

# External Evaluation Report of Doctoral Domain in Geography

## I. Introduction

This report concerns to periodically External Evaluation of the Institution Organising Doctoral Study Programs (IOSUD), in the doctoral study domain of Geography at University "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" of Iasi (AICU). The evaluation period occurred between 9-17.09.2021.

The assessment will determine the accreditation of the doctoral area in geography, taking into account the following levels:

- the activity of doctoral supervisors and doctoral students;
  - the research outcomes in relation to the defended doctoral theses in public meetings and respective CNATDCU validation;
  - evaluation of doctoral field in Geography, with reference to the criteria and performance indicators (A., B, C.);
  - the activity of Doctoral School of Geosciences (DSG);
  - the activity of DSG as the Institution Organizing Doctoral Study Programs in domain Geography.
- The Evaluation Panel for doctoral studies in fundamental domain of Geography is constituted by:
- Coordinator Prof. Dr. Vasile Efros, Universitatea "Ștefan cel Mare" Suceava, Romania.
  - International expert Prof. Francisco da Silva Costa, University of Minho, Portugal;
  - PhD student Alina-Mihaela Simion, Universitatea din București, Romania.

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași is the oldest higher education institution in Romania.

The Doctoral School of Geosciences (DSG) appeared on 2017, as an independent organizational and administrative structure, organised as a separate Department of the Faculty of Geography and Geology, with its own Regulations.

The doctoral field of Geography is operating within the DSG and have a body of 9 Doctoral supervisors and 24 students. Forty-five doctoral candidate was awarded a doctoral degree in the field of Geography in the interval 2015-2020.

## II. Methods used

At first, the consultation and analysis of the documentation in electronic format sent by IOSUD was carried out, namely:

- the periodic self-evaluation report for maintenance of accreditation of the doctoral field of geography;
- the attached documents;
- the list of the domains, criteria, standards, performance indicators;
- the list of critical performance indicators.

We also carry out the consultation collection of information in:



- the website of AICU: <https://www.uaic.ro/>;
- the webpage of the Faculty of Geography and Geology: <https://www.uaic.ro/en/studies/faculties/faculty-geography-geology/>
- the webpage of the DSG: [https://www.geo.uaic.ro/en/programe-de-studii/scoala-doctorala-geostiinte](https://www.geo.uaic.ro/en/programe-de-studii/scoala-doctorala-geostiinte;);
- the webpage of the Doctorate: [https://www.geo.uaic.ro/en/programs-of-study/doctoral-school](https://www.geo.uaic.ro/en/programs-of-study/doctoral-school/);
- the website of the Library: <http://www.bcu-iasi.ro/> and <https://www.uaic.ro/studenti/bibliotecii/>.

In a second moment, occurred, in hybrid mode, the evaluation period between 9-17.09.2021. A preliminary meeting was held on September 9, aims to present all the members of the panel and discuss the preparation and harmonization of evaluation steps of doctoral study domains and IOSUD. After this, online meeting/discussions were held with (annex 1):

1. Representatives of the AICU institution and of the Council for Academic Doctoral Studies (CSUD). September 9th, 2021.
2. The contact person for the doctoral study domain under review and the team who drafted the internal evaluation. September 9th, 2021. Main topics analyzed: Structure and organization of the report; SWOT analysis; Human Resources; Evolution of PhD students; Research centers.
3. The academic staff corresponding to the doctoral study domain. September 9th, 2021. Main topics analyzed: Human Resources; Curricula; Finances and budget; Internationalization.
4. PhD students. September 13th, 2021. Main topics analysed: Administrative processes; Grants; Curricula; Teaching activities.
5. The members of the Ethics Commission. September 13th, 2021.
6. Graduates. September 13th, 2021. Main topics analysed: Current status at the professional level. Difficulties in the PhD; Grants and research projects;. Relations with the university after the end of the PhD.
7. The Directors/persons in charge) of the research centers/laboratories within the doctoral study domain. September 14th, 2021. Main topics analysed: Financial resources; Laboratories; collaboration with foreign universities; software licenses.
8. The Commission for Quality Evaluation and Assurance (CEAC) members/Quality Assurance Department. September 14th, 2021.
9. Employers of AICU doctoral graduates. September 14th, 2021. Main topics analysed: Status of collaboration; Relations with the university; Research, planning and civil protection activities.
10. The IOSUD evaluation panel for conclusions. September 17th, 2021. Main topics analysed: Strong and weak points; Improvement strategies.
11. The representatives of the institution under review to discuss on the conclusions of the evaluation process and the main recommendations. September 17th, 2021.

During the evaluation period, emails was exchanged to prepare meetings, clarify doubts and gather additional information with the team who drafted the internal evaluation.

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

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

The fields of Geography are traditional doctoral fields in the AICU with activity since the beginning of the 19th century.



The DSG appeared in 2017, as an independent organizational and administrative structure, within the IOSUD of AICU of Iași in the context of the reorganization of the Doctoral School of Chemistry, Life and Earth Sciences. The DSG has merged the existing PhD programmes in Geography, Geology and Environmental Science in the Doctoral School of Chemistry and Life and Earth Sciences.

With the increase in the number of PhD supervisors per field as well as the number of PhD students, the academic community decided to separate the three PhD schools, Biology, Chemistry and Geosciences, so that 2017, the PhD School of Geosciences starts to operate independently.

A various functional documents - regulations, procedures, methodologies and frameworks - about the organization and functioning of doctoral studies was published in the last years. Procedures for PhD students, criteria for the evaluation and standards required from applicants for admission are specified. The recognition of the quality of doctoral supervisor is made according to the legislation in force. PhD activities are carried out under the supervision of IOSUD-AICU. The organisation of doctoral degree program is specified in the Institutional Regulation and according the acquisition of a level 8 qualification of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the National Qualifications Framework.

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

*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 regulations are in place and they are applied at the level of IOSUD and of the DSG, namely: specific regulations, the methodology for conducting the competition for the position of director of the Council of Doctoral Studies, methodologies for organising and conducting doctoral program, the existence of mechanisms for the recognition of the position of doctoral supervisor, functional management structures, internal procedures for analysis and approval of proposals on the topic of doctoral study program.

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

- (a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;*
- (b) the Methodology for conducting elections for the position of director of the Council of doctoral school (CSD), as well as elections by the students of their representative in CSD and the evidence of their conduct;*
- (c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);*
- (d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;*
- (e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;*
- (f) the contract for doctoral studies;*
- (g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.*



At the level of the DSG there are specific regulations concerning: doctoral school regulations; methodology/rules for the conduct of doctoral school elections and evidence of their development; methodology for the admission of PhD students; methodologies for the completion of doctoral studies; internal procedures for reviewing and approving proposals for the subject matter of doctoral degree programmes; the existence of mechanisms for recognising the status of doctoral supervisor; the system procedure for the recognition and equivalence of the PhD obtained with other countries.

Several documents were analyzed, highlighting the institutional regulation for the organization and functioning of the IOSUD-AICU doctoral studies programs, the internal regulations of the DSG and the Council of the Doctoral School. The verification of the documents presented on this indicator demonstrates the conditions of the IOSUD and DSG for the regular functioning of the Doctorate in Geography.

However, the DSG must meet the conditions in order to Enable bilingual (English/Romanian) edition of main content.

***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.*

The Regulations of DSG includes and establishes a series of mandatory criteria, procedures and standards provided in the Code of Doctoral Studies. The thirty nine articles of the Regulations of the DSG guarantee compliance with the Performance Indicator A.1.1.2.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

To assess the logistical resources needed to carry out the mission of the doctoral studies in Geography, we analyzed the Student Registration Information System based in IT platforms adapted to AICU requirements and the software to check the similarity index of doctoral theses.

***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.*

An appropriate information system for the registration of doctoral students and their academic career, called eSims (<https://simsweb.uaic.ro/eSIMS/>) is presented and resulting from the implementation of the project "Integrated information system for the management of students' professional activities in the context of the transformations generated by the Bologna process". The platform ensure transparency in student management and implementation of the Single Register of Romanian.

The AICU must study the possibility of making the system available in English in order to serve foreign students.



**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.*

IOSUD - AICU Iasi has shown a continuous concern for providing the necessary resources to verify the percentage of similarity for the works elaborated by PhD students, with the disponibilization of the special module dedicated to this functionality within the Blackboard e-learning platform - SafeAssign, from 2016. All PhD students' theses are checked through the of the plagiarism identification program TURNITIN purchased in 2018. The similarity report is being a compulsory part of the doctoral degree validation dossier.

**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.*

We identify financial resources and funding and their application by the IOSUD/DSG in the last 5 years.

**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.*

During the period evaluated, the field of Geography have benefited from 5 projects about human capital and resources in scientific research, which at least one PhD student as received a grant.

**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%.*

In addition to the source of government funding, doctoral students are funded from other sources:

- scholarships and support for the training and research activity from the AICU;
- scholarships from the Human Capital Operational Programme 2014-2020.
- scholarships and grants from Projects of Human Resources and Mobility for researcher and Research Projects (ReGrowEU);

The funding situation of 2020 show 42% active PhD students benefit from supplementary funding.

**The indicator is fulfilled.**



**Performance Indicator \*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.).*

Of the amounts related to doctoral grants obtained by the university through institutional contract and tuition fees collected in the form of paid education, a part is used to cover the training expenses of doctoral students. During the evaluated period, 32 PhD students from the Geography field were supported for delegation abroad from the funds of the DSG. The amounts settled for the training expenses of doctoral students and other specific forms of dissemination represents 16.6% of the funds allocated by the Ministry of Education.

Based on the collection of information from the teaching staff and PhD students in Geography, we can conclude for the lack of public funds provided by the Ministry of Education finance the number of scholarships and funded research projects; It is advisable for the DSG to study news strategies to increase the number of scholarships and thus attract more students to PhD program. The supervisors should promoting the students involvement in international research projects and diversify financial sources in order to increase the number of PhD grants.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

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

IOSUD / The DSG have a research infrastructure that supports the development of the related activities. Within the Geography field, the university study programme benefits from the facilities of the Faculty of Geography and Geology and research centers:- lecture hall; teaching laboratories; research laboratories and office rooms.

The situation of the research spaces, infrastructure and equipment is presented in detail. These show that the equipment available to geographic researchers has multiplied in the last 5 years and that they can support a complex and diversified activity.

Students have access to all the Libraries and the benefits from online access of the AICU.

**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.*

The teaching and research facilities available to the Doctoral School of Geosciences include lecture halls, seminar rooms, laboratories and research stations. 20 Laboratories within the Faculty of Geography and Geology are disponible. Doctoral students also have access to research and student



practice stations of AICU. PhD students have access to the research infrastructures of the Interdisciplinary Research Institute (ICI UAIC), Department of Science and Natural Sciences, namely, three specific research centres: Platform for Interdisciplinary Training and Research in Archaeology – Arheoinvest, Integrated Center of Environmental Science Studies in the North Eastern Region – CERNESIM, Research Center on Advanced Materials and Technologies – RAMTECH and two research groups: Molecular Biophysics group and Environmental Sciences group.

The "Mihai Eminescu" Central University Library has 12 branches in the "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University for faculties. The doctoral students of the Doctoral School of Geosciences, attending in particular the Biology Library.

IOSUD / the DSG / the Faculty of Geography and Geology allow for the conduct of research activities in the Geography field, in accordance with the mission and objectives assumed providing PCs, dedicated software, equipment, laboratory equipment, library, access to international databases, etc.. The research infrastructure and the offer of research services provision are complex, diversified and proper:

- the research infrastructures of the Interdisciplinary Research Institute;
- development and Innovation Platform for Interdisciplinary Training and Research;
- laboratories spaces equipped with modern technology that allow work essentially related to physical geography; AICU has won a huge grant for the development and modernization of research infrastructure, including the University's research stations
  - education and research spaces where the students have a high number of books, volumes and collections of periodicals in the field of Geography;
  - softwares and their user licenses are disponibilized to PhD students;
  - online access to scientific databases.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

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

The DSG emerged at the AICU in accordance with the provisions of the National Education Law regarding the of Doctoral Studies,. Nine doctoral supervisors currently work in the PhD of Geography.. The subjects of the advanced training program included in the study plan of the PhD in Geography are taught by professors who supervise doctoral theses. The doctoral supervisors have publications indexed by the Web of Science or ERIH in impact journals and other achievements of relevant significance to the domain of Geography. The doctoral supervisors are still active in their scientific field and qualified according to the minimum standards required by the CNATDCU.

***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 degree of fulfilment of the CNATDCU minimum standards in force, necessary and mandatory for obtaining the certificate of qualification in Geography, is presented and the minimum of three doctoral



thesis advisors and at least 50% of them meet the necessary and obligatory standards and conditions for conferring didactic degrees in higher education.

**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.*

All nine PhD supervisors in the field of Geography have a tenured position within IOSUD-AICU and ensure the necessary human resources to have a high quality doctoral studies.

**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 subjects in the program based on advanced higher education studies of the Geography PhD curriculum are supported by professors and associate professors, within IOSUD-DSG.

**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 programs does not exceed 20%.*

From the presented data it can be seen that within the Geography field, three doctoral supervisors guide more than 8 doctoral students, but not more than 12, which represents a percentage of 33%. This value includes students in training and in extension.

None of PhD advisors in Geography coordinate more than 8 students at the same time, but not more than 12, during their PhD studies (3 years) and 15 PhD students in total.

**The indicator is partially fulfilled.**

**Recommendations:** Doctoral advisors should encourage extension doctoral students to present their thesis and should not accept new orientations from doctoral students until they meet the conditions of this performance indicator.

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

We analyse the publications in indexed journals and international level contributions of the PhD supervisors in order to understand the progress in scientific research-development-innovation and international visibility. We also consulted the list of research projects that supervisors were involved in as coordinator/investigator and awards received. Hereby we try to infer if the supervisors are scientifically active by the CNATDCU minimum standards, required and mandatory to obtain the habilitation certificate.





**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.*

From various attachments, namely the curriculars, a list with the research activity of the PhD supervisors, reflected by publications in journals listed in Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar databases or ERIM in journals with impact factor or other achievements relevant to the field of Geography, it was possible to assess the scientific and research portfolios. A serie of articles and other achievements relevant to the geography field of doctoral supervisors was consulted. The publications indexed Web of Science in journals with impact factor as well as other achievements such as articles ISI Conference Proceedings prove that the PhD supervisors have at least 5 indexed publications or other relevant achievements in the field.

We found that supervisors perform the tasks of editors and reviewers of journals specialized in the field of Geography and are affiliated to international scientific bodies and organizations and have international visibility in the last 5 years.

All PhD supervisors carry out activities that meet the requirements regarding the contributions made at national and international level regarding the development-innovation in the field of Geography.

***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.*

The consulting of the curriculars, research contracts and other documents available in the annexes allows us to comprove that PhD supervisors continue to be scientifically active by the minimum CNATDCU standards. The proportion of at least 50% of the leaders of at least 25% of the score required by the minimum standards CNATDCU, necessary and mandatory for obtaining the certificate of qualification, based on scientific results of the last 5 years, is accomplish.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

## **Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**



We analyze the entire admission process, namely the organization of the different phases. We assess the quality of this process in terms of the ability to attract candidates, We tried to infer from the consequences of the doctoral student dropout rate on the course functioning.

We examine the specialization curriculum in the area of doctoral geography, the content of the doctoral programs and the training program based on advanced academic studies.

We have consulted the annexes on ethics in research and intellectual property,

We have identified the different counseling/guidance strategies for students used by functional advisory committees.

We consulted the lists of scientific research activities and participation in international events carried out by doctoral students.

We tried to understand if the involvement of evaluators in the defense committees of doctoral theses is significant.

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

*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.*

Based on the statistical elements presented in the report, we analyzed the capacity to attract students, with regard to their institutional origin and the profile of candidates in their academic research and professional performance components. We also interpreted the data presented on doctoral students' resignation / dropout.

**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.*

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 geography doctoral studies and the number of places funded by to the state budget put up for competition, in the period 2015/2016 - 2019/2020, was 0.14 being lower than 0.2. The ratio between the number of candidates in the last five years and the number of places financed from the state budget put up for competition within the field of doctoral studies, Geography, is 1.28 accomplished the indicator.

It will be prudent for the DSG and to determine strategies for attracting students from the Master's Degree in Geography from another national and foreign universities.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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



**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.

The admission to doctoral studies is based on the "Methodology of Admission" to IOSUD-AICU. In accord to the regulations contained in the institutional regulation for the organization and operation of doctoral studies, the "Methodology of admission" is approved annually and establishes a pre-established program with the assessment and grading in the admission procedures, evaluation criteria and standards. According to the regulations, the the doctoral admission is carried out on a compulsory basis through a competition that includes two phases: a specialised exam and an oral test ( interview).

**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 admission does not exceed 30%.

According to the number of enrolled students (67) and expelled students (9) , the 3-year expulsion rate is 13.4%, below 30% and accomplishing the performance indicator.

From the stage of the admission procedure, the DSG continue should to identify scientific risk factors and possibly present some alternative solutions: development of an effective mentoring system at the level of doctoral university studies; creating more direct links between the doctoral and master's programs of the University and elements of continuity; integration of doctoral students in the activity of presentation and promotion of master's and doctoral programs; organizing social events and considering volunteer actions to support doctoral students in difficult situations.

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

The training program is based on advanced academic studies includes topics relevant to geography and standards of scientific research ethics and intellectual property. IOSUD-AICU is responsible for creating mechanisms to ensure that the training program based on advanced academic studies achieves student learning outcomes. The DSG provides doctoral students with training programs based on advanced university studies, consisting of activities carried out in institutionalized study formations, through courses, seminars and others.

Doctoral students should benefit from the guidance of functional advisory committees on their academic path.

The relationship between the number of doctoral students and the number of number of teaching staff is an important criterion to guarantee quality in the supervision of academic work.

*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.*



**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.*

The curriculum of the training program based on advanced academic studies in Geography include two compulsory disciplines study in-depth research methodology and/or statistical data processing. for the first semester:

1. Current trends in fundamental and applied research;
2. Experimental techniques, processing and presentation of results in the field of specialization.

The PhD student can choose the optional discipline "Methods and models for advanced cartographic statistical processing of geographical information" to reinforce the research methodology and statistical processing of experimental data.

***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.*

A compulsory discipline has been introduced for PhD in Geography called Ethics and Academic Integrity. This subject is dedicated to ethics in scientific research and to intellectual property.

***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 activities.*

The curricular description of the academic training program based on advanced university studies demonstrates that each discipline is centered on and aims at learning outcomes, specifying the competencies, skills and attitudes that students should acquire. A feedback on the content and competences offered by the discipline sheets is obtained using the PhD students' satisfaction survey.

***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.*

Throughout the doctoral training period, each student benefit from the counseling / guidance of a functional guidance commission, aspect reflected by written guidance and feedback or regular meetings. The PhD supervisors in the field of Geography and the guidance commissions coordinate the activity of doctoral students.

During the doctoral internship, the doctoral students benefite from functional guidance commissions, which is reflected in the number of scientific papers developed.



There is a correspondence system in place by email between the doctoral supervisors, the school and the AICU and the doctoral students that allows the communication of information related to schedule, fees, tutorials, etc. . The communication with the students is permanent facilitating the achievement of the individual plan. Another online platforms, such as: Zoom, Google classroom, WhatsApp are, also, used.

***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.

The number of doctoral students in geography during the five years of study is 57. A total members of the steering committee of 46 worked in the guidance commissions of the geography students during the reference period. Based on the data provided we calculate the ratio between the number of Doctoral students and the number of teachers providing guidance is 1,2:1.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

### **Criterion B.3. 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.*

Each doctoral advisor is involved in the supervision of their own doctoral students, involving them in scientific research activities, conferences, publication of relevant papers in journals and proceedings, participation in workshops, scientific sessions, etc.

One important performance indicator is the ratio between the number of presentations delivered by the doctoral students and the number of the doctoral students who successfully completed the doctoral programme during the evaluated period.

***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.

Based in the list of published articles or other relevant contributions of the doctoral students who have defended their doctoral thesis in the last five years, we select 5 relevant papers which we analysed and rated in a scale from 1 to 5, according to the original contribution to the development of the studies in Geography. All papers contain significant original contributions in the field of Geography.

***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.



Based on the analyse of the student activity lists, we conclude that the ratio between the number of presentations including posters, exhibitions, made at international events and the number of students who completed their doctoral studies is 4,2. To achieve this value we used the number of manifestations of PhD students who have defended their theses in the last five years..

***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.*

This performance indicator lets you know if significant number of external reviewers in the doctoral theses defence committees.

***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.***

In the last five years in the field of Geography there not have been cases in which two appointments from a higher education institution, other than IOSUD evaluated, are exceeded, for the theses coordinated by the same doctoral supervisor, in the same year.

No doctoral thesis defended in the field of Geography was invalidated at CNATDCU.:

***The indicator is 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.***

In the last five years in the field of Geography, 45 Members of the thesis jury come from a higher education institution other than the evaluated IOSUD. The ratio varies between 0,022 and 0,2,

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

## ***Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT***

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

In this domain, we analyse the internal quality assurance system based on the institutional framework and internal quality assurance policies. We attend to the description of the process of evaluation and internal quality assurance in accordance with a procedure developed and applied at the



IOSUD level and we identify the evaluated criteria mandatory and if the student feedback mechanisms are 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.*

**Performance Indicator C.1.1.1.** *The Doctoral school in the respective university study domain shall demonstrate the continuous development of the evaluation process and its internal quality assurance following a procedure developed and applied at the level of the IOSUD, the following assessed criteria being mandatory:*

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

The operational procedure regarding the evaluation and internal monitoring of the doctoral schools within the AICU establishes the procedure of internal evaluation of the doctoral schools and of the domains of doctoral studies in order to accredit and periodically evaluate them according to "The Methodology of Evaluation of Doctoral University Studies" elaborated in accordance with the legislation in force. The institutional regulation for the organization and functioning of Doctoral University Studies establishes internal quality assurance policies.

At the level of the DSG, the permanent evaluation of the activity is under the regulation of operation of the doctoral school and represents one of the objectives in Strategic Plan of Faculty of Geography and Geology.

Annually a "Doctoral Quality Assessment Questionnaire" is applied giving the opportunity to the doctoral students presented some suggestions for the continuous improvement of the academic and administrative activity.

A report is prepared by the internal commission for evaluating the activity of the doctoral school to contains a series of recommendations that are transposed in the action plan proposed within the strategies and procedures implemented at the level of the DSG.

The evaluation and internal monitoring of the evolution of DSG is based regulation on the organization and conduct of doctoral study programs taking into account Evaluation methodology, reference standards and and the list of performance indicators of ARACIS.

We verified this condition with regard to the scientific work of Doctoral advisors in the field of Geography, the infrastructure and logistics the procedures, the scientific activity of doctoral students, the training program and the social and academic services.

***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 DSG provides methodologies to assess student satisfaction with the functioning of the doctorate and identify their scientific needs. A tool for monitoring student satisfaction is the questionnaire "How satisfied are you with the University services?" applied at IOSUD level and launched annually to assess students' perception. This questionnaire on student satisfaction favors the exchange of ideas, allowing the implementation of student feedback mechanisms aimed at the continuous improvement of academic services.

The measures to be taken following the annual evaluation are reflected in the strategies and policies adopted in the Strategic Plan of Faculty of Geography and Geology into account the wishes, desires, aspirations, vision of PhD students regarding the entire socio-professional activity in which they are involved.

The DSGI must reflect on the employability rates and the continuity of students in scientific research careers.

***The indicator is fulfilled/.***

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

In this criterion, we analyze the information transparency policy and the regulations for accessibility to learning resources and scientific research laboratories.

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

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

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

Information of interest to doctoral students and information of public interest is available for consultation on the AICU website. There website of the Faculty of Geography and Geology (<https://www.geo.uaic.ro/en/>) providing all the information for doctoral supervisors and doctoral students





and the admission conditions for the doctorate of Geography (<https://www.geo.uaic.ro/en/programe-de-studii/scoala-doctorala-geostiinte>).

The IOSUD publishes, in compliance with the general regulations on data protection, information such as: internal regulations and standards about the doctoral programme; the doctoral studies contract; the academic and scientific profile of the Doctoral advisors; the informations of doctoral students activities and doctoral theses summaries.

Although there is a brochure about all doctoral courses in English, the essential information about doctorate only are available in Romanian. This makes it quite unattractive for foreign students who want to study geography in AICU. It should be an effort to allow all information to be published in bilingual format. Also the Faculty of Geography and Geology should promote the PhD activities (national and international projects participation and internationalization) in bilingual format.

***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.*

***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.***

The AICU has provided through the Anelis Plus Project access to international scientific databases, from different fields of knowledge, and, periodically, to other databases on the consortium list. The databases and other bibliographic sources can be accessed on the AICU library websites. Based on the access to international databases, each PhD supervisor and PhD students have their own documentation in electronic format in their field of specialisation. The AICU offers to access the following databases: Science Direct Freedom Collection, Scopus, SciFinder (CAS), MathSciNet, etc., while through the "Mihai Eminescu" Central University Library in Iasi they also have access to other representative databases, such as: SpringerLink Journals, ProQuest Central, Emerald Journals, Science Journals, Thompson Reuters, Oxford Journals, SAGE Journals HHS Collection, EBSCO, Wiley Journals etc.

***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.***

The IOSUD has shown a continuous concern for ensuring the necessary resources to verify the percentage of similarity for the works developed by PhD students. To avoid intellectual fraud, the AICU has acquired the identification services TURNITIN which PhD students can have access.

***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 doctoral students have access to research laboratories, the libraries of AICU and the databases specialized in scientific literature, an essential support in the drafting and development of theses, without discrimination, prohibitions, restrictions on material resources or of any other nature. A



operational internal procedure, approved at the institutional level, ensures the unrestricted access of the Geography doctoral students to all the infrastructure provided by DSG, research centers and excellence laboratories in the field of Environmental Science. The educational offer for doctoral students within the Doctoral School of Geosciences can be viewed at <https://iciuaic.ro/en/laboratory-of-environmental-geography/> respecting the regulations and procedures for use. As evidence of this statement are the mentions of infrastructure users at the end of the some published articles.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

In this criterion we evaluate the strategies to increase the degree of internationalisation of doctoral programmes, the involvement of doctoral student, the participating in international conferences and workshops. We consult the joint doctoral programmes and the mobility agreements. The degree of internationalization of the activities is also considered within the doctoral program

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

***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.***

Based on the activities of doctoral students, it was proven that they completed training courses abroad or other forms of mobility, such as participation in scientific conferences and international workshops.

For the mobility of doctoral students and doctoral supervisors in the field of Geography and the doctoral school, financial support is provided in conducting research internships in the country or abroad. The Geography field, through the AICU and the Faculty of Geography and Geology, has concluded bilateral inter-institutional agreements and agreements within the ERASMUS program, both for practice and study mobility for doctoral students and teachers.

Almost 67% of doctoral students in geography have completed an internship abroad or another form of mobility. In the case of international mobility, we highlight the collaboration materialized through the realization of joint ERASMUS projects: 166 doctoral students financed from the state budget in the period 2016-2020, performed 111 mobilities abroad for training courses or participation in scientific events. Of the 111 mobilities, 25 were carried out within the ERASMUS Program.

As it is a doctoral course currently aimed at national students, it is important to motivate and support supervisors and doctoral students to take improvement courses in English. It is also important to continue to motivate doctoral students to develop national / international mobility programs and to participate in doctoral workshops with other courses that have affinities. Scientific capacity shows are also a good modality to demonstrate the importance of student mobility.



***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.*

The AICU allocates necessary funds for the organization of co-supervised doctorates. Seven doctorates concluded the co-supervision with co-advisors of six foreign Universities.

The Faculty of Geography and Geology established partnerships with institutions abroad for the exchange of doctoral students and teachers contributing to the internationalization of the didactic and scientific activities. On the occasion of participating in the Public dissertations of the theses in Iași, the references and the coordinators of the co-tutors from abroad held conferences for teachers, students and doctoral students. Also on the International Geographical Seminar are some foreign experts of the field.

***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.).*

The internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by IOSUD through concrete measures manifested by:

- mobility of doctoral students through projects, ERASMUS programs, research contracts, own funds, etc...;
- the number of international mobilities;
- the number of internships offered a scholarship holders;
- the number of PhD students studying entirely in an international language;
- the number of trips of doctoral supervisors for lectures or other scientific activities related to doctorates abroad.
- the inclusion of international experts in the commissions for guiding and defending doctoral theses.

In order to increasing the number of international students , to increase the visibility and promotion, to strengthen the existing cooperation relations and to develop new partnerships, the AICU carried the following activities :

- a series of joint actions in the field of teaching, research, international relations and student initiatives in the year of 2016;
- since 2017, Erasmus + International Staff Training Week takes place annually;
- the participation, in Helsinki, at the conference and educational fair European Association for International Education;
- an online information session in 2020 with the representatives of the Erasmus Bureau of the AICU;
- Within the VINCIT, took place the participation in the online educational fairs Study in Europe and the online organization of the 3rd edition of the JASSY International Summer School;
- the translation into English of the course descriptions available on the AICU website and on the studynromania.ro platform, in order to facilitate access to information for international students.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

## IV. SWOT Analysis

<p><b><u>Strengths:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The academic Tradition of AICU in the local and national community and a credible partner internationally</li> <li>- The international relations that outline a potential for collaboration in the field of education and research</li> <li>- The excellent laboratory high level offer</li> <li>- The academic qualities of the internal supervisors.</li> <li>- The Interdisciplinary view of research centers</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The absence of a strong economic environment in the area to provide solutions for the insertion on the labour market</li> <li>- The lack of information in English about PhD</li> <li>- The low number of theses validated by CNATDCU</li> <li>- The lack of autonomy of research centers</li> <li>- The lack of human resources in the field of Human Geography</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The geographic placement in a strategic cross-border area</li> <li>- The relationship with institutions and employing companies</li> <li>- The EU funds that can be used for mobility, ERASMUS+ programs and other emerging programmes.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The decrease of the school population</li> <li>- The social and economic factors that limit mobility.</li> <li>- The low external financing</li> </ul>

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

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment
1.	PI	<p><b>A.1.1.1.</b> The existence of specific regulations and their application at the level of the Doctoral School of the respective university doctoral study domain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);</li> <li>d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;</li> <li>e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;</li> <li>f) the contract for doctoral studies;</li> <li>g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.</li> </ul>	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>
2.	PI	<p><b>A.1.1.2.</b> The doctoral school' Regulation includes mandatory criteria, procedures and standards binding on the aspects specified in Article 17, paragraph (5) of the Government Decision No. 681/2011 on the approval of the Code of Doctoral Studies with subsequent amendments and additions.</p>	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>
3.	PI	<p><b>A.1.2.1.</b> The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.</p>	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment
4.	PI	<b>A.1.2.2.</b> The existence and use of an appropriate software program and evidence of its use to verify the percentage of similarity in all doctoral theses.	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>
5.	IP	<b>A.1.3.1.</b> 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.	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>
6.	PI *	<b>A.1.3.2.</b> 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%.	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>
7.	PI *	<b>A.1.3.3.</b> At least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants obtained by the university through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system is used to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students (attending conferences, summer schools, training, programs abroad, publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.).	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>
8.	CPI	<b>A.2.1.1.</b> The venues and the material equipment available to the doctoral school enable the research activities in the evaluated domain to be carried out, in line with the assumed mission and objectives (computers, specific software, equipment, laboratory equipment, library, access to international databases etc.). The research infrastructure and the provision of research services are presented to the public through a specific platform. The research infrastructure described above, which was purchased and developed within the past 5 years will be presented distinctly	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>
9.	CPI	<b>A.3.1.1.</b> Minimum three doctoral thesis advisors within that doctoral domain, and at least 50% of them (but no less than three) meet the minimum standards of the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU) in force at the time when the evaluation is carried out, which standards are required and mandatory for obtaining the enabling certification.	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>
10.	PI *	<b>A.3.1.2.</b> At least 50% of all doctoral advisors have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>
11.	PI	<b>A.3.1.3.</b> The study subjects in the education program based on advanced higher education studies pertaining to the doctoral domain are taught by teaching staff or researchers who are doctoral thesis advisors / certified doctoral thesis advisors, professors / CS I or lecturer / CS II, with proved expertise in the field of the study subjects they teach, or other specialists in the field who meet the	<b><i>Fulfilled</i></b>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment
		standards established by the institution in relation with the aforementioned teaching and research functions, as provided by the law.	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
12	PI *	<b>A.3.1.4.</b> The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than 12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs does not exceed 20%.	<b>partially fulfilled</b>	Doctoral advisors should encourage extension doctoral students to present their thesis and should not accept new orientations from doctoral students until they meet the conditions of this performance indicator.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment
13.	CPI	<b>A.3.2.1.</b> At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in the evaluated domain have at least 5 Web of Science- or ERIH-indexed publications in magazines of impact, or other achievements of relevant significance for that domain, including international-level contributions that indicate progress in scientific research - development - innovation for the evaluated domain. The aforementioned doctoral thesis advisors enjoy international awareness within the past five years, consisting of: membership on scientific boards of international publications and conferences; membership on boards of international professional associations; guests in conferences or expert groups working abroad, or membership on doctoral defense commissions at universities abroad or co-leading with universities abroad. For Arts and Sports and Physical Education Sciences, doctoral thesis advisors shall prove their international visibility within the past five years by their membership on the boards of professional associations, membership in organizing committees of arts events and international competitions, membership on juries or umpire teams in artistic events or international competitions.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
14.	PI *	<b>A.3.2.2.</b> At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in a specific doctoral study domain continue to be active in their scientific field, and acquire at least 25% of the score requested by the minimal CNATDCU standards in force at the time of the evaluation, which are required and mandatory for acquiring their enabling certificate, based on their scientific results within the past five years	<b>Fulfilled</b>
15.	PI *	<b>B.1.1.1.</b> The ratio between the number of graduates of masters' programs of other higher education institutions, national or foreign, who have enrolled for the doctoral admission contest within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget, put out through contest within the doctoral domain is at least 0.2 or the ratio between the number of candidates within the past five years and the	<b>Fulfilled</b>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment
		number of seats funded by the state budget put out through contest within the doctoral studies domain is at least 1,2.	
16.	PI *	<b>B.1.2.1.</b> Admission to doctoral study programs is based on selection criteria including: previous academic, research and professional performance, their interest for scientific or arts/sports research, publications in the domain and a proposal for a research subject. Interviewing the candidate is compulsory, as part of the admission procedure.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
17.	PI	<b>B.1.2.2.</b> The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission does not exceed 30%.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
18.	PI	<b>B.2.1.1.</b> The training program based on advanced academic studies includes at least 3 disciplines relevant to the scientific research training of doctoral students; at least one of these disciplines is intended to study in-depth the research methodology and/or the statistical data processing.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
19.	PI	<b>B.2.1.2.</b> At least one discipline is dedicated to Ethics and Intellectual Property in scientific research or there are well-defined topics on these subjects within a discipline taught in the doctoral program.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
20.	PI	<b>B.2.1.3.</b> The IOSUD has mechanisms to ensure that the academic training program based on advanced university studies addresses „the learning outcomes”, specifying the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy that doctoral students should acquire after completing each discipline or through the research activities.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
21.	PI	<b>B.2.1.4.</b> All along the duration of the doctoral training, doctoral students in the domain receive counselling/guidance from functional guidance commissions, which is reflected in written guidance and feedback or regular meeting.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
22.	CPI	<b>B.2.1.5.</b> For a doctoral study domain, the ratio between the number of doctoral students and the number of teaching staff/researchers providing doctoral guidance must not exceed 3:1.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
23.	CPI	<b>B.3.1.1.</b> For the evaluated domain, the evaluation commission will be provided with at least one paper or some other relevant contribution per doctoral student who has obtained a doctor's title within the past 5 years. From this list, the members of the evaluation commission shall randomly select 5 such papers / relevant contributions per doctoral study domain for review. At least 3 selected papers must contain significant original contributions in the respective domain	<b>Fulfilled</b>
24.	PI *	<b>B.3.1.2.</b> The ratio between the number of presentations of doctoral students who completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years), including posters, exhibitions made at prestigious international events (organized in the country or abroad) and the number of doctoral students who have completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years) is at least 1.	<b>Fulfilled</b>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment
25.	PI *	<b>B.3.2.1.</b> The number of doctoral theses allocated to one specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the evaluated IOSUD should not exceed two (2) in a year for the theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis advisor.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
26.	PI *	<b>B.3.2.2.</b> The ratio between the doctoral theses allocated to one scientific specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the institution where the defense on the doctoral thesis is organized, and the number of doctoral theses presented in the same doctoral study domain in the doctoral school should not exceed 0.3, considering the past five years. Only those doctoral study domains in which minimum ten doctoral theses have been presented within the past five years should be analyzed.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
27.	PI	<b>C.1.1.1.</b> The Doctoral school in the respective university study domain shall demonstrate the continuous development of the evaluation process and its internal quality assurance following a procedure developed and applied at the level of the IOSUD, the following assessed criteria being mandatory: a) the scientific work of Doctoral advisors; b) the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out the research activity; c) the procedures and subsequent rules based on which doctoral studies are organized; d) the scientific activity of doctoral students; e) the training program based on advanced academic studies of doctoral students; f) social and academic services (including for participation at different events, publishing papers etc.) and counselling made available to doctoral students.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
28.	PI *	<b>C.1.1.2.</b> Mechanisms are implemented during the stage of the doctoral study program to enable feedback from doctoral students allowing to identify their needs, as well as their overall level of satisfaction with the doctoral study program in order to ensure continuous improvement of the academic and administrative processes. Following the analysis of the results, there is evidence that an action plan was drafted and implemented.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
29.	CPI	<b>C.2.1.1.</b> The IOSUD publishes on the website of the organizing institution, in compliance with the general regulations on data protection, information such as: a) the Doctoral School regulation; b) the admission regulation; c) the doctoral studies contract; d) the study completion regulation including the procedure for the public presentation of the thesis; e) the content of training program based on advanced academic studies; f) the academic and scientific profile, thematic areas/research themes of the Doctoral advisors within the domain, as well as their institutional contact data; g) the list of doctoral students within the domain with necessary information (year of registration; advisor); h) information on the standards for developing the doctoral thesis; i) links to the doctoral theses' summaries to be publicly presented and the date, time, place where they will be presented; this information will be communicated at least twenty days before the presentation.	<b>Fulfilled</b>



No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment
30.	PI	<b>C.2.2.1.</b> All doctoral students have free access to one platform providing academic databases relevant to the doctoral studies domain of their thesis.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
31.	PI	<b>C.2.2.2.</b> Each doctoral student shall have access, upon request, to an electronic system for verifying the degree of similarity with other existing scientific or artistic works.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
32.	PI	<b>C.2.2.3.</b> All doctoral students have access to scientific research laboratories or other facilities depending on the specific domain/domains within the Doctoral School, according to internal order procedures.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
33.	PI *	<b>C.3.1.1.</b> IOSUD, for every evaluated domain, has concluded mobility agreements with universities abroad, with research institutes, with companies working in the field of study, aimed at the mobility of doctoral students and academic staff (e.g., ERASMUS agreements for the doctoral studies). At least 35% of the doctoral students have completed a training course abroad or other mobility forms such as attending international scientific conferences. IOSUD drafts and applies policies and measures aiming at increasing the number of doctoral students participating at mobility periods abroad, up to at least 20%, which is the target at the level of the European Higher Education Area.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
34.	PI	<b>C.3.1.2.</b> In the evaluated doctoral study domain, support is granted, including financial support, to the organization of doctoral studies in international co-tutelage or invitation of leading experts to deliver courses/lectures for doctoral students.	<b>Fulfilled</b>
35.	PI	<b>C.3.1.3.</b> The internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by IOSUD through concrete measures (e.g., by participating in educational fairs to attract international doctoral students; by including international experts in guidance committees or doctoral committees etc.).	<b>Fulfilled</b>

## VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

### *Justification*

- The leaders of the Faculty of Geography and Geology and the DSG consider that the study programme in Geography is well framed in the development strategy of the IOSUD.
- The fields of Geography and Geology are traditional doctoral fields in the AICU and the PhD programme in Geography is valued by local and regional public institutions.
- The teaching staff consists of PhDs, with a stable conditions to the AICU and integrated in research units.
- The DSG has a good system of evaluation and quality assurance.
- The students expressed satisfaction with the PhD programme and high appreciation for the teachers and thesis supervisors.
- The "Mihai Eminescu" Central University Library has good working conditions for the students.



- The students have access to laboratories, computer rooms and software suitable for their needs.

*Guidelines:*

We summarize some guidelines we established from the analysis of performance indicators:

- increase the participation of supervisors in research projects, both national and international with competitive funding;
- promote the marketing of the study programme in english in order to attract more foreing students;
- encourage PhD students to publish their research outcomes in peer-reviewed scientific journals;
- institutionalize the practice of organizing a doctoral workshop. This will provide a good opportunity for the students presenting their work and getting feedback from teachers and their pairs.

*Fiinal recommendation:*

All performance indicators was fulfilled, with exception of the A.3.1.4. which is partially fulfilled and for which recommendations were made.

September 22, 2021.

## **VII. Annexes**

Annex 1 - The detailed schedule of the evaluation visit.