with the PhD students of the Doctoral School of Law; with members of the Doctoral Schools Council (CSD); with the members of the Ethics Commission; with graduates for the Doctoral School of Law; with the Directors and persons in charge with the research centers and laboratories within the Law domain; and with employers' representatives of Doctoral graduates in Law) were especially useful for the preparation of this evaluation.

In this regard, special mention should be made to the following methodological aspects I have taken into account in preparing this report, namely: the analysis of the internal evaluation report of the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara, its 25 annexes, the additional information on joint international supervision of PhD studies as requested on 8 September 2021 and other documents that kindly have been prepared and made available during the evaluation mission on 13-14 October 2021; the website of the West University of Timisoara; virtual meetings and discussions as scheduled by the ARACIS (see Annex). Each meeting and discussion consisted of questions asked by the members of the Team of evaluation and answers we got, which occasioned an active and relevant debate so necessary for writing this Report.

III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

The domain analysis was carried out in accordance with the Romanian legislation and ARACIS standards. The facts, the documents provided by the ARACIS and the Doctoral School of Law within the West University of Timisoara, and also the online evaluation visits have been taken into consideration for the assessment of this domain.

As a general description of the domain analysis, the finding is that the IOSUD at the West University of Timisoara meets the vast majority of the conditions required on its institutional capacity for an effective functioning of doctoral studies, as it results from the analysis of the following criteria, standards and indicators.

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

As a general description of the analysis of the criterion, it is noted that the IOSUD at the West University of Timisoara has implemented the necessary administrative, managerial institutional structures and the financial resources laid down in the specific legislation on the organisation of doctoral studies.



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.

The IOSUD within the West University of Timisoara has implemented the effective operating mechanisms provided for in the specific legislation on the organisation of doctoral studies, as shown by the analysis of the following 2 indicators. Both indicators have been fulfilled.

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;

The normative framework regarding the organization and development of doctoral university study programs within the WUT is established by the Institutional Regulation Regarding the Organization of Doctoral Studies), approved by the WUT Senate Decision no. 73 / 29.01.2019 and posted on the WUT website.

The Doctoral School of Law had adopted its own regulation, an aspect which establishes the specific framework for the organization and functioning of the doctoral school, as well as for the organization and development of doctoral studies in Law (*Annex SDD_ Doctoral School of Law Regulation*). The last edition of the regulation was approved in the General Assembly of doctoral supervisors within the Doctoral School of Law and approved by the Council of the Doctoral School of Law on January 31, 2019.

On the basis of the facts, the assessed institution's documents as well as the evaluation visit itself, I may affirm that, on 29 January 2019, the Senate of the West University of Timisoara has adopted its Institutional Regulation regarding the organization of doctoral studies, which is into force since the same date (see: <https://www.uvt.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Regulamentul-institutional-privind-organizarea-si-desfasurarea-studiilor-universitare-de-doctorat-in-cadrul-IOSUD-editia-.pdf>). On its part, the Doctoral School of Law has adopted its own Regulation on the organization and functioning, which has been approved by the General Assembly of doctoral supervisors within the Doctoral School of Law and endorsed by the Council of the Doctoral School of Law on 31 January 2019.

(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;

The process of electing all management, administrative and advisory structures within the WUT for the term 2020-2024 was carried out in accordance with the Regulation and Methodology on the election of management structures and functions of WUT for the term 2020-2024. All the outcomes of these elections (methodology, candidates, results) are posted on the website of the WUT available at <https://oldsite.WUT.ro/ro/alegeri-2020-2024>.

Art. 22 para. 3 and art. 25 of the regulation provide regarding the election of the Council of the Doctoral School members that: "The Council of the Doctoral School is composed of a maximum 40% percent of PhD supervisors from the doctoral school, a 20% percent of PhD students, rounded up if necessary, and a remaining 40% percent of members outside the doctoral school, elected from scientific personalities



whose scientific activity has a significant international recognition and / or personalities from the relevant industrial and socio-economic sectors (...) (art. 22 para. 3). PhD students elect their representatives in the Council of the Doctoral School, according to art. 14 para. 2 of G.D. no. 681/2011 on the approval of the Code of doctoral studies, pursuant to their own regulation (art. 25)”.

Student elections for the management structures of CSUD, respectively the Council of the Doctoral Schools are regulated by the specific documents concerning the organization of student elections within WUT (*Regulation for the election of representatives of PhD students in WUT*). Student elections take place annually, in accordance with a specific calendar, announced by the Students' Organization of West University of Timișoara (OSUT). Information about the elections and their results are available at: <https://osut.ro/rezultate-alegeri-csd-si-csud/>.

According to the facts, the assessed institution's documents as well as the evaluation visit itself, the West University of Timisoara has a specific Regulation on the methodology regarding the election of its management structures and functions that has been applied for the term 2020-2024. This legal act has been adopted by the Senate of this University on 27 June 2019 and has been amended in relation to the partial elections that took place in July 2020. See: <https://oldsite.uvt.ro/ro/alegeri-2020-2024/>

Thus, on the one hand, the Articles 22(3) and 25 of this Regulation refer to the election of members of the Doctoral School Council and, on the other hand, the Articles 40-45 are related to the election of members of the Council for Doctoral Studies (CDS). These provisions contain references to the director of CSD.

Regarding the elections by the students of their representatives in CSD, Articles 77-80 of the Regulation on election of students' representatives of the West University of Timisoara (see: <https://www.uvt.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Anexa-1.-Regulament-alegere-studenti-reprezentanti-2021-1.pdf>), which has been approved by the Senate of this University on 4 February 2021 and has entered into force on 4 February 2021, set out the procedure for the elections by the students of their representative in the CSD and the University Doctoral Studies Council (CSUD-UVT). In addition, the Articles 81 and 82 refer to the loss of student's representative status.

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

The proper conduct of doctoral studies within IOSUD-WUT is regulated by a series of methodologies and regulations, which detail and explain the institutional regulation regarding the organization and conduct of doctoral studies. The regulations and procedures are available to <https://doctorat.uvt.ro/?cat=37>.

Thus, annually the CSUD discusses the frameworks of admission to studies of PhD students, proposing customized admission methodologies (available to <https://doctorat.uvt.ro/?cat=43>). These methodologies are in accordance with the national methodologies of Ministry of Education, respectively with the Methodologies of admission to studies of Romanians Everywhere. Based on the general admission methodologies discussed in the CSUD, approved by the UVT Board of Directors and approved by decision by the University's Senate, the doctoral schools make up their own admission methodologies, which are specific according to the specifics of the domain of doctoral studies.



Admission to doctoral studies in IOSUD-WUT is carried out in conditions of transparency, with the dissemination of useful information for enrollment. Thus, on the site www.doctorat.uvt.ro; the places available are announced as well as their type (frequency/low frequency; budget with scholarship/budget without scholarship/own funding) as well as the distribution of places on doctoral schools and domains of doctoral studies. For example, the announcement for the admission on session 2020 is available to <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=8818>.

Regarding the special places allocated to *Romanian Everywhere* candidates, respectively, for admissions in the academic years 2017/2018 and 2018/2019, the special places allocated to *Roma* candidates, for their filling the registered candidates were classified according to the results of the admission competition. In order to avoid parity situations, the Methodology of admission to the IOSUD level provided for clear and successive criteria of division.

The Doctoral School of Law has a Methodology for the organization and conduct of the exam for the admission to doctoral studies during the ongoing academic year, which is annually endorsed by the General meeting of the members of the doctoral school and approved by the Council of the Doctoral School (*Annex SDD_Methodology_admission*).

The Doctoral School of Law Regulation contains provisions regarding the selection and admission to the doctoral study program (art. 5.1) and establishes the following: "Doctoral school will ensure the transparency of the procedures of selection and admission to the doctoral study program, of the evaluation criteria and standards required of candidates, as well as access to this information, including through its publication on the Internet. This information, as well as the vacant places at the level of the doctoral school (with specifications regarding the form of study and the financing conditions) shall be published on the IOSUD-WUT website and at the place where the doctoral school is organized" (art.5.1 para. 8) (*Annex SDD_Doctoral School of Law Regulation*).

IOSUD-WUT also has clear procedures concerning the completion of doctoral studies. Elaborated on the basis of the national legislation and compliant with the national platforms for the validation of doctoral degrees (Integrated Educational Register and Single Matriculation Register), these procedures include information on the stages preceding the defence of the PhD dissertation, as well as on the requirements established for defending it. All these procedures are aimed at ensuring conditions of total exigency and transparency regarding the completion of the doctoral dissertations. The latest version of the methodology for the defence of the PhD dissertations is available at <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=9462>, and the procedure for the defence of the PhD dissertations online is available at <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=9493>.

Thus, IOSUD-WUT has clear procedures regarding the verification of the similarity of doctoral theses, without turning this technical process into a substitute for the discussions between the doctoral supervisor and the PhD student.

Each similarity analysis report made using the Ithenticate software is accompanied by the written opinion of the doctoral supervisor, which confirms the acceptability of the thesis. At the same time, the procedures for public defense of the doctoral thesis specify the situations in which the abstract of the doctoral thesis/



the thesis in full format are made public and are accessible before the public defense. Thus, the doctoral thesis (in physical format) is available at the Central University Library "Eugen Todoran" 20 days before the public defense, and the thesis summary is available online: <https://doctorat.uvt.ro/?cat=46>.

The Doctoral School of Law Regulation includes in art. 7.1. provisions regarding the completion of the doctoral studies (*Annex SDD_ Doctoral School of Law Regulation*) compatible with those set forth by the specific methodologies and procedures of IOSUD-WUT.

Taking into account the facts, the assessed institution's documents as well as the evaluation visit itself, I may say that the West University of Timisoara has a specific Institutional Regulation regarding the organization and conduct of doctoral studies. The current version of this Regulation has been adopted by Senate on 18 February 2021. According to its Article 7(1), each Doctoral School elaborate its own regulation on the organization and conduct of doctoral studies in the conformity with the provisions of this Institutional Regulation. Thus, the Doctoral School of Law has a specific Metodology on the organization and conduct of the exam for the admission to doctoral studies. This Methodology is adopted for each academic year. For example, the Metodology for the 2020/2021 academic year was adopted by the CSD on 6 July 2020.

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

Since 2017, implementing national regulations, IOSUD-WUT has regulated through internal methodologies and procedures the recognition of the quality of doctoral coordinator, based on certifications obtained in universities abroad, and the recognition of the doctor's degree obtained abroad. The methodology is available at <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=4183>. The Doctoral School of Law within IOSUD - WUT has not received requests for the recognition of the quality of PhD supervisor or of PhD degrees awarded abroad.

I have been able to find the information regarding this part of my report on the part of the website of the West University of Timisoara dedicated to the legislation on the doctoral studies organized in the framework of the IOSUD-UVT (available at: <https://www.uvt.ro/cercetare/doctorat/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

Thus, since 22 February 2017, the West University of Timisoara has adopted its Methodology for the recognition within its structures of the Doctoral supervisor quality obtained by foreign accredited Higher Education Institutions. This recognition is needed in order to be affiliated to the Doctoral School of the IOSUD-UVT. Moreover, this University has published a list of those foreign Universities that are considered prestigious as well as of a list of States for which Apostille or super-legalisation is required (see: <https://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=4183>). Furthermore, this University has a specific Methodology for the Recognition of the PhD Diploma and Doctoral Degree of Science or Professional Fields Certificates and Degrees Awarded by Foreign Accredited Higher Education Institutions. It has been endorsed by the Board of Directors within the West University of Timisoara on 18 January 2017 and approved by the Senate of the West University of Timisoara on 19 January 2017, and that entered into force on 19 January 2017.



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

The current composition of the Council of the Doctoral School of Law was validated within the election process carried out at the level of West University of Timișoara during 2019-2020 (according to the Election Calendar within West University of Timișoara). The Council of the Doctoral School is composed of: Professor Irina Sferdian (director of the Doctoral School of Law), Professor Anton Trăilescu (PhD supervisor within the Doctoral School of Law, member), Professor Claudia Roșu (PhD supervisor within the Doctoral School of Law, member), Professor Radu Catană ("Babeș-Bolyai" University of Cluj-Napoca, member), Professor Dan Claudiu Dănișor (University of Craiova, member), Alexandra Burdulea (PhD student of the Doctoral School of Law, member).

The Council of the Doctoral School of Law meets upon the request of the director of the doctoral school or of at least one third of its members whenever there are operational issues requiring attention. We should mention that, among its duties, the Council of the Doctoral School: (i) approves requests regarding the number and structure of the vacant places requested for each admission session, the curriculum and the content of the course syllabus, the analytical report prepared within the analysis and endorsement of the affiliation applications; (ii) endorses reports regarding the interruption, extension of studies or expulsion of PhD students who do not fulfil their contractual obligations; (iii) analyses requests from the PhD supervisors and the PhD students, as the case may be; (iv) approves the amendments to the doctoral school regulations, admission regulations, scholarship regulations and other specific regulations, etc. The members of the doctoral school meet at least once a year and are consulted by the Council of the Doctoral School on strategic aspects concerning to the development of current activities. (*Annex SDD_ Doctoral School of Law Regulation*).

On the basis of the facts, the assessed institution's documents as well as the evaluation visit itself, I have been able to note that there are detailed rules and norms set out by the Regulation on the organization and functioning of the Doctoral School of Law, which are applied to the Council of the Doctoral School of Law. There are proofs or evidences on regular meetings of this Council.

f) the contract for doctoral studies;

The relations between the PhD student, the PhD supervisor and IOSUD-WUT are established in accordance with the *Contract of doctoral studies* (available at <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?=3285>). This document specifies the rights and obligations of each of the parties, and sets forth the research path of the PhD student. Any change that might occur along the way (interruption, extension of studies) will be stipulated in the additional documents to the Contract of doctoral studies.

Taking into account the facts, the assessed institution's documents as well as the evaluation visit itself, I may affirm that, at present, the West University of Timisoara has a template of contract for doctoral studies. The Doctoral supervisor, the doctoral student, the Director of CSUD, and a jurist sign this contract.

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



Upon signing the Contract of doctoral studies, PhD student together with the PhD supervisor and with his agreement, elaborates a Doctoral study plan that specifies the student's research path (disciplines in the training program based on advanced academic studies, themes and dates for the presentation of the research reports, dates for the public defense of the PhD dissertation, projects in which the PhD student participates, study / research stays, etc.) (see: Annex_IOSUD_Forms). The study plans proposed by the PhD supervisors together with their students are analysed by the Council of the Doctoral School of Law and endorsed by the Director of the Doctoral School of Law.

On the same occasion, based on their discussions with the students, following the analysis of their research topic, the PhD supervisors also establish the doctoral guidance committee (see: Annex_IOSUD_Forms).

On the basis of the facts, the assessed institution's documents as well as the evaluation visit itself, I consider that the IOSUD-WUT has established serious and strong internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies. These procedures apply at the level of the Doctoral School of Law for each PhD student.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.*

According to art. 17 of the Code of doctoral studies (G.D. no. 681/2011), the regulations of the doctoral schools within IOSUD - WUT specify these procedures, and the particularities of each field of doctoral studies. The acceptance of new members in doctoral schools is validated by the doctoral schools' councils based on analyzing the opportunity of such recruitments and each candidate's scientific performance and professional integrity. The doctoral school councils also discuss and validate the competences PhD students will acquire by completing the training program based on advanced university studies, i.e. the disciplines included in this program. Also, the doctoral schools' councils take into account the special situations in which the PhD student, based on the discussion with the supervisor and taking into account the preparation of their research theme, chooses other subjects than those offered by the doctoral school where they are learning in WUT.

Doctoral schools comply with the Romanian legislation in force, as well as with the Regulation on the organization and conduct of doctoral studies (available at <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=7901>) with respect to the potential cases of incompatibility or conflicts between the supervisor and the PhD student, providing for the mediation of conflicts or, where appropriate, the change of the PhD supervisor. At the same time, the procedures regarding the prevention of intellectual fraud, including plagiarism, respectively the aspects related to the PhD students' attendance follow these general procedures.



As specified by art. 1 of the Doctoral School of Law Regulation (in force since 31.01.2019) (Annex SDD_ Doctoral School of Law Regulation), it is elaborated based on the provisions of the National Law on Education no.1/2011, of G.D. no. 681/2011 on the approval of the Code of doctoral studies and of the Regulation for the organization and conduct of doctoral studies within IOSUD-WUT. The Doctoral School of Law Regulation includes provisions concerning: (i) the acceptance of new PhD supervisors (art. 3.3); (ii) the activity of PhD students - the training program based on advanced academic studies (Art. 4.1 - 4.2, art. 7.2); (iii) the change of the PhD supervisor and the mediation of conflicts (art. 4.3); (iv) the conditions under which the doctoral studies may be interrupted (art. 5.2 para. 4); (v) the means of preventing fraud in scientific research, including plagiarism (art. 7.3); (vi) the access to research resources (art. 4.4); g) the attendance requirements for PhD students (art. 4.2 para. 4, art. 5.2-5.3).

On the basis of the analysis of the facts, the assessed institution's documents as well as the evaluation visit itself, I consider that the internal Regulation of the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara fulfils all the requirements of Article 17(5) of the Government Decision No. 681/2011.

Thus, it provides for the acceptance of new doctoral supervisors and regulations on how a doctoral supervisor may be appointed to a doctoral programme, membership of the Doctoral School; the mechanisms by which decisions on suitability are taken, structure and content of the training programme based on University studies advanced training, the procedures for changing the doctoral supervisor of a precise doctoral student and procedures for mediating conflicts, the conditions under which the doctoral programme may be interrupted, the arrangements for the prevention of fraud in scientific research, including plagiarism, ensuring access to research resources, and attendance duties for doctoral students that have to be established according to the methodologies established by the Romanian Ministry of Education.

As for Art. 17(5)(e) of the University Studies Code that refers to the ways to prevent fraud in scientific research, including plagiarism, it has to be mentioned that there is the 10% similarity percentage indicated in the normative of this University regarding the organisation and implementation of the process of presenting the PhD thesis (see Article 7(4) of the Methodology: <https://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=9462#more-9462>). In addition, the PhD student is allowed to present his/her thesis only if he/she count on the resolution of his/her doctoral supervisor in this regard.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

As a general description of the analysis of this standard, it is noted that the IOSUD at the West University of Timisoara has the necessary logistical resources in order to carry out the doctoral studies' mission, as shown by the analysis of the following 2 indicators. Both indicators have been fulfilled.

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.



IOSUD-WUT supports the implementation of the IT solutions necessary for the optimization and development of the administrative activities related to PhD students. Thus, PhD students and their research path records are to be found in WUT's own system: UMS - University Management System, but also in the systems of the Ministry of National Education: REI - Integrated Educational Register and RMU - Single Matriculation Register.

UMS - University Management System (academic management component) is one of the 2 main components of the Integrated Information Management System (ACADEMIS) implemented by West University of Timisoara. The second main component of the ACADEMIS system is SAP - Systems Application and Products in Data Processing (the economic-financial component). The ACADEMIS information system renders academic management more efficient, by digitalizing all processes, flows, procedures, and ensures the efficient administration of all the activities related to the academic-didactic organization, admission, examinations, scholarships, accommodation, transport discounts, issuance of study documents, specific managerial analyses.

Additionally, PhD students have access to the platform <https://elearning.e-uvt.ro/> Elearning platform - doctoral studies.

As my evaluation has been conducted on the basis of evidences sent by the ARACIS and the documents available on the website of the West University of Timisoara, on the one hand, and the virtual meetings through Zoom hold between 20 and 24 September 2021, on the other hand, I have to use the information contained by the Internal Evaluation Report of Doctoral School – Law. It has not been possible for me to see these aspects *in situ*. Therefore, I am not able to make any recommendation.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.

In accordance with the provisions of Annex 1, art. art. 4, pc. b) to Order 3897 / 16.05.2017 for amending the Regulation on the Organization and Functioning of the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates of 24.03.2016, IOSUD-WUT uses as a support tool for learning academic writing and for verifying the degree of similarity to the online software iThenticate (available at <http://www.ithenticate.com>), through which all doctoral theses are filtered, according to the internal procedures, before the defense within the Guiding Commission, i.e. before the public defense. The resulting reports are submitted in full on the National REI Platform, in order to be verified and validated by CNATDCU, which also validates the doctoral submissions and the proposals of conferring the title of PhD. The similarity report is also accompanied by a resolution of the PhD supervisor, by which he evaluates the similarities identified by the software, stating whether the similarity is purely mechanical (i.e. long titles, names of institutions, names of documents and normative acts, standard formulations, etc.), or due to fraudulent copying of scientific content belonging to other authors.

Thus, according to art. 7 (3) of the Methodology Regarding the Organization and Development of PhD Thesis Defense of the WUT, approved by the Decision of the Senate of the WUT no. 20 from 24.09.2020,



the program used to analyze the similarity of doctoral theses by the IOSUD-WUT is iThenticate. The same software is provided by the Procedure Regarding the Organization and Development of PhD Theses of the WUT in the online version (Procedure Regarding the Process Organization for Defending the Ph.D. Thesis in WUT for online versions) , art. 8-11: „Art 8. The Doctoral Studies Office starts the similarity analysis procedure, by filtering the doctoral thesis with the iThenticate anti-plagiarism program. Art. 9. The Doctoral Studies Office sends electronically the similarity report to the PhD supervisor, the latter being obliged to reach a written decision. Art. 10. The doctoral supervisor sends the signed resolution (printed, completed, signed, scanned in PDF format) to the Doctoral Studies Office in digital version. Art. 11. After completing these procedures, the PhD student defends the doctoral thesis in front of the Guiding Commission.”

During the meeting with PhD students scheduled from 9:30 to 10:25 (Romanian time) on Tuesday, 12 October 2021, several participants mentioned that they were aware of the requirement to submit their doctoral thesis to an appropriate software program in order to verify the percentage of similarity. One of the PhD student, who is pending on defending the PhD thesis in the coming months, mentioned that a person from the Administration of the West University of Timisoara was in charge with checking the percentage of similarity of his doctoral Thesis.

Through the documentation and information made available by the Doctoral School of Law on 14 October 2021, I consider that this institution has and use an appropriate software program for checking the percentage of similarity in all the PhD theses. Its activity in this field is based on an appropriate normative and there are reports in percentage of similarity for such academic papers.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.

The IOSUD within the West University of Timisoara makes sure that financial resources are used optimally, and the revenues obtained from doctoral studies are supplemented through additional funding besides governmental funding, as shown by the analysis of the following 3 indicators. 2 of the 3 indicators have been fulfilled and a third indicator has been partially fulfilled.

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.

The PhD supervisors of the Doctoral School of Law are involved in grants or research contracts in the assessed field, addressing relevant topics for the field. For example, during 2020- 2022, the Project for the modernization of the computing and storage infrastructure of the Informatics Research Centre of West



University of Timișoara for the provision of Cloud services and high performance computing services - MOISE, ID 124562, funded through the Operational Program Competitiveness 2014 -2020 within the call for projects no. 398/1/1, Action 1.1.2. - Development of networks of R&D centres, coordinated at national level and connected to European and international networks and opening access of researchers to scientific publications and European and international databases, in accordance with the financing contract no. 240/24.04.2020 (total value of the financing contract: 5.695.580,54 lei) in which Professor Florin Moțiu is a member of the implementation team (Annex SDD_CV_Florin_Motiu_A.1.3.1), is under development. During 2018-2020, the same PhD supervisor was an expert in commercial law for the meetings of the presidents of the specialized sections of the High Court of Cassation and Justice and the courts of appeal / expert in insolvency law within the project Justice 2020: professionalism and integrity, co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) through the Operational Program Administrative Capacity (POCA), Component 1 IP9/2017 - Quality, transparency, ethics and integrity at the level of the judiciary, Priority Axis 2 - Accessible and transparent public administration and judiciary, Specific Objective 2.3: Ensuring greater transparency and integrity at the level of the judiciary in order to improve access to its services and their quality (Annex SDD_CV_Florin_Motiu_A.1.3.1). During 2016-2017, Professor Lucian Bercea was a researcher within The research contract on the application of the law in time in the field of bank loan agreements concluded with consumers, the beneficiary of the project being the Institute for Public Policies (IPP), as well as within The research contract on the legal implications of the theory of frustration of purpose, including from the perspective of the Decision no. 623/2016 of the Constitutional Court regarding the exception of unconstitutionality of certain provisions of Law no. 77/ 2016 on *datio in solutum* of real estate for the extinction of certain obligations deriving from credits, the beneficiary of the project being the Society of Legal Sciences (SSJ). At the same time, Professor Raluca Bercea has, at the date of the assessment, the quality of Research advisor UNITA Office, within the project UNITA-UNIVERSITAS MONTIUM developed by West University of Timișoara (grant agreement no. 101004082). Previously, during the reference period, the same PhD supervisor was a national coordinator within the project Trust, Independence, Impartiality and Accountability of Judges and Arbitrators Safeguarding the Rule of Law under the EU Charter, TRIIAL, 853832, JUST-JTRA-EJTR-AG-2018, carried out by a professional body (National Union of Romanian Bars), and whose leader was the European University Institute in Florence (Italy), as well as in 4 other international projects carried out by professional bodies in Romania (National Union of Romanian Bars, Superior Council of Magistracy, etc.), in cooperation with international partners.

I consider that the Doctoral School of Law counts on a sufficient number of projects in order to fulfill this Performance Indicator, which address relevant themes for the doctoral domains of research. There are enough evidences regarding the active and fruitful participation of PhD students in the national and international projects.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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%.



During 2019-2021, the project *Entrepreneurial education and professional counselling for PhD students and postdoctoral researchers for the purpose of organizing the transfer of knowledge in the field of socio-humanities to the labour market* (ATRIUM) - project code POCU / 380/6/13/123343, in which West University of Timișoara is a partnership leader, and the University of Bucharest and Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca are partners (total value of the project: 5,946,036.61 lei) is under development. For PhD students, the funding level is of 1680 lei / month, and for postdoctoral students of 2500 lei / month. Within this project, the number of young researchers - PhD students and postdoctoral students who benefit from financial support is 34 PhD students and 16 postdoctoral students of West University of Timișoara (for example, Andrei Rusu, with the research theme Documentary evidence). At the same time, during 2018- 2020, the Faculty of Law within West University of Timișoara participated, together with the other faculties of law within the Hexagon of the Faculties of Law, in carrying out (management and implementation) specific activities within the project *Counselling Services for victims of abuses or irregularities in administration and justice* - project code SIPOCA 377 / My Smis 111830), coordinated by the Romanian Association for Transparency Bucharest (partnership leader) (total value of the project: 6,645,492.33 lei). From the teaching and research staff of the Faculty of Law within West University of Timișoara 1 research assistant - PhD student in the field of Law (DanAdrian Cărmidariu) was part of the project.

I consider that the Doctoral School of Law shows that it has been very active in the last years in order to raise funds from different projects, which can contribute to grant scholarships to its PhD students and support therefore doctoral research. There is sufficient evidences that those PhD students, who have been interested in getting the financial supprt of this Doctoral School, have been able to benefit from funding sources. These funds were used for research stays abroad, attendance to summer schools, and participation to international conferences organized abroad.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *A.1.3.3.2 *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.).*

At the level of the Economic-Financial Department of West University of Timișoara, there is no analytical breakdown of the amounts allocated for the mobility of PhD students by funding sources, because the law does not impose such a measure. However, the analysis of the travel expenses covered by West University of Timisoara in 2018, to mention as an example, shows that the approximate sums allocated for the mobility of PhD students amount to 105.956,60 lei (daily allowance, internal travel, external travel, fees). The Methodology concerning access of PhD students to institutional resources for professional

² 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.



training will be adopted at the level of IOSUD-WUT (Annex IOSUD_Methodology_financial support). This methodology stipulates at art. 7-9: „Art. 7. The PhD student with an activity in WUT or in a national joint degree program can benefit yearly, for a period of three years, of financial support for their professional activities amounting to 10% of their doctoral grant. Art. 8. The PhD student involved in an international joint program or who obtains a European doctoral degree can benefit yearly, for a period of three years, of financial support for their professional activities amounting to 20% of their doctoral grant. Art. 9.

The financial support can consist of: research/creation/sport performance grants, participation in specialized conferences and workshops, participation in training programs, summer schools, professional events, the open-access publication of a peer-reviewed article/chapter authored or coauthored by the PhD student, equipment or access to electronic/physical resources other than those available in IOSUD-WUT”.

The West University of Timisoara is very well-known for the high number of Erasmus+ bilateral agreements signed with Universities from other countries that are part of the Erasmus+ programme. Moreover, it is benefiting from other mobilities such as the ones occasioned by its membership to the UNITA-Universitas Montium that is funded by the European Commission. This academic consortium is made up by Università degli studi di Torino (Italy), Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour and Université Savoie Mont Blanc (France), Universidad de Zaragoza (Spain), Universidade Beira Interior (Portugal) and the West University of Timisoara. It is expected that this academic network will benefit a lot PhD students as well as as doctoral students and exchange of doctoral supervisors among the six Universities that are part of the UNITA-Universitas Montium.

Taking into account the documents prepared by the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara, which have been facilitated during the evaluation period, I consider that this Doctoral School has made great efforts in order to use at least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants obtained by it through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system for reimbursing 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 consider that this percentage can be reached in the very near future.

Recommendation: Allocate at least 10% of its funds (got from doctoral grants it obtained through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system) for reimbursing professional training expenses of doctoral students (attending conferences, summer schools, training, programs abroad, publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.).

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure

As a general description of the analysis of this criterion, it is noted that the IOSUD at the West University of Timisoara has implemented the necessary administrative, managerial institutional structures and the financial resources laid down in the specific legislation on the organisation of doctoral studies.



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

The IOSUD at the West University of Timisoara has a modern research infrastructure to support the conduct of doctoral studies' specific activities, as shown by the analysis of the following indicator that is fulfilled.

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.*

IOSUD-WUT has its own headquarters in a WUT building situated on 1 Paris street, extended and renovated. Apart from offices and archives, the building has a large room for public defenses and conferences, which can also take place in WUT auditoria like A01 and A11 which have proper equipments.

The Faculty of Law within West University of Timișoara, located at Blvd. Eroilor de la Tisa no. 9A, has a conference room (equipped with a video conferencing system), 4 lecture halls, 12 seminar rooms, 2 computer laboratories (equipped with 20 computers each) and 1 forensic laboratory. The students of the Doctoral School of Law have access to the teaching, research and documentation spaces. The Law Library of "Eugen Todoran" Central University Library (BCUT) is situated within the Faculty of Law where it has a reading room. The students of the Doctoral School of Law have access to the WUT research infrastructure (computers, software, library, access to international databases), under the conditions of the internal regulations and based on the student card. The courses for the first year PhD students take place in the lecture halls with video projector and internet access.

WUT is a member of the *Anelis+ consortium*, which brings together the main higher education and research institutions in Romania, interested in accessing top scientific literature. UVT currently has subscriptions in the following scientific databases: *ScienceDirect Freedom Collection Journals ACCESS, Springlink journals, Thomson Web of Knowledge, American Institute of Physics Journals, American Physical Society Journals, Oxford Journals, IEEE/IEL, SCOPUS, Sage Journals HSS, Wiley Journals, American Chemical Society, Cambridge Journals, Institute of Physics Journals, MatSciNet, EBSCO Academic Search Complete, EBSCO Business Source Complete, EBSCO Art Full text, NATURE, ScienceDirect ARHIVE NATIONALE, Springer Archive, Wiley Archive, Institute of Physics Journals Archive, ScienceDirect Archive Curente 2016.* IOSUD-WUT is in an institutional partnership with the



“Eugen Todoran Central University Library” (BCUT), a partnership by virtue of which the library keeps the doctoral thesis allowing its consultation before the public defense and afterwards. The electronic resources provided by BCUT are available at: <http://www.bcut.ro/Informatii-generale-s31-ro.htm>. These can be accessed from the networks of the WUT, including its Halls of Residence and the library networks (wireless from the building B of the library) and include, among others: the ROLiNeST Portal; ANELIS PLUS; Web of Science; CEEOL; Ebsco; Oxford Journals; ScienceDirect; SCOPUS; Sage; SpringerLink e-journals; Ulrichs; Wiley Journals etc. and internet access to the Electronic Catalogue (OPAC) of the BCUT, which contains 334,656 bibliographic entries, representing over 90% of the usual datapool of documents (<http://aleph.bcut.ro/F?RN=204446683>). ANELIS also provides free access to numerous important databases (e.g. Ebsco Academic Search Premier and Proquest Central, ScienceDirect, Scopus, SpringerLink e-journals and Thomson ISI Web of Science), including ISI journals, books and chapters. of books, books, doctoral papers (<https://intranet.uvt.ro/>, <https://portal.anelisplus.ro/>).

PhD students from the Doctoral School of Law have, under the conditions of internal regulations and based on their student IDs, access to the WUT research infrastructure (computers, software, library, access to international databases). For first-year doctoral students, the courses take place in amphitheatres equipped with video projectors and internet access.

Taking into account the assessed institution’s documents, the website of the West University of Timisoara, and the information got during various online meetings, I consider that in the last years the West University of Timisoara has consolidated itself as one of the leading Romanian Universities. It has a very solid material and research infrastructures that allow PhD students to carry out their doctoral research in an excellent context.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resources

As a general description of the analysis of this criterion, it is considered that the Doctoral School of Law within the West University of Timisoara fulfills all the requirements on quality of human resources for the effective organisation of doctoral studies, as shown by the following analysis of standards and indicators.

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

It is estimated that there is sufficient qualified staff to ensure the conduct of doctoral study program within the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara, as shown by the analysis of the following 4 indicators. All the indicators have been fulfilled.

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.



The Doctoral School of Law within the Research-Development Institution of the West University of Timișoara (hereinafter referred to as IOSUD-WUT) has a number of 11 PhD supervisors: Professor Lucian Bercea, PhD, Professor Raluca Bercea, PhD, Professor Radu Bufan, PhD, Professor Radu I. Motica, PhD, Professor Florin Moțiu, PhD, Professor Claudia Roșu, PhD, Professor Anton Trăilescu, PhD, Professor Viorel Pașca, PhD, Professor Irina Sferdian, PhD, Professor Valentin Constantin, PhD, Professor Ioan Vida, PhD. As it results from the individual minimum standards checklists (Annex SDD_A.3.1.1.), as well as from their synthesis (Annex SDD_Situation_standards), in the field of Law, 9 of the PhD supervisors - 6 full-time WUT professors and 3 retired WUT professors - fully meet the minimum necessary and mandatory standards in force for conferring the certificate of habilitation, which represents a percentage of 81.82%, and 2 of the PhD supervisors - 1 full WUT professor and 1 WUT retired professor meet to a full extent the minimum necessary and mandatory standards in force for obtaining the certificate of habilitation (Fund Performance - C1), which represents a percentage of 18.18%.

According to the Annexes SDD_A3.1.1, SDD_Situatie_standarde and SDD_Punctaje2016-2020_conducatoridoctorat, more than 3 PhD supervisors of the Doctoral School in Law, who represent more than 50% of them, 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.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.

Among the 11 PhD supervisors within the Doctoral School of Law, 6 are WUT tenured professors (Annex SDD_Certificates), which represents a percentage of 54.54%, and 5 are WUT retired professors, which represents a percentage of 45.46%. In between 2015 and 2019, a number of 6 professors of the faculty have been attested as PhD supervisors - Professor Lucian Bercea, PhD (by Order of the Minister of Education and Scientific Research no. 3216/18.02.2015), Professor Valentin Constantin, PhD (by Order of the Minister of Education and Scientific Research no. 4209/10.06.2015), Professor Claudia Roșu, PhD (by Order of the Minister of Education and Scientific Research no. 5353/29.09.2015), Professor Irina Sferdian, PhD (by Order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research no. 4035/07.06.2016), Professor Florin Moțiu, PhD (by Order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research no. 5358/29.09.2016), Professor Raluca Bercea, PhD (by Order of the Minister of National Education no. 4076/28.05.2019) – a fact which proves the institutional capacity of Law Faculty in Timișoara to develop its Doctoral School of Law. At the same time, reasonable estimates indicate a high probability that in the next 2 years at least 3 other professors of the faculty will apply for the certificate of habilitation.

On the basis of Annex SDD_Adeverinte, 6 of the 11 supervisors within the Doctoral School of Law have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD. Therefore, this percentage is fulfilled. In addition, I would like to stress the relatively young age of the doctoral supervisors. Perhaps



this has contributed to the great dynamism of the West University of Timisoara especially in the last decade.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.*

The disciplines configured in the academic year 2020/2021 curricula of the Doctoral School of Law, on subjects such as: Civil Law, Civil Procedural Law, Commercial Law, Constitutional Law, Public International Law, European Union Law, are taught by PhD supervisors, IOSUD-WUT affiliates, with professional expertise, teaching and research experience in their field of study. The teaching and research activity of the PhD supervisors in charge of the disciplines offered to first year PhD students proves their expertise in the field of study (Annex SDD_Education plans; Annex SDD_CV_Doctoral supervisors). The non-legal disciplines in the advanced program (related to the methodology of scientific research and academic ethics) are taught by prestigious professors of the WUT, who are also PhD supervisors in other fields of study.

As it can be read on the website of the Faculty of Law from Timisoara (see: <https://drept.uvt.ro/programe-doctorat.html>), currently there are 7 fields of doctoral studies, namely: civil law, civil procedural law, business law, international and European law, constitutional law, administrative law, and criminal law. Each PhD student has to at least 3 doctoral studies, which are considered to offer him/her the necessary training for conducting doctoral research. Two courses – Ethics and academic integrity, and Methodology of scientific research and writing the doctoral thesis – are common to the curricula of all the PhD students.

On the basis of the information available on the teaching plans of the 7 fields of doctoral studies, which is available on the above mentioned website, I consider that these courses are taught by teaching staff or researchers, who are doctoral 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.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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 programs³ does not exceed 20%.*

³ 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



With regard to the situation of distribution of PhD students by PhD supervisors, in the academic year 2020/2021 2 PhD supervisors of the Doctoral School of Law coordinate more than 8 PhD students (including PhD students in extension of studies), which represents a percentage of 18.18 %. (Annex SDD_Situation_2020-2021_PhD students_Doctoral supervisors). The constant trend of the last years indicates a considerable reduction in the number of PhD students coordinated by PhD supervisors, notwithstanding the increase in the number of the latter.

Taking into account the documents provided for this evaluation, I consider that the percentage of doctoral supervisors of the Doctoral School of Law from Timisoara, who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 PhD students and no more than 12, is less than 20%. It is worth mentioning that, according to the estimations made by this Doctoral School, it is expected that this percentage will be even lower in the next 3 years as a consequence of getting the capacity to supervise doctoral studies by 3 other members of the Faculty.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

The doctoral supervisors, who are part of the Doctoral School of Law within the West University of Timisoara, are carrying out a scientific activity visible at international level, as shown by the analysis of the following 2 indicators. Both indicators have been fulfilled.

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.*

The analysis of the results of the scientific research conducted by the Doctoral School of Law supervisors highlights two important aspects: most PhD supervisors have published articles in Web of Science indexed publications or book chapters in volumes published by prestigious international publishers (although the field of Law is officially recognized as a field of study with a strong national specificity); the

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.



11 PhD supervisors have published 678 articles (an average per field of 61.63 articles / PhD supervisor) (Annex SDD_A.3.2.1). The first category of achievements includes both publications in Web of Science indexed journals (The Translator, Journal of Comparative Law, etc.) and book chapters in collective volumes published by prestigious international publishers, in English or French (Springer, Cambridge University Press, CH Beck, Nomos, Hart, Bruylant, Presses Universitaires de France, LGDJ etc.).

At the same time, for the reference period, the international academic visibility of PhD supervisors in the field of Law is illustrated by: membership of the scientific committees of international publications and conferences; membership of PhD theses defence commissions at foreign universities; the quality of guest speaker at conferences held abroad, membership of international groups of experts; membership of boards of international professional associations (Annex SDD_CV doctoral supervisors_FV research). Thus, the following examples can be highlighted: (i) membership of international professional associations: the European Association for Banking and Financial Law - EABFL, in which Professor Lucian Bercea is a member of the Scientific Committee at European level; the European Association of Fiscal Law Professors and the International Fiscal Association, in which Professor Radu Bufan is a member; the International Association of Criminal Law, in which Professor Viorel Pașca is a member; the Association of Constitutional Courts using the French language - ACCPUF, whose vicepresident was Professor Ioan Vida; the Association "Henri Capitant" Association - Friends of the French Legal Culture, in which Professor Raluca Bercea is a member; (ii) co-optation in management structures of some research institutes from abroad: Professor Lucian Bercea is, starting with 2013, vice director of the Research Center for European Criminal Law within the Institute of Law, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, in charge of the business law area; (iii) participation as experts or rapporteurs in the work groups of international bodies or associations: since 2016, Professor Florin Moțiu is a national expert in the Work Group V - Insolvency Law of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL); Professor Ioan Vida has been appointed the European regional network rapporteur of the World Conference on Constitutional Justice, organized by the Constitutional Court of South Africa in cooperation with the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission); Professor Raluca Bercea is, since 2017, a training expert on human rights at the Council of Europe; (iv) participation as experts or rapporteurs in international congresses: Professor Lucian Bercea was a national rapporteur at the Journées Internationales Henri Capitant, Bordeaux - Paris (2019), and co-rapporteur, together with Adriana Almășan, at the Congress of the International Association of Comparative Law, Fukuoka (Japan), 2018; (v) organization of international conferences within the regional cooperation networks: the series of international conferences of the Journal of Eastern European Criminal Law (published by the Faculty of Law of the West University of Timișoara in collaboration with the Faculty of Law of the University of Pecs, Hungary), organized by Professor Viorel Pașca in 2015 and 2017, with the participation of criminal law specialists from Central and Eastern Europe.

There are extensive proofs on the scientific results of the 11 doctoral supervisors within the Doctoral School of Law from Timișoara (such as, among others: 11 articles published by legal journals indexed by Web of Science, 27 chapters in collective books published by international prestigious publishing houses, and approximately 700 articles published by prestigious legal journals in the field of Law). Furthermore, they have a relevant international academic visibility both in the Romanian Academia and abroad. This relevant research activity has been supported by the large openness of the West University of Timișoara, which has allowed the doctoral supervisors to be in contact with researchers and professors from many



other countries and Universities. It is expected that this tendency will be maintained in the future also due to a consolidated alliance through the UNITA.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.*

In between 2016 and 2020, all PhD supervisors within the Doctoral School of Law have achieved a score of 25% of the minimum CNATDCU standards necessary and mandatory to obtain the certificate of habilitation, this score being achieved, in proportion of 25% - 100%, in the last 5 years (Annex SDD_Scores 2016-2020_Doctoral supervisors). For example, in relation to the minimum limit of 37.5 points, in the reference period 2016-2020, Professor Lucian Bercea has achieved a score of 171.13 points; Professor Florin Motișu - a score of 118.45 points; Professor Raluca Bercea - a score of 112, 41 points; Professor Radu Bufan - a score of 71.25 points; Professor Irina Sferdian - a score of 63.70 points; Professor Anton Trăilescu - a score of 44.7 points.

As showed in the Annex SDD_Punctaje2016-2020_conducatori de doctorat, during the period 2015-2020 each one of the 11 doctoral supervisors within the Doctoral School of Law from Timisoara has acquired at least 25% of the score requested by the minimal CNATDCU standards in force currently.

Concretly, 1 doctoral supervisor has got 171.13 points out of the 150 CNATDCU standards; 3 doctoral supervisors have got more than 100 points; 3 supervisors have got more than 50 points; and 4 doctoral supervisors have got between 37.5 and 50 points.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The Doctoral School of Law within the West University of Timisoara demonstrates educational effectiveness and meets the vast majority of the following criteria, standards and indicators.

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

As a general description of the analysis of the criterion, it is noted that the Doctoral School of Law meets the standard and the performance indicator, as it is described below.

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.



The Doctoral School of Law within the West University of Timisoara has shown its capacity to attract candidates from outside this University, as shown by the analysis of the following indicator that is fully fulfilled.

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.*

In the analysed period, the number of budgeted places for admission in IOSUD-WUT provided by the Ministry of National Education has ranged between 80-95. Apart from these places, annually, there have been special grants for Romanian natives from abroad (Romanians everywhere). Additionally, WUT has also recruited self-financed students (paying students, international paying students from Eu and non-EU countries). Since 2017, UVT also offers a number of grants to Roma candidates.

On January 1 2020, the official figures submitted to the Ministry of National Education were as follows:

University (1 ian. 2020)	Doctoral studies					% PhD of all students	% PhD of Master students
	Total (D)	Of which:		Ratio budget/pay ing			
		Budget	Paying				
<i>West University of Timisoara</i>	616	272	344	0,79	4,10%	17,14%	

resulting in a ratio of 2.26 between the total number of students and the budgeted students.

On November 1, the internal data indicated the following distribution of places in accordance with the financing source:

PhD students	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Romanians (budgeted)	267	258	271	255	270
Romanians (paying)	225	212	231	264	296
Romanians everywhere (with grant)	5	6	11	12	12
Romanians everywhere (no grant)		6	2	4	4
Romanians everywhere (paying)	3	2	1	2	1
Roma students (budgeted)		1	4	5	5
International students (budgeted)	5	7	3	3	1
EU paying students	7	8	5	6	5
Non-EU paying students	70	66	37	45	39
Ratio international students/all students	15%	17%	10%	12%	10%
Ratio all students/ budgeted students	2,10	2,04	1,94	2,14	2,16



IOSUD-WUT respects the Romanian regulation in force, implying that all PhD candidates are graduates of master programs or long-term bachelor programs (equivalated in accordance with the National Education Law with master studies). In the doctoral schools, most candidates are also WUT graduates, even if a change can be noticed in the choice of doctoral programs.

As for the number of candidates from abroad, the average is 13%, consisting mainly of international candidates (Romanians everywhere, graduates of Serbian or the Republic of Moldova universities, non-EU candidates, especially from Iraq, Algeria, Vietnam, Armenia and India). During the admission in the past 5 years, in accordance to the doctoral domains, the candidates' number is indicated in the table below (the ratio candidates/budgeted places available in the last column). The ratio between candidates and budgeted places in IOSUD-WUT, is the following: in 2016, the ratio is 2.06; in 2017, 1.67; in 2018, 2.23; in 2019, 2.15; in 2020 1.86.

For the field of Law, cumulatively, in the period between the academic years 2016/2017 and 2020/2021, the ratio is 3.03. Thus, regarding the ratio between the number of Master's degree graduates of other higher education institutions in the country or abroad who have entered the competition for admission to doctoral studies in the last five years and the number of places financed from the budget, which the state provided, for the field of Law within the Doctoral School, the data in the table below show a ratio higher than 0.2: in the academic year 2015/2016 the ratio is 1.6; in the academic year 2016/2017 the ratio is 1.8; in the academic year 2017/2018 the ratio is 0.75; in the academic year 2018/2019 the ratio is 2; in the academic year 2019/2020 the ratio is 1.5; in the academic year 2020/2021 the ratio is 1.16.

Academic Year	Number of registrations	WUT Master's Graduates	Non-WUT Master's Graduates	Number of admissions	WUT Master's Alumni	Non-WUT Master's Alumni
2015-2016	16	8	8	16	8	8
2016-2017	22	13	9	19	11	8
2017-2018	20	14	6	16	10	6
2018-2019	21	11	10	19	10	9
2019-2020	16	7	9	16	7	9
2020-2021	12	5	7	12	5	7

Regarding the ratio between the number of candidates in the last five years and the number of places financed from the state budget open for competition within the field of doctoral studies for the field of Law, the data in the table below show a ratio higher than 1.2: in academic year 2015/2016 the ratio is 3.2; in the academic year 2016/2017 the ratio is 4.4; in the academic year 2017/2018 the ratio is 2.5; in the academic year 2018/2019 the ratio is 4.2; in the academic year 2019/2020 the ratio is 2.66; in the academic year 2020/2021 the ratio is 2.

Academic Year	Number of Registrations	Number of admissions	Buget		Tuition Fee	Form	
			With grant	Without grant		Regular	Reduced Frequency
2015-2016	16	16	4	1	11	11	5
2016-2017	22	19	2	3	14	19	0
2017-2018	20	16	3+1	4	8	16	0
2018-2019	21	19	2	3	14	14	5
2019-2020	16	16	2	4	10	16	0
2020-2021	12	12	3	3	6	12	0



I consider that the detailed data contained by the *Internal Evaluation Report of the Domain of Doctoral Studies* of the Doctoral School of Law, which has been prepared by the professors Irina Sferdian, Lucian Bercea and Florentina Mutiu in June 2021, demonstrates that this Doctoral School fulfills 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 higher than 0.2. Moreover, 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 higher than 1.2. It is worth mentioning the high capacity of the Doctoral School of Law for attracting students, who got their Master's degree at other Universities than the West University of Timisoara.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

As a general description of the standard analysis, the finding is that the candidates admitted to doctoral studies demonstrate academic, research and professional experience, as shown by the analysis of the following 2 indicators. Both indicators have been fulfilled.

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.*

In accordance with the Methodology of the Doctoral School of Law regarding the organization and conduct of the admission procedure for the academic year 2020/2021 (Annex SDD_Methodology_admission): (i) the admission contest consists in the candidate's presentation of the scientific research project and in an interview in front of the examination commission, focused on the research project; (ii) if the physical presence of the participants in the admission contest is prohibited by law, the project and the interview before the examination board will take place online, by accessing a videoconference link communicated to all participants; (iii) the research project will have to include the title of the research topic, the justification of its importance, the research objectives and the research methods envisaged, the bibliography accessed by the candidate, his publications in the field of study; (iv) each candidate is assessed with a grade between 1 and 10, awarded by each member of the examination board. The admission grade is the arithmetic average of the grades awarded by each member of the examination board. The minimum admission grade is 8 (eight).

By virtue of Article 24 of the Methodology for organizing the admission to the doctoral studies at the Doctoral School of Law within the West University of Timisoara, the admission to the doctoral study program in Law consists of the candidate's presentation of a research project and an interview on the basis of the research project, conducted in front of the examination commission. According to Article 23



of this legal text, the examination commission is made up by the doctoral supervisor, the Dean of the Faculty of Law or a representative that is a doctoral supervisor, and the Director of the Doctoral School of Law or a representative that is a doctoral supervisor.

Therefore, the candidate's interview and the presentation of a research project are binding for the admission to the Doctoral School of Law. The examination commission usually takes into account various criteria, such as the previous academic, research and professional performance, the candidate's interest for scientific research, and even publications in the domain, depending on each case.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator B.1.2.2. *The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission⁴ does not exceed 30%.*

Of the PhD students enrolled at the Doctoral School of Law in between the academic years 2015/2016 and 2020/2021, 11 were expelled or withdrew from studies within the 3 years following the admission (17.99%) (Annex SDD_PhD Students_Withdrew_Expelled_Law). As the table below shows: (i) of the PhD students enrolled in the academic year 2015/2016 (54), a number of 3 PhD students withdrew within the 3 years following the admission (5.55%) and no PhD student was expelled within the 3 years following the admission; (ii) of the PhD students enrolled in the academic year 2016/2017 (64) a number of 3 PhD students withdrew within the 3 years following the admission and 3 PhD students were expelled 3 within the years following the admission (a total of 9.37 %); (iii) of the PhD students enrolled in the academic year 2017/2018 (64) a number of 3 PhD students withdrew within the 2 years following the admission (3.12%) and no PhD student was expelled within the 3 years following the admission; (iv) in the case of PhD students enrolled in the academic years 2018/2019, 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 the dropout rate is 0%.

Year of Enrollment	Number enrolled of PhD students	Number of PhD students withdrawn within the 3 years following the admission	Number of PhD students expelled within the 3 years following the admission	% abandonment
2015/2016	54	3	0	5,55 %
2016/2017	64	3	3	9,37 %
2017/2018	64	2	0	3,12 %
2018/2019	66	0	0	
2019/2020	68	0	0	
2020/2021	65	0	0	

According to the information provided by the *Internal Evaluation Report of the Domain of Doctoral Studies* of the Doctoral School of Law (which has been prepared by the professors Irina Sferdian, Lucian Bercea

⁴ 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 Florentina Mutiu in June 2021) as well as the information facilitated by this Doctoral School on 13 October 2021, the expelling rate is lower than 30%.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion B.2. The content of doctoral programs

As a general description of the analysis of this criterion on the content of doctoral program in Law, it is observed that the Doctoral School of Law fulfills the standard and the five indicators, as shown below.

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.

The Doctoral School of Law has implemented a training program that is appropriate for improving doctoral students' research skills and for strengthening ethical behavior in science, as shown by the analysis of the following 5 indicators. Each indicator has been fulfilled.

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.

In the academic year 2020/2021, in the 1st semester, the curricula is composed of Civil law, Civil Procedural Law, Commercial Law, Constitutional Law, International Public Law, European Union Law. The curricula is structured on 4 subjects, of which 2 are specialized (each of them with a 2 hours course, 1 hour seminar, 13 ECTS and with a colloquium as the final form of examination) and 2 subjects focusing on the methodological and ethical aspects of academic research, i.e. Methodology of Academic Research and the elaboration of doctoral thesis, Ethics and Academic Integrity (each with a 1 hour course, 2 ECTS and with a colloquium as the final form of examination). Attending these 4 subjects, including the special curriculum (which is also correlated with the specifics of the doctoral research topic) allows PhD students enrolled in the first year to accumulate a total number of 30 ECTS (Annex SDD_Education Plans; Annex SDD_Subject_Sheets).

On the basis of the Annexes SDD_Planuri invatament, SDD_Fise disciplina si SDD_Fisa disciplinei_Etica si integritate academica, as well as of the *Internal Evaluation Report of the Domain of Doctoral Studies*, I may affirm that the training program based on advanced academic studies includes at least 3 disciplines relevant to the scientific research training of doctoral students and, moreover, at least one of these disciplines is intended to study in-depth the research methodology for writing the PhD thesis.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.



Respecting the criteria of research ethics has been for a long time an important component of the doctoral education in IOSUD – WUT. In the analysed period 2015-2020, the doctoral schools of IOSUD-WUT organized courses of Academic writing, meant to lead to the improvement of the students' abilities to write and publish correctly and honestly. Since the academic year 2018 – 2019, all doctoral school included in their curricula of advanced studies the course of the Ethics of research in accordance with OM no. 3131/30.01.2018.

The Curricula of Doctoral Studies in Law also contains the subject called Ethics and Academic Integrity (Annex SDD_Ethics and Academic Integrity_Sheet). The Ethics and Academic Integrity course is offered to all PhD students enrolled in the first year and offers a realistic perspective on issues of Ethics in academia, the principles, values and norms underlying ethical behavior, practices and dilemmas, vulnerabilities and challenges, rights and obligations of doctoral students and professors, violations of the Ethics Code, possible sanctions, etc. The course of Ethics and Academic Integrity ensures the PhD students are provided with the adequate understanding and application of the concepts related to the research, publication and dissemination of the results of their doctoral theses.

The course on Ethics and Academic Integrity is offered to all the PhD students. This information can be checked on the website of the Faculty of Law from Timisoara regarding the Doctoral Programme (<https://drept.uvt.ro/programe-doctorat.html>). In addition, each doctoral supervisor is keen on the integrity in academic research, being an essential guide for his/her PhD students.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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 activities⁵.*

Each domain of doctoral studies offers courses in the advanced doctoral studies program. The purpose of these courses is to form competences, abilities and openness for scientific research in particular and for academic activity in general. The curricula include usually between 3 to 5 courses (lectures and practical seminars), of which approx. one third are destined to forming general research competences (Academic writing/Scientific research/ Research methods/ Research ethics and integrity), while approx. two thirds are specialized courses, developing advanced research abilities in the specific domain of doctoral studies.

The PhD student fills in, together with the supervisor, a doctoral research plan. This plan sets out, in detail, the courses that the doctoral student attends, depending on the specifics of his / her doctoral research topic, the sequence of research reports and their topics, as well as a series of other additional elements

⁵ 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.



that can add value to the research (conference attendance, , publication of texts, national or international mobilities, etc). The cognitive and applicative content of the subjects in the special curriculum of Doctoral Studies in Law, detailed in the Discipline Sheets (Annex SDD_Subject_Sheets), is correlated with the learning outcomes (qualifications, skills and capabilities that PhD students should acquire after each graduating from each discipline or through research activities).

I consider that the IOSUD of West University of Timisoara has several mechanisms in order to assure that the academic training for each PhD students addresses „the learning outcomes”. Besides the doctoral reseach plan, which is signed at the beginning of the doctoral training period, the IOSUD has established an operational procedure for the doctoral students in order to present their research reports periodically. Due to the pandemic, on 6 May 2020 the IOSUD has adapted this operational procedure to the on-line support.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.

According to art. 4.2 para. 1 of the Regulations of the Doctoral School of Law, “during the Doctoral Studies Programme, the PhD student has the right: (i) to benefit from the support, guidance and counselling of the doctoral supervisor, as well as of the Guidance Commission; (ii) to participate in the seminars or meetings of the Research Development staff within IOSUD-WUT, if relevant topics are under discussion”.

Of special relevance for the guidance of PhD students in the field of Law, PhD’s who are enrolled in the academic year 2020/2021, is the composition of the Doctoral Guidance Committees for the 65 PhD students, which reflects the professional expertise of professors in the field of the PhD students. Each Guidance Commission consists of 3 members. For the Faculty of Law, these Guidance Committees include professors of the Faculty of Law of the West University of Timișoara; professors of other WUT Faculties (e.g. the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration); professors with a rich professional experience and scientific research who are part of the academic staff of various other prestigious Universities in the country (e.g. University of Bucharest; "Babeș-Bolyai" University of Cluj-Napoca; "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași).

I consider that there are clear evidences that during the doctoral training each PhD student of the Doctoral School of Law is benefiting from the counselling and guidance of a specific Doctoral Guidance Committee, which is created according to the internal normative of this Doctoral School. On 14 October 2021, the Doctorsl School of Law has facilitated to the members of this Commission of evaluation information regarding evidences on the activities of the Doctoral Guidance Committees.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.



According to art. 4.2 (paragraphs 2 and 3) of the Regulation of the Doctoral School of Law, in accordance with art. 2.29 of the IOSUD Regulation (paragraphs 1 and 2), “for the doctoral studies, the doctoral student is supported by a Guidance Committee, consisting of 3 members who can be part of the research team of the doctoral supervisor, from other persons affiliated to the Doctoral School or non-affiliated teaching and research staff. The composition of the Guidance Commission is established by the doctoral supervisor following consultations with the doctoral student.”

The rules regarding the functioning of the Guidance Committee, and its activity are also included in other provisions of the IOSUD-WUT Institutional Regulation on the organization and development of doctoral studies and in the Regulation of the Doctoral School of Law, together with the Statutes of Doctoral Students' Rights and Obligations. Within the field of Law, the coordination of the 65 PhD students in the academic year 2020/2021 is ensured by 35 professors who are part of the Guidance Committees. The mentioned ratio is 1.85: 1 (Annex SDD_Guidance_Committees_2020_2021).

There are clear evidences that the *ratio* 3:1 (between the number of PhD students and the number of teaching staff or researchers providing doctoral guidance) is according to the normative of the Doctoral School of Law from Timisoara. The ratio is clearly lower. Thus, the ratio for 2015/2016 academic year was 1.54:1; the ratio for 2016/2017 academic year was 1.68:1; the ratio for 2017/2018 academic year was 1.73:1; the ratio for 2018/2019 academic year was 1.89:1; the ratio for 2019/2020 academic year was 2:1; and the ratio for 2020/2021 academic year was 1.81:1. Therefore, during the period 2015-2020, the ratio was 1.78:1.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

As a general description of the analysis of this criterion, it is noted that the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara has a clear and solid strategy regarding the results of doctoral studies and procedures for their evaluation.

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

It is considered that the PhD students succeed in capitalizing on the research through presentations at scientific conferences, scientific publications, technological transfer, products and service orders, as demonstrated by the assessment of the following two indicators. Both indicators have been fulfilled.

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.*



The list of relevant scientific papers developed during the Doctoral Programme by PhD students who have obtained the PhD degree in the last 5 years in the field of Law, a list prepared based on available information, can be found in Annex SDD_B.3.1.1. PhD students in the field of Law who obtained the title of Legum Doctor in the period 2016-2020 are noted for their constant concern to develop scientific papers focused on their doctoral topic and to publish them in conference proceedings dedicated to disseminating their research results (e.g. the volume of the International Conference of Doctoral Students in Law organized by the Faculty of Law of the WUT; the volume of the Biannual International Conference organized by the Faculty of Law of the WUT; volumes of other national and international conferences). At the same time, PhD students' articles have been published in prestigious national journals (e.g. Law; Romanian Journal of Private Law; Romanian Journal of Business Law; Romanian Journal of Compulsory Execution; Romanian Journal of European Law; New Journal of Human Rights), in journals published by the faculty (Annals of the WUT – The Law Series, Journal of Eastern European Criminal Law), but also in international journals (e.g. International Journal on Rule of Law, Transnational Justice and Human Rights, Journal of International Banking Law and Regulation). Additionally, some of the faculty PhD students are involved in international research projects (e.g. European Central Bank Legal Research Programme).

During the period 2016-2020, 25 PhD students got their PhD degrees in Law at the West University of Timisoara (see: Annex SDD_B.3.1.1). There are evidences that each of them published at least one paper during their doctoral research or after getting the PhD title. As this evaluation has been conducted online (through the zoom platform) due to the pandemic caused by the COVID-19, it has not been possible for me to select 5 of these papers in order to assess on the originality and relevance of the academic research conducted.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.*

The situation of the number of relevant scientific papers developed and communicated during the Doctoral Studies Programme at various international scientific events by PhD students who have obtained a doctorate in Law in the last 5 years (2016-2020) reflects a ratio of 130: 25 = 5.20 (Annex SDD_B.3.1.2). PhD students in the field of Law have a specific framework for presenting the results of their scientific research, consisting of conferences dedicated to PhD students, which allow both the communication of main ideas and issues related to approaches in the literature (especially interdisciplinary) as well as the exchange of good practices (International Conference of Doctoral Students in Law, organized annually by the Faculty of Law of the WUT in collaboration with the research centers within the faculty). Also, PhD students disseminate the results of scientific research at prestigious national or international scientific events (e.g. the French-speaking International Conference of Doctoral Students in Criminal Law, organized by the Faculty of Law at the "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iasi; conferences organized in the Czech Republic, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Hungary, etc.).



Taking into account the information available at the Annex SDD_B.3.1.2, the ratio between, on the one hand, the number of presentations of PhD students, who completed their doctoral studies during the period 2016-2020, that were presented in the framework of different international prestigious scientific events, and, on the other hand, the number of these PhD students, who have completed their doctoral studies within the period 2016-2020, is 5.20 (130 scientific presentations : 25 PhD students = 5.20). Therefore, in the past 5 years, the ratio has been considerably higher than 1.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.

As a general presentation of this standard, the finding is that the Doctoral School of Law partially fulfills this standard as one of the indicators is fulfilled only partially, but the other indicator is fulfilled 100%, as shown by the assessment made below.

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.*

The list of referees coming from a higher education institution, other than IOSUD - WUT, is given in the Annex SDD_Defense_Commissions. According to the centralized data (for the period 2016-2020), out of the 33 external referees within the field of Law, the referees were appointed in more than two Public Defense Commissions (2018, 2019) only in specific and marginal situations. In their vast majority, external referees come from various higher education institutions in the field (e.g. University of Bucharest; "Babeş-Bolyai" University of Cluj-Napoca; "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iaşi; University of Craiova; University „Lucian Blaga” of Sibiu etc.).

Taking into account the Annex SDD_Comisii sustinere, during 2018 a full professor of law at the UAIC Iasi and a full professor of law at the UBB Cluj-Napoca were members of the commissions of 3 PhD theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis advisor. The same situation happened in 2019 when a full professor of law at the University of Craiova and a full professor of law at the University Lucian Blaga din Sibiu were members of the commissions of 3 PhD theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis advisor.

Recommendations: To take into account not to allocate to one specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the evaluated IOSUD, more than 2 commissions of PhD thesis defence in the same year for the theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis supervisor.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

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.

As results from the Annex SDD_Defense_Commissions, within the field of Law, referring to the situation registered in the last 5 years, for any external scientific referee, the ratio of 0.3 is not reached / not exceeded. Even in the specific cases where external scientific referees had been assigned 3 doctoral theses defended in the field of Law within the Doctoral School of Law of IOSUD-WUT, the maximum ratio mentioned is only $4:25 = 0.12$.

According to the information considering the period 2016-2020 that is available at Annex SDD_Comisii sustinere, the ratio between the PhD theses allocated to one scientific specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara, on the one hand, and the number of PhD theses presented in the same doctoral study domain in this doctoral school, on the other hand, is far from 0.3.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The assesment of the domain dedicated to the quality management of the Doctoral School of Law has been carried out in accordance with the Romanian legislation and ARACIS standards. The facts, the documents provided by the ARACIS and the Doctoral School of Law within the West University of Timisoara (before and during the online visit), and also the online evaluation visits have been taken into consideration for this domain analysis.

As a general description of the assessment made, the finding is that the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara meets all the conditions required on its quality management for the doctoral studies, as it results from the analysis of the following criteria, standards and indicators.

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

As a general description of the analysis of this criterion, it is noted that the Doctoral School of Law count on an internal quality assurance system that is periodically implemented.

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.

The Doctoral School of Law has an institutional framework and procedures in place as well as relevant internal quality assurance policies, applied for monitoring the internal quality assurance of its doctoral activity, as shown by the assessment of the following 2 indicators. Each indicator has been fulfilled.



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;*

In order to ensure the quality of the activities carried out within the doctoral schools, IOSUD – WUT periodically organized internal evaluations of the doctoral schools. The internal evaluation reports followed the evolution of the logistic infrastructure necessary for the research activity, the scientific activity of the doctoral supervisors, respectively the evolution of the procedures and norms based on which the activities within the doctoral schools are carried out.

Thus, internal evaluation reports have been published (such as the 2016 IOSUD report available at <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=2656>) as well as internal evaluation reports of doctoral schools and doctoral university fields, in OMEN base no. 5403 / 1.11.2018 (<http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=7572>, <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=7718>, <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=7604>).

At the same time, in order to optimize all the components of the doctoral activity, a series of internal audit and control procedures were carried out within the university. Thus, by the Order no. 9132 of 19.03.2019, the Rector of the WUT, following the proposal of the CSUD Director, appointed a commission to audit the teaching activities carried out by doctoral students within the university departments.

The scientific activity is monitored periodically every two years in the context of the IC and CNFIS reports. To facilitate this reporting activity, the individual self-assessment CNATDCU have been digitized, as well as the Annex 5 of the CNFIS report with the help of the online system URAP (<http://urap.uvt.ro>) which allows: permanent updating of the individual sheet by the teacher/supervisor; automatic allocation of articles indexed in Web of Science Core Collection and Scopus and their citations; adding up of indicators in individual self-assessment CNATDCU sheets; downloading the individual sheets and the Annex 5 of CNFIS.

The system is functional, in May 2021, thus: for 6 domains (Mathematics, Accountancy, Economy, Finance, Management, Marketing), the above functionalities without the Annex 5 (the second version of the system); for 6 domains (Physics, Informatics, Psychology, Chemistry, Geography, Philology) the above functionalities with a partial adding up of indicators and manual upload (the first version of the system); for the other domains, manual upload and download un Annex 5. The system is estimated to be fully functional by the end of 2021.

In March 2021, IOSUD has carried an analysis regarding the supervisors' scientific activity between 2016-2020. In what concerns the scientific production, 86 supervisors are present as WUT members in Web of Science (Core) 2858 times out of 5265 WUT entries, representing 54% of WUT entires in WoS. In the past five years (2016-2020), 1021 WUT entries have been recorded, which represents 36% of the supervisors' Web of Science entries.



Taking into account all the facts and documents facilitated by the ARACIS and the Doctoral School of Law from Timisoara, I may consider that this Doctoral School has an adequate evaluation process and internal quality assurance system of the scientific work of its doctoral supervisors.

(b) the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out the research activity;

PhD students carry their activity in the laboratories and research centres whose infrastructure is run by the faculties.

On the basis of the facts and documents facilitated by the ARACIS as well as the website of this Doctoral School, I consider that PhD students have the necessary infrastructure and logistics in order to carry out their respective doctoral research. In my opinion, the existence of the three research centres – namely, the Centre of Business Law, the Centre of Research in Criminal Sciences, and the Centre of Comparative Law and Interdisciplinary – offer the PhD students to have access to a solid legal specialization in different fields. Moreover, these Centres have created working groups (made up by the doctoral supervisors and the PhD students) that have a relevant scientific production and have increased the possibilities for the Doctoral School of Law to attract funds for teaching and research activities.

(c) the procedures and subsequent rules based on which doctoral studies are organized;

The regulations and procedures are available at <https://doctorat.uvt.ro/?cat=37>. Annually, CSUD discusses the framework of admission to doctoral studies, proposing particularized admission methodologies (available at <https://doctorat.uvt.ro/?cat=43>). Based on the general admission methodologies, discussed in CSUD, approved by the Administration Board and by Senate Decision, the doctoral schools make their own admission methodologies, specific according to the doctoral studies domain.

The admission to doctoral studies in IOSUD-WUT is carried transparently, disseminating all necessary information for the applicants. The website publishes the available places as well as their type and distribution to doctoral schools and doctoral domains. The latest announcement for the admission of September 2020 is available at <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=8818>.

IOSUD-WUT also has clear procedures for graduating doctoral studies. Written on the basis of the national legislation and in accordance with national platforms of validating doctoral degrees (REI and RMU), these procedures include information about the stages before the public defense of the thesis and the conditions for the thesis defense. Carrying out these procedures ensures strictness and transparency about the doctoral theses. The latest version of the PhD thesis defense methodology is available at <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=9462>. The latest procedure for the online PhD thesis defense is available at <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=9493>.

On the basis of the different sources of information I have analysed, I consider that the Doctoral School of Law from Timisoara has adopted and implemented specific procedures and subsequent rules regarding doctoral studies in Law.

d) the scientific activity of doctoral students;



The scientific activity of the PhD students is carefully supervised by the coordinators and the guidance committees. The list of the PhD students' publications is submitted together with the PhD theses.

In WUT, the Department of Scientific Research and Artistic Creation has a clear evidence of WUT publications, which is refreshed periodically. In March 2021, IOSUD carried an analysis of the PhD students' scientific production between 2016-2021 which indicated that, of 456 graduates of doctoral studies, 264 have Web of Science (Core) entries.

I consider that there is a large and already consolidated activity of doctoral students in Law. In this regard, many examples may be named: participation to national and international conferences; participation with book chapters to relevant publications in their field of study; translation to Romanian of chapters from books that are very well known foreign manuals in different branches of law; active participation to the activities of the Centre of Business Law; etc. Special mention should be made to the organization of the International Conference of PhD students in Law with the support of the Doctoral School of Law from Timisoara, the European Centre of Legal Studies and Researches and Foundation of the West University of Timisoara. So far, thirteen editions have been organized, the last one took place on 25 June 2021.

e) the training program based on advanced academic studies of doctoral students;

When the Study contract is signed, the PhD students fill in, together with their supervisor, a Research plan (available at <http://doctorat.uvt.ro/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Planul-studiilor-doctorale3.pdf>) which specifies the themes and calendar of progress reports, the advanced studies program, the scientific research grants in which the students are involved, the mobilities etc.

I consider that there is a training program based on advanced academic studies of PhD students at the Doctoral School of Law within the West University of Timisoara.

f) social and academic services (including for participation at different events, publishing papers etc.) and counselling made available to doctoral students.

WUT's social service organizes the accommodation of PhD students in the campus and ensures the maintenance of accommodation venues.

The Career Counselling and Orientation Centre (<http://www.ccoc.uvt.ro>) in WUT offers students services of vocational counselling and orientation services, as well as psychological counselling.

The students' participation in local, national, international events and the publication of articles is supported financially from the funds of the doctoral grant (see the *Methodology concerning PhD students' accessing institutional resources for professional training*), from support funds (FDI), from the faculties' funds, or from national and international research-development grants.

The methodology dealing with the accessing of PhD students of institutional resources for professional training defines the types of activities for which WUT provides financial support: "Art. 3. The vocational training activities of PhD students include the professional training activities established by the contract and the activities of disseminating the results of the research, artistic creation or sports performance



activity. (...) Art. 9. The financial support specified in articles 7 and 8 refers to: stages of documentation / research / creation / sports performance; participation in workshops and conferences; participation in trainings / seasonal schools / events / professional manifestations / specific to doctoral students; the publication in open access regime of an article / chapter / other reviewed document that is authored or co-authored by the student; consumables, software, equipment or access to electronic / physical resources that are not present in IOSUD-WUT.

There are extensive evidences that the PhD students of the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara can benefit from social and academic services (including for participation at different events, publishing papers etc.) and counselling.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.

The Doctoral School of Law (in particular, the doctoral supervisors, the members of the Guidance Commissions and the Doctoral School Council), together with the PhD students, underlines feedback of the latter with regard to didactic and research activity specific to the doctoral programmes of the field of Law. In this sense, the following aspects are deemed important: direct, effective communication regarding the training of doctoral students, coordination and guidance of PhDs; questionnaires that aim to quantify the degree of satisfaction of PhD students in relation to the teaching and research process carried out (questionnaires may include: (i) collaboration with the doctoral supervisor and the Guidance Committee; (ii) the development of the courses provided in the first year of studies; (iii) the motivation of PhD students for choosing the doctoral study programme; (iv) proposals for improving the activity; (v) the benefits of doctoral studies in the professional career.

Through the online meetings (from Monday, 11 October 2021, until Wednesday, 13 October 2021), I have had the opportunity to note that the Doctoral School of Law has implemented the necessary mechanisms in order to get feedback from its PhD 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.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

It is evidence that there is transparency of information and accessibility of learning resources within the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara. This may be assessed according to the criteria, standards and indicators analysed below.



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

This Doctoral School of Law has implemented an accurate system in order to provide information of interest to the PhD students as well as to future PhD candidates. Moreover, public interest information is available for electronic format consultation. This standard has been assessed on the basis of the indicator mentioned below, which has been fulfilled.

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;

IOSUD-WUT publishes on its site information about the organization of doctoral studies in WUT. The site contains the *Institutional regulation concerning doctoral studies* and concrete information about admission, the process of doctoral instruction/research, and the public defense of the thesis.

The site also contains detailed information about the other (specific) regulations concerning doctoral studies, especially the regulation and procedures for the public defense of the PhD thesis. All the necessary steps are presented with a view to the public defense, observing scientific rigor and the Romanian legislation in force.

The doctoral schools write their own particular information, on the sites of the doctoral school or on the sites of the respective faculties, insisting on the information about doctoral studies in the specific domains. Such information may contain the regulation of the doctoral schools, information about admission to the doctoral school (number and type of places, admission methodologies, admission calendar, themes and topics proposed by the supervisors etc.), information about the actual organization of doctoral studies (content of the curriculum, information about conferences and training programs organized by the university etc.), as well as information about the public defense of the PhD theses.

The website of the West University of Timisoara contains the regulation of the Doctoral School of Law.

(b) the admission regulation;

IOSUD-WUT updates annually the Doctoral studies admission methodology, according to national methodologies and regulations, taking also into account the internal priorities of the doctoral schools, their evolution and projects. The university site presents the annual admission methodologies, the admission calendar, individual situations (admission for candidates with disabilities, admission for non-Eu international candidates, the admission for Romanian natives abroad (Romanians everywhere), admission for Roma students etc., providing candidates with the electronic versions of all forms required in the admission process.

Also for the purpose of correct, detailed and transparent information about doctoral studies, the IOSUD-WUT website contains useful information about doctoral studies: grants in progress, the content of the curricula for advanced studies, information about the doctoral research per se (research reports, interruption and extension of studies etc.). (*Annex_IOSUD_Forms*)



The general information about research grants, mobilities, scholarships for PhD students, training programs, can also be found on the Facebook page of doctoral studies.

The website of the West University of Timisoara contains the rules approved for the admission regulation to the Doctoral School of Law.

(c) the doctoral studies contract;

A draft of the future doctoral studies contract may be accessed by the interested persons on the website of the West University of Timisoara.

(d) the study completion regulation including the procedure for the public presentation of the thesis;

The website of the West University of Timisoara contains detailed regulation on the procedure for the public presentation of the PhD Thesis (<https://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=9462#more-9462>). In addition, a specific procedure has been adopted on the process organization for defending PhD thesis in online version as the consequence of the pandemic caused by the Covid-19. This regulation has tried to give practical solutions to those PhD students, who could be negatively affected by this delicate situation (<https://doctorat.uvt.ro/?p=9493>).

(e) the content of training program based on advanced academic studies;

The website of the West University of Timisoara contains detailed information regarding the content of the 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;

The academic and scientific profile, thematic areas/research themes of the doctoral supervisors within each domain of the Doctoral School of Law, as well as their institutional contact data have been published on the website of the West University of Timisoara.

(g) the list of doctoral students within the domain with necessary information (year of registration; advisor);

The website of the West University of Timisoara should improve the dissemination of this type of information. It is not easy to be found out.

(h) information on the standards for developing the doctoral thesis;

The website of the West University of Timisoara contains detailed information regarding the standards to be developed during the doctoral studies.



- (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.*

The West University of Timisoara publishes the doctoral theses' summaries to be publicly presented and the date, time, place where they will be presented. This information is usually published well in advance before the presentation of the PhD thesis.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

The IOSUD/Doctoral School of Law provides PhD students with access to the resources needed for conducting doctoral studies, as shown by the analysis of the following 3 indicators. Each indicator has been fulfilled.

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.

WUT is a member of the *Anelis+ consortium*, which brings together the main higher education and research institutions in Romania, interested in accessing top scientific literature. UVT currently has subscriptions in the following scientific databases: *ScienceDirect Freedom Collection Journals ACCESS, Springlink journals, Thomson Web of Knowledge, American Institute of Physics Journals, American Physical Society Journals, Oxford Journals, IEEE/IEL, SCOPUS, Sage Journals HSS, Wiley Journals, American Chemical Society, Cambridge Journals, Institute of Physics Journals, MatSciNet, EBSCO Academic Search Complete, EBSCO Business Source Complete, EBSCO Art Full text, NATURE, ScienceDirect ARHIVE NATIONALE, Springer Archive, Wiley Archive, Institute of Physics Journals Archive, ScienceDirect Archive Curente 2016.*

I consider that all the PhD students have free access to several platforms providing academic databases, which are relevant to the doctoral studies in Law.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.

For this purpose, the software to which WUT doctoral students have access, based upon the institutional email address (e-uvt domain) allocated to them at enrollment, is Turnitin. Simultaneously with the verification carried out by the PhD students, the existence of similarity with other sources is verified by the doctoral supervisors and the Office of Doctoral Studies, using the *iThenticate* software.

WUT currently owns two software programs to check the similarity of theses. The doctoral schools use *iThenticate*, because it allows an advanced identification of the sources and exact mapping of textual



overlappings. PhD students have access to *iThenticate* / are created an account, following a direct application submitted to the IT & C Service, which first checks their identity as PhD students.

There are enough evidences in order to affirm that each PhD student has access, upon request, to an electronic system for verifying the degree of similarity with other existing scientific or artistic works. There are specific rules adopted by this University in this field, which are contained by the Methodology regarding the process organization for sustaining the Ph.D. thesis in WUT (Senate UVT HS 20 / 24.09.2020) as well as the Procedure regarding the process organization for defending the Ph.D. thesis in West University Timisoara in online version (Senate UVT HS 25 / 22.10.2020).

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.*

The contracts of doctoral studies stipulate the right of PhD students to have access to the libraries within WUT, respectively to the different research laboratories, depending on the specialisation.

All PhD students have access to the infrastructure components, according to the IOSUD-WUT Regulation and the Doctoral School of Law Regulation. According to Art. 4.4 of the Doctoral School of Law Regulation (*Annex SDD_ Doctoral School of Law Regulation*): „ (1) Each PhD student has free access to a platform hosting academic data relevant to the field of the organized doctoral studies, by accessing the institutional e-mail account. (2) Each PhD student has free access to an electronic similarity checking tool, based on the institutional e-mail account. (3) Each PhD student has free access to a series of data analysis programs and other research facilities relevant to their field of doctoral studies, according to a prior planning and in compliance with the internal conditions regarding their proper use.”

WUT has research centres which carry grants with international, national or local financial support. These grants involve the doctoral supervisors as well as PhD students, as members in the research teams. In 2018, WUT carried an institutional development grant which enabled the university to assess the research centres, accrediting the functional, performing centres during audit visits of external experts. The centres today form a special part of the UVT research architecture, with a three-part division: the domain of exact sciences, the domain of social sciences, the domain of humanities (<http://uvt.ro/organizare/organigrama/>).

PhD students from the Doctoral School of Law have access to the resources and programmes offered by the Research Centers of the Faculty of Law (Center for Business Law, Center for Research in Criminal Sciences, Center for Comparative Law and Interdisciplinarity). The objective of these research centers are as follows: the coordination of research activities for students, Master's and PhD students of Law (in particular Business Law, Criminal Law, Comparative law) including the organization of seminars and Summer Schools for PhD students: training sessions in the field of scientific research supported by professors and by Guest Lecturers from higher education institutions and research institutes / centers in the country and abroad; b) conferences and presentations with prestigious Guest Lecturers from the country and abroad; c) access to software and other useful tools useful for their doctoral research activity.



I consider that all the PhD students of the Doctoral School of Law have access to scientific research laboratories or other facilities depending on their specialization within the Doctoral School. All the evidences provided and the online meetings (especially the ones scheduled for Wednesday, 13 October 2021, with the Directors and persons in charge with the research centres and laboratories within the doctoral study of Law, as well as with employers of doctoral graduates in the field of Law) gave me the opportunity to note that the students of this Doctoral School can benefit from the activities made by the research centres and stakeholders settled in Timisoara. There is a constant dialogue and collaboration between the Doctoral School of Law, on the one hand, and other public institutions from Timisoara, on the other hand.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion C.3. Internationalization

As a general description of the analysis of the criterion, it is noted that the Doctoral School of Law at the West University of Timisoara has established and developed a solid and vast policy of internationalization of its doctoral activities .

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

It is assessed that there is a strategy in place, which is applied to enhance the internationalization of doctoral studies. This assessment is based on 3 indications, which have been fulfilled by this Doctoral School of Law.

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.

The complete list of partnership agreements includes mainly the partner universities involved in international Erasmus and Erasmus + international programs. With the help of the International relations Department and the Erasmus + coordinators in the faculties, many partnership agreements were signed with international universities in the EU and in partner countries. The list of partners is available at <https://ri.uvt.ro/programul-de-mobilitati-erasmus/>.

The Bilateral agreements also allow mobilities, the list of partners being available at <https://ri.uvt.ro/acorduri-de-colaborare-cu-parteneri-internationali/>. The number of PhD students who had Erasmus+ mobilities is as follows: 2015-2016: 19 PhD students in mobility; 2016-2017: 25 PhD students in mobility; 2017-2018: 27 PhD students in mobility; 2018-2019: 10 PhD students in mobility; 2019-2020: 13 PhD students in mobility.



Similarly, the POSDRU doctoral scholarship grants enabled 177 PhD students to have study and research nobilities abroad and to take part in at least one international conference abroad. Moreover, PhD students took part in over 250 national and international conferences during the analysed period.

For the field of Law (level 3 of the doctoral studies cycle), Erasmus + partnership agreements have been concluded, in which the collaboration at the PhD level is explicitly specified as well as its clarifying elements (excluding other types of bilateral agreements that do not include such details, but establish a general framework of collaboration between the partner universities, the collaboration between them will be established in the future) with a number of universities in the European Union and other non-EU Universities, for example: Austria: A KREMS05 University for Continuing Education Krems ; Bulgaria: BG BLAGOEV02 South-West University "Neofit Rilski"; Spain: E LA-CORU01 Universidad de A Coruna, E MADRID03 Universidad Complutense de Madrid; France: F MONTPEL54 University of Montpellier1, FNICE42 University of the Côte d'Azur (UNITA partner), F ORLEANS01 University of Orleans, F PAU01 University of Pau and the Pays de l'Adour (UNITA partner), F POITIER01 University of Poitiers; Croatia: HR ZAGREB01 University of Zagreb; Italy: I FIRENZE01 Università degli Studi di Firenze, I NAPOLI10 I.U.M. Academy School, I PERUGIA01 Università degli Studi di Perugia, I SALERNO01 Università degli Studi di Salerno, I UDINE01 University of Udine, I VARESE02 Università degli Studi dell'Insubria; Latvia: LV RIGA01 University of Latvia; Macedonia: MK BITOLA01 "St Kliment Ohridski" University, MK TETOVO02 South East European University; Serbia: RS BELGRAD09 Megatrend University; Turkey: TR ISTAMBU21 Yeditepe University, TR MALATYA01 Inonu Universitesi; United Kingdom: UK CONVENTR02 Coventry University (*Annex SDD_ Erasmus + Partnership Agreements*).

Out of the total number of doctoral students enrolled in the period 2015-2020 (86), 7 PhD Students (8.14%) benefited from at least one form of international mobility (training / research internship abroad, presentations at conferences abroad) as follows: 4 internships for documentation / research abroad in Szeged (Hungary), Amsterdam (Netherlands), Leeds (UK), Trier - ERA (Germany); participation in 8 international conferences held abroad in Athens (Greece), Malaga (Spain), Novi Sad (Serbia), Osijek (Croatia), Szeged (Hungary), Shanghai (China).

Taking into account all the documents and facts provided by the ARACIS and the Doctoral School of Law, as well as the information I have gathered during the online meetings scheduled from Monday October 11th until Wednesday October 13th, I may affirm that this Doctoral School has a strong and consolidated strategy on internationalization. The Erasmus agreements, the support for PhD students in order to participate to international conferences and to do research stays abroad, the participation to the UNITA consortium funded by the European Commission, the signature of different agreements for joint supervision of PhD thesis with various foreign Universities are very good examples in this regard. I am convinced that this work dynamic will also be followed in the future.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.



At the level of IOSUD-WUT, a Methodology on joint or European doctorate is going to be adopted (*Annex IOSUD_ Co-supervision*). The methodology on Cotutelle or European doctorate provides the institutional framework for the conduct of doctoral programs based on national and international collaboration and for the award of the European Doctorate degree aimed at enabling the recognition of the European dimension of doctoral studies and facilitating the integration of doctoral graduates from the European Union in the international academic and socio-economic environment.

The methodology sets forth that: “Art. 8. In the case of Cotutelle international doctoral programs carried out by students enrolled in IOSUD-WUT, where national legislation applicable to doctoral studies also requires joint enrolment in IOSUD, IOSUD-WUT does not lose its rights corresponding to its main role of IOSUD in the doctoral program, which is to be mentioned in the co-supervision agreement. Art. 9. The advisory committee includes both PhD supervisors. The jury for the public defence in Romania of the joint PhD dissertation includes both supervisors. The PhD student’s research program is agreed by both PhD supervisors. Changes regarding the doctoral study program for which the co-supervision agreement was concluded, such as the change of the PhD supervisor, the change of the PhD dissertation title, the date of the oral defence, shall be made in compliance with the legal provisions in force and with the agreement of both PhD supervisors. (...) Art. 11. In case advice by a PhD supervisor of IOSUD-WUT is requested from another partner institution based on a national or international co-supervision agreement, the supervisor will have to submit the agreement proposed by the IOSUD where the PhD student for whom co-supervision is requested is registered for analysis by the Doctoral School Council. The co-supervision agreement is to be endorsed by the PhD supervisor, the Director of the Doctoral School, Director of CSUD and institutionally assumed by the Rector. (...) Art. 15. The European Doctorate (European Doctorate / Doctor Europaeus / Doctor Europaea) is a label added to the national PhD degree which enables recognition of the European dimension of the PhD project and facilitates the integration of doctoral graduates from the European Union in the international academic and socio-economic environment. Art. 16. The European doctorate program conducted by IOSUD-WUT complies with the recommendations of the European University Association (EUA) and is recognized by the European universities that implement the model and the requirements established by EUA. Art. 17. The European doctorate is optional. PhD students enrolled at IOSUD-WUT may pursue a European doctorate programme based on an application endorsed by the PhD supervisor and the director of the doctoral school, and approved by the CSUD director (Annex 6). Art. 18. In order to qualify for the European doctorate degree the following requirements are to be met: the PhD student of IOSUD-WUT enrolled in the European doctorate program at the end of the second year of doctoral studies at the latest; the PhD dissertation is written in an international language, preferably English; the PhD student has completed, in the first three years of study, a research internship of at least three months at a university or research institute in the European Community and the period is certified by the host organization; the authorisation for the oral presentation of the dissertation is granted (on the basis of reports submitted) by at least three PhD supervisors, comprising at least two from higher education institutions from two European countries other than the country in which the oral presentation of the dissertation is to be held (IOSUD-WUT members' reports are not included, nor are those of the IOSUD partner in case of a joint doctorate); at least one member of the jury should belong to a European higher education institution from a different country to that in which the oral presentation of the dissertation is held; the oral presentation of the dissertation is conducted in an official language of the European Community which is not the language of the country in which the



presentation is held. Art. 19. Failure to meet the criteria leads to the cancellation of the program. The PhD student can relinquish the program by filing an application. The PhD supervisor can request interruption of the program”.

The Doctoral School of Law encourages and supports the practice of Cotutelle PhDs. Currently, the premises for collaboration and co-optation for the Cotutelle PhDs with prestigious specialists in the field of law from the University of Udine (Italy) are being established; the partnership will be institutionally formalized by a letter of intent requested by the partner university.

Additionally, PhD students have the opportunity to participate in lectures given by professors and researchers from abroad. For example, between 2016-2020, professors from the Pierre Legrand Doctoral School of Law (Sorbonne - Paris 1) were invited as Guest Lecturers, Rainer Kulms (Max Planck Institute for Comparative and Private International Law, Hamburg), Ulrich Sieber (Max Institute Planck of International and Foreign Criminal Law from Freiburg) - Doctor Honoris Causa of the WUT, Roberto Kostoris (University of Padua) - Doctor Honoris Causa of the WUT.

A special point of reference in internationalization policies is the organization of the International Conference of PhD Students in Law (in 2021, 13th edition) by the Doctoral School of Law with the support of the three research centers within the Faculty of Law of the WUT: Center for Business Law, Center for Research in Criminal Sciences and Center for Comparative Law and Interdisciplinarity.

I consider that I have to highlight the conviction of Doctoral School of Law that international joint supervision for PhD students is a fundamental part of its internationalisation strategy. In the past years, several such supervisions have been signed. Moreover, the membership of the West University of Timisoara in the UNITA consortium will favour this academic dynamic. It is expected that other agreements will be signed in this field in the coming years.

Special mention should also be done to the programme of Visiting Researcher at the Faculty of Law of the West University of Timisoara (<https://drept.uvt.ro/anunturi/call-for-applications-visiting-wut-research-grants-at-the-faculty-of-law-spring-semester-2022.html>). This programme will allow the selected visiting researcher to participate and to conduct legal research for three months during the second semester. This will strongly benefit the Faculty of Law in general and the PhD students in particular. This type of academic programme has been accompanied by inviting researchers and professors from different foreign Universities to teach at the Doctoral School of Law.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.).*



WUT is an active participant in international fairs organized with a view to disseminating the educational offer at an international level. With the help of partnerships with various stakeholders, the university attracts international students from North Africa and the Middle East.

Even if this is not a generalized phenomenon, within the analysed period (2016-2020), many doctoral schools were joined by researchers and academics from universities abroad. They are affiliated, as external members of the doctoral schools. The advisory boards of several doctoral researches as well as several public defense committees included researchers and academics from foreign universities; at the same time, researchers or professors from institutes and universities abroad were integrated in the advisory committees of some PhD projects, respectively in the oral presentation juries.

In order to promote the educational offer at doctoral level among international students, we use: WUT websites: <https://doctorat.uvt.ro/>; <https://ri.uvt.ro/cetateni-din-state-terte-uniunii-europene-2/?lang=en>; Study in Romania national platform:

<https://www.studyinromania.gov.ro/fp/index.php?&sm=module.fp.home&ddpN=1889031329&we=cf9516660d3d48bb8c4d53b784a51fa3&wf=dGFCall&wtok=&wtkps=VY1BDolwFETv8veQtIAkny1LF17h01KKUsAiNMZ4dy3qwtVM3mRmCCU+FswQII5DtaDkCKUpbtfSnc16UML4kS7ZZm0uRUfFPQimwyswu3oaQsJd2poYIUghDYaniO4Sa9Dm5o5tZP70HjSkf25KfOk9shQr0r/4XH3jX0jdh/r34vjf0aUOA6vkC&wchk=28d0928ad64c5489b340ba85903403be6ac78cb3>

As for the WUT participation in international higher education fairs, represented by the International Relations Department, the list for the period 2016-2019 is as follows: Erasmus Congress & Exhibition ERACON 2016, Thessaloniki, Greece; European Association for International Education Annual Conference 2016, Liverpool, UK; European Association for International Education Annual Conference 2017, Sevilla, Spain - „Study in Romania” national stand organized by CNR; European Higher Education Fair (EHEF) 2017, Tokyo and Kyoto, Japan; International Graduate Scholarship Fair (IGSF) 2017, Beijing, Changchun and Hangzhou, China; European Association for International Education Annual Conference 2018, Geneva, Switzerland – „Study in Romania” national stand organized by CNR; International Education Fairs of Turkey (IEFT) 2018, Istanbul, Turkey; BMI Global Education Fair UAE 2018, Dubai, UAE - „Study in Romania” national stand organized by CNR; Education Abroad Fair 2018, Kiev, Ukraine - „Study in Romania” national stand organized by CNR; „Campus Roumanie” 2018, Tunisia - „Study in Romania” national stand organized by CNR; Study Abroad Event 2018, Paris, France; European Association for International Education Annual Conference 2019, Helsinki, Finland - „Study in Romania” national stand organized by CNR; Annual NAFSA (National Association for Foreign Student Affairs) Conference 2019, Washington, USA - „Study in Romania” national stand organized by CNR; Vietnam Global Education Fair 2019, Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, Vietnam - „Study in Romania” national stand organized by CNR; Annual Forum of universities members in University Alliance of the Silk Road 2019, Xi’an, China; China Education Expo 2019, Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai, China; the 15th FICCI Summit for higher education 2019, New Delhi, India; European Association for International Education Spring and Autumn Academies 2019, Bordeaux - France, respectively Budapest-Hungary; Masterclass on Internationalisation of Higher Education, organized by Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (UNICA) in cooperation with International Association of Universities (IAU), 2019, Dubrovnik, Croatia.



In 2020, the university participated in fairs and events dedicated to internationalization in higher education which were organized online, as follows: "EAIE Community Summit: The Year Ahead" Event, organized online by *European Association for International Education (EAIE)* 16-17 June 2020; "A2 VIRTUAL INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION FAIR" recruitment fair, organized online by *Flexy Class Global Education* 27-28 July 2020, with potential candidates from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Mauritania; "Online Education Fair for Africa (North Africa)" recruitment fair, organized online by *Begin Group* on 18 August 2020, with potential candidates from North Africa, countries like Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia; "Online Education Fair for Africa (Tropical Africa)" recruitment fair, organized online by *Begin Group* on 20 August 2020, with potential candidates from Tropical Africa, countries like Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Tanzania; "THE Virtual World Academic Summit" event, organized online by *Times Higher Education (THE)*, 1-2 September 2020; "Study and Go Abroad. Virtual Education Fair" recruitment fair, organized online by *Recruit in Canada* on 24 September 2020, with potential candidates from Tropical Africa, countries like Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Tanzania; "Study in Europe" annual higher education fair, organized online by the EU Delegation in Singapore on 26 September 2020. "Study in Europe" is a higher education fair raising the awareness of Singapore highschool and university students about the opportunities of studying in European universities, details about the admission process and the variety of scholarships available. The participation of UVT to this event consisted in the contribution to the webpage of Romania by creating the UVT page and offering the live webinar "Discover West University of Timișoara", presenting the UVT educational offer to international candidates and answering their questions; "India and Nigeria Virtual Conference and College Fair 2020 (Lekkside Education Fair)" recruitment fair, organized between 9-11 October 2020, brought together potential candidates from Nigeria and India; "EAIE Community Exchange" annual conference, organized by *EAIE (European Association for International Education)* between 14-16 October 2020; "Online Education Fair (Indian Subcontinent)" recruitment fair, organized by *Begin Group* on 27 October 2020, brought together potential students from the Indian Subcontinent, countries like India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka; "Online Education Fair (Eurasia)" recruitment fair, organized by *Begin Group* on 29 October 2020, brought together potential candidates from countries like Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Ukraine; "European Dream - European Education Fair 2020" recruitment fair, organized by *Nordic Centre and the Austrian Centre of Fudan University* on 30 October 2020; "Online Education Fair (Central Asia)" recruitment fair, organized by *Begin Group* on 3 November 2020, brought together potential candidates from countries like Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan; "EuroPosgrados" recruitment fair, organized on 14 and 28 November 2020, brought together potential candidates from countries in Latin America, especially Mexico; The event dedicated to recruitment agents titled "Study in Romania/Study in Canada/Study in USA", organized by *New Educational Trend (NET)* between October 2020 - January 2021. NET is an online platform bringing together representatives of international students recruitment agencies worldwide; "Erasmus Congress and Exhibition - ERACON 2020" annual conference, organized by *European Association of Erasmus Coordinators (EAEC)* 19-20 November 2020.

I consider that the IOSUD within the West University of Timisoara has implemented adequate and concrete measures regarding internationalization. In this regard, mention should be made to the participation in educational fairs in order to attract international doctoral students; by including international experts in guidance committees or doctoral committees, etc.

The indicator is fulfilled.

IV. SWOT Analysis

<p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dynamism and strong involvement of the doctoral supervisors. - Consolidation of graduates of the Doctoral School as members of the teaching staff of this School, who have later obtained the degree to supervise PhD theses. - Strong involvement of PhD students in the academic activities of the Doctoral School of Law. - Strong involvement of PhD students in the preparation of students within the Faculty of Law of the West University of Timisoara to participate to international competitions of Law. - Existence of a consolidated internationalization strategy. 	<p><u>Weaknesses:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Few foreign doctoral students despite of the geographical position of Timisoara and the existence of such a relevant internationalization strategy. - Few foreign doctoral students, who are conducting their doctoral research at this Doctoral School of Law despite of its exchanges with other Universities and membership to the UNITA consortium.
<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being a consolidated Doctoral School of Law in the academic landscape of a Member State of the European Union. - Geographical proximity to other Member States of the European Union. - Attractiveness of its offer of doctoral programs and their relevance to the local and national market. 	<p><u>Threats:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potentially, there may be external threats arising from the environment in which it operates and carries out its activity. However, no concrete threat may be identified at this moment.

V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1.	PI	<p>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:</p> <p>a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;</p>	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<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>		
2.	PI	<p>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.</p>	Fulfilled	
3.	PI	<p>A.1.2.1. The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral</p>	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		students and their academic background.		
4.	PI	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.	Fulfilled	
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.	Fulfilled	
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%.	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
7.	PI *	<p>A.1.3.3. 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.).</p>	Partially fulfilled	<p>Allocate at least 10% of its funds (got from doctoral grants it obtained through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system) for reimbursing professional training expenses of doctoral students (attending conferences, summer schools, training, programs abroad, publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.).</p>
8.	CPI	<p>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</p>	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
9.	CPI	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.	Fulfilled	
10.	PI *	A.3.1.2. At least 50% of all doctoral advisors have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.	Fulfilled	
11.	PI	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.	Fulfilled	
12.	PI *	A.3.1.4. The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		students, but no more than 12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs does not exceed 20%.		
13.	CPI	<p>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.</p>	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
14.	PI *	<p>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</p>	Fulfilled	
15.	PI *	<p>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.</p>	Fulfilled	
16.	PI *	<p>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</p>	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		is compulsory, as part of the admission procedure.		
17.	PI	B.1.2.2. The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission does not exceed 30%.	Fulfilled	
18.	PI	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.	Fulfilled	
19.	PI	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.	Fulfilled	
20.	PI	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.	Fulfilled	
21.	PI	B.2.1.4. All along the duration of the doctoral training, doctoral students in the domain receive	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		counselling/guidance from functional guidance commissions, which is reflected in written guidance and feedback or regular meeting.		
22.	CPI	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.	Fulfilled	
23.	CPI	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	Fulfilled	
24.	PI *	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.	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
25.	PI *	<p>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.</p>	Partially fulfilled	<p>To take into account not to allocate to one specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the evaluated IOSUD, more than 2 commissions of PhD thesis defence in the same year for the theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis supervisor.</p>
26.	PI *	<p>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.</p>	Fulfilled	
27.	PI	<p>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:</p>	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.		
28.	PI *	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.	Fulfilled	
29.	CPI	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;	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.		
30.	PI	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.	Fulfilled	
31.	PI	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.	Fulfilled	
32.	PI	C.2.2.3. All doctoral students have access to scientific research	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		laboratories or other facilities depending on the specific domain/domains within the Doctoral School, according to internal order procedures.		
33.	PI *	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.	Fulfilled	
34.	PI	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.	Fulfilled	
35.	PI	C.3.1.3. The internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by	Fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.).		

VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

The Doctoral School of Law within the West University of Timisoara has consolidated itself in the Romanian academic landscape of PhD studies as a solid and prestigious academic institution.

It is a young Doctoral School of Law, which has been able to take advantage of its human capital as well as to attract PhD students with Master degrees got in other Universities from Romania and abroad to a certain extent.

As part of a public University from the West part of Romania, the Doctoral School of Law has known how to take advantage of its geographical position in order to become and consolidate itself as an academic centre of reference in this part of Romania. The activity of this Doctoral School seems to be an accurate reflection of the traditional opening of the city of Timisoara, which perhaps explains the opportunities seized on Romania's membership to the European Union.

Other recommendations:

1. Establishment of an institutional repository on doctoral research projects in the pipeline at the Doctoral School of Law. This repository could contain the following information: the name of the PhD student, the title of the PhD thesis, the doctoral supervisor's / supervisors' name(s), and the summary of the doctoral research project. This repository should be public.
2. Establishment of a database of meetings and recommendations made in relation to each doctoral research in the pipeline at the Doctoral School of Law. It would not be necessary that this information be available for the public at large, but for the internal organization of this Doctoral School and the PhD students' use.
3. Establishment of a database with information regarding the persons, who got their PhD degree in Law.
4. Consider the possibility of amending the methodology for organizing the admission to the doctoral studies of Law in order to introduce specific requirements on previous academic, research and professional performance. In this way, the PhD candidates would demonstrate interest for scientific research, which is so necessary for any doctoral research. Moreover, it could help to ensure that students do not give up their doctoral studies.
5. Consolidate and diversify the strategy of the Doctoral School of Law for gathering information on the quality of the doctoral activities carried out.



6. To work on the indexation of *Analele Universitatii de Vest din Timisoara – Seria Drept* and the *Journal of Eastern European Criminal Law* in SCOPUS. The work already done in relation to the indexation of this legal journals in international databasis (such as HeinOnline, EbscoHost, CEEOL, and SSRN) is an excellent start.
7. Application to international calls for Jean Monnet Actions, such as Modules, Chairs, and Centres of Excellence co-funded by the European Commission. Several doctoral supervisors have the profile to obtain Jean Monnet Modules and Jean Monnet Chairs. Moreover, the Centres that already exist within the Faculty of Law and strongly collaborate with the Doctoral School of Law could propose successful applications for Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence.

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.*