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**R EPUBLIC OF ALBANIA  
SPORT UNIVERSITY OF TIRANA**

# **STRATEGY OF INTERNATIONALIZATION**

## **2024-2028**

## INTRODUCTION

The SPORTS UNIVERSITY OF TIRANA is the only higher education institution of its kind in the Republic of Albania. The University realizes the full scientific qualification of specialists in physical education and sports, recreation and rehabilitation up to the level of “Master of Sciences” and “Doctor of Science”.

The genesis of the Sports University of Tirana began with the establishment of the Technical School of Physical Education in 1948, as the first high school to prepare future physical education teachers. After 10 years, in 1958 the Higher Education Institute of Physical Education was established.

From 2010, this institution has the University status with three faculties and one research institute.

The four Units of SUT are:

- I. Faculty of Movement Sciences;
- II. Faculty of Physical Activity and Recreation;
- III. Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences;
- IV. Sports Research Institute.

The current study programs that take place at the university are:

- 3 (three) bachelor programs;
- 3 (three) scientific master programs
- 4 (four) professional master programs;
- 2 (two) doctoral programs;
- 1 (one) short cycle program.

SUT is particularly interested in the internationalization of its study programs and thus it seeks to build successful partnership with other institutions in the region and in Europe.

In line with the teaching, research is equal important for the mission that the university has. SUT has a pool of highly qualified experts, researchers, lecturers and project managers and it works closely with a well-established network of higher education institutions, businesses, research institutes and other stakeholders.

Sports University of Tirana is involved in different European Projects in Higher Education and Sports in order to improve the learning and teaching process and also conducting scientific research.

Sports University of Tirana is the highest-ranked university, according to the accreditation agency of higher education in Albania (SUT is accreted from an international board with the max of years, 6 years).

Internationalization is one of the primary objectives of the Sports University of Tirana (SUT) and occupies an important and integral part of the development strategy of the institution, which has set clear short-term, medium-term and long-term objectives regarding the further internationalization of the university. We consider the internationalization of the university as an instrument for achieving the ambition to become a point of reference for the Balkan region in the field of sports sciences.

In fulfilling its mission, SUT emphasizes supporting international exchanges in teaching and research by fostering collaboration with universities and other partners around the world.

The university's international approach encompasses and harmonizes various aspects of university life: teaching, research and administration. In this context, SUT is committed to giving an international dimension to university research, publications produced by the university academic staff at home and abroad through prestigious international. Recognized papers, and exchanges of students, academic and administrative staff with new and old partner universities, as well as establishing and strengthening international cooperation.

In 2024, SUT counts more than 30 cooperation agreements with partner universities in the world, which involve collaboration in the field of research, teaching, joint publications, as well as staff and student exchanges. 10 members of the academic staff are internationally recognized professors in their fields. Also, the university has concluded 7 inter- institutional agreements through the Erasmus+ program for staff and student exchanges. All of these are proof of the will to make internationalization a tangible reality at the university.

## **I GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

SUT as the only public university in the field of sports sciences, has as its main goal to be an important actor in social, economic, sports and health development, not only within the country but also in the region and beyond, providing students with academic knowledge of high quality in accordance with international standards of higher education.

SUT aims to become: one of the most internationally recognized Albanian universities in the field of sports sciences by strengthening international orientation and cooperation. The main objective is to create a profile of credibility and professionalism in relation to teaching, research and international cooperation: within the framework of research, development or cooperation projects to increase human capacity mutually.

At the same time, SUT aims to become a meeting point of cultural and sports values, by strengthening not only international cooperation, but also becoming a promoter of tolerance, respect and acceptance of different cultures.

To meet the general objectives, SUT has set a number of long-term objectives, which focus

on the following strategic aspects:

- i. institutional partnership;*
- ii. international experience for students, arid academic and administrative staff;*
- iii. internationalization of programs and-curricula;*
- iv. international cooperation in research, development and transfer of knowledge and technologies.*

## II STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The strategic objectives aim to involve the university in new activities and enterprises to achieve internationalization as follows:

- 1. Promoting the mobility of students, and academic and administrative staff*
- 2. Promoting and supporting international cooperation in the field of research development and transfer of knowledge and technologies;*
- 3. Strengthening ties with the Albanian scientific diaspora;*
- 4. Increasing the international visibility of the university not only in the region but even beyond;*
- 5. Strengthening the administrative support structures for the development -of projects and foreign relations;*
- 6. Internationalization of programs and curricula;*
- 7. Awareness on the intercultural component in relations with international partners.*

### A- ACHIEVEMENT OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Strategic Objectives	Goal	How will it be achieved
<p><b>1) Promoting student and academic and administrative staff mobility</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increasing mobility opportunities for UST students and staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Through current agreements that UST has with other universities;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Through the inter-institutional agreements that SUT has currently signed under the components of the Erasmus + program and other programs;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>By encouraging staff to apply to secure other inter-institutional arrangements for exchanges through European Union programs, etc.;</i></li> <li>➤ <i>By increasing the number of SUT teaching staff in foreign universities and vice versa.</i></li> </ul>

<p><b>2) Promoting and supporting international cooperation in the field of research, development and transfer of knowledge and technologies.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Promotion and international recognition of research work and conducted by SUT staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>By promoting SUT human capacity in research, development, technology to promote their work.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Through increasing the quality and authenticity of research, development, technology work at SUT.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Through the presentation of research, development, technology work at SUT in international activities.</i></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Determining the international dimension of research, development and transfer of knowledge and techniques and technologies used by SUT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Through involvement in international research and development activities and projects.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>By increasing the reliability of UST human capacity in research, development, technology to international partners.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Through the realization of joint publications.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>3) Strengthening ties with the Albanian scientific diaspora</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Deepening international cooperation through ties with the Albanian diaspora.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Through the identification of the Albanian scientific diaspora</i></li> <li>➤ <i>By encouraging staff to deepen collaborations with their colleagues in international universities.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Through the organization of international scientific and publishing activities.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>4) Increasing the international visibility of the university not only in the region, but also more widely.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Greater presence in activities and projects of scientific, research and development character</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>By increasing the number of applications in international projects as a leader or as a partner.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>By encouraging staff to deepen collaborations with their colleagues in international universities.</i></li> <li>➤ <i>Through the organization of international scientific and publishing activities.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>5) Reinforcing administrative support services for project</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Efficient structuring of administrative support services for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Training administrative staff to support academic staff in writing project proposals.</i></li> </ul>

<b>implementation and external relations</b>	project implementation and external relations	➤ <i>Recruitment of qualified staff in international relations and writing project proposals.</i>
6) Internationalization of programmes and curricula	○ Improvement of programs in response to the international experience	➤ <i>Programs that support student and staff mobility.</i> ➤ <i>Programs that foster teaching and learning in contemporary disciplines and support the enhancement of human resources in research and development.</i> ➤ <i>Increasing the number of study programs in English.</i> ➤ <i>Increasing the number of joint degrees.</i> ➤ <i>Increasing the number of international students.</i>
7) Awareness of the intercultural component in relation to international partners	○ Increasing the intercultural awareness of the administrative staff.	➤ <i>Increasing the administrative staff's awareness of the cultural diversity of international students and staff.</i> ➤ <i>Providing more opportunities for administrative staff mobility for the recognition and appreciation of international experience and culture.</i> ➤ <i>Training of administrative staff at international universities.</i>

## **B- MEASURES OF ACHIEVEMENT**

The achievement of these objectives will be measured through the following instruments:

- ❖ Statistical data about the number of international students and staff at SUT projects obtained by SUT, project applications by SUT, partnerships with other universities.
- ❖ Studies and surveys with international students.
- ❖ Studies and surveys with international staff.
- ❖ Research data.
- ❖ Number of obtained mobilities.