

The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education



External Evaluation Report (REE) for the procedure for obtaining a maintaining accreditation (MAC) of Doctoral Study Domain

Higher Education Institution/Education Provider Organisation:	Universitatea Ștefan cel Mare din Suceava/Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava
Doctoral School:	Școala Doctorală de Științe Socio-Umane/ Doctoral School of Social and Human Sciences
Doctoral Domain:	Economie/Economics
The objective of the external evaluation:	Maintaining accreditation (MAC)



Members of the ARACIS Evaluation Panel

No.	Last Name and First Name	Team role	Signature
1.	POPA Ion	Expert evaluator	
2.	HĂMURARU Maria	International Expert	
3.	IONAȘCU Alina	PhD Student Evaluator	

I. Introduction

- The context in which the external evaluation report was drafted (the type of evaluation, the period covered by the evaluation, membership of the external quality experts' panel, etc.);

The external evaluation report was prepared by the ARACIS Commission of experts in external quality assessment during the visit held from 22.06.2026 to 23.06.2026, for the periodic evaluation of the Economic doctoral study domain at USV, Faculty of Economics, Administration and Business.

- Description of the higher education institution;

The “**Ștefan cel Mare**” University of Suceava (USV) has its origins in 1963, with the establishment of the 3-year Pedagogical Institute, intended for the training of teachers for pre-university education. The evolution of the institution has gone through several organisational stages, and since 1990 it has been operating as a public university within the national higher education system. Currently, USV is a modern university, with 11 faculties and study programmes in various fields, such as exact sciences, engineering, social sciences, humanities, arts and sports. Its main mission is to create and disseminate knowledge through education, research, innovation and continuous training, contributing to regional, national and European development.

The university promotes values such as academic excellence, creativity, critical thinking and internationalisation, being affiliated with prestigious academic organisations and a member of the European Alliance NEOLAiA. Its activity is coordinated through a democratic management structures, in which both teaching staff and students are represented.

USV attaches great importance to quality management, continuous evaluation of study programmes and compliance with the principles of academic integrity. All university programmes are subject to periodic evaluations, and the institution has consistently obtained the "High Confidence Rating" granted by ARACIS, confirming the high standards of the educational and research process.

Through its teaching, scientific and administrative activity, USV distinguishes itself as an important academic center of the Bukovina region and a relevant actor in the European higher education space.

- General description of the doctoral study domain (why it was established - in the case of a provisional authorisation to operate; evolution and/or changes since the last external quality evaluation procedure - in the case of procedures intended for accreditation or maintaining accreditation, as applicable).

The **Doctoral School of Socio-Human Sciences (ȘDSSU)** within IOSUD –USV has the mission to support high-quality scientific research, the training of researchers and the development of the academic competences of doctoral students. Established in 2012, the doctoral school organizes doctoral studies in the fields of Business Administration, Accounting, Economics, Philology, Philosophy and History, benefiting from the expertise of over 40 doctoral supervisors and a significant number of doctoral students. Its activity is oriented towards academic excellence, internationalisation and compliance with European ethical and scientific standards.

The **doctoral field of Economics** has been operating since 2009, and the first admission to the PhD took place in 2010. It is based on a solid academic tradition, supported by accredited bachelor's and master's programmes and the "High degree of trust" qualification consistently awarded by ARACIS. The field has an academic body formed by doctoral supervisors with experience and international visibility, who coordinate research in current and relevant economic fields. Both the bachelor's degree program (General Economics and Economic Communication) and the master's degree program in the field of Economics (Globalization

and Economic Diplomacy and Economics and International Affairs) have been authorized and accredited under the law under the aegis of ARACIS. Benefiting from the "High degree of trust" qualification consistently reconfirmed by ARACIS, this field is distinguished by high scientific rigor and agile adaptation to current trends. To date, 31 doctoral theses have been defended in this field, 21 doctoral theses in the period 2020-2025, of which 2 theses in English. The number of doctoral students and doctoral supervisors in recent years has been on an upward trajectory. The most relevant aspects of the field are:

- Highly qualified human resources: The guidance activity is ensured by a stable core of 5 full-time doctoral supervisors of USV, and 1 associate doctoral supervisor from the Romanian Academy, the National Institute of Economic Research (INCE) Costin C. Kirițescu, CE-MONT Vatra Dornei, all of whom fully meet the minimum CNATDCU standards and are active in the international scientific community through editorial positions and participation in prestigious professional associations.
- Superior performance standards: The program imposes publication criteria above the national minimums, requiring doctoral students to produce at least 5 scientific papers, of which at least 3 in prestigious databases (ISI/Clarivate or Scopus) to validate the international quality of the research.
- Curriculum aligned with EQF level 8: The curriculum is structured on transferable credits (30 ECTS in the advanced training program) and aims to develop advanced synthesis competences. The disciplines place a strong emphasis on research ethics, academic writing and advanced methodologies.
- Active internationalisation: USV is a member of the NEOLAiA Alliance, facilitating European mobilities and transnational collaborations.

The Economics field has ongoing international collaboration agreements in the field of PhD Economics (e.g. with the University of Pescara. University of Cusano Italy).

- Modern infrastructure and digitalisation: Research is also supported by the Center for European Studies - ENACTED and by free access to the ANELIS Plus platform (Elsevier, Scopus, Web of Science). Administrative processes are completely digitalised, and academic integrity is guaranteed by the Turnitin system, equipped with Artificial Intelligence content detection technology.
- Support and Wellbeing Ecosystem: Through the USV COACH project, doctoral students benefit from integrated legal, psychological and IT counseling services.

II. Methods used

During the external quality evaluation of the Economics doctoral program the Internal Evaluation Report (IER) and its annexes were analyzed.

During the on-site visit, the commission requested and additionally examined documents demonstrating the professional and personal development of the academic and administrative staff involved.

Meetings were held with the university leadership at the Economics doctoral school, the team that prepared the internal evaluation report, 5 doctoral supervisors, 10 graduates of the Economics Phd Program, employers of doctoral program graduates representing 7 companies/organisations/institutions, 8 doctoral students, representatives of research centers/laboratories, members of the University Ethics Committee, and representatives of organisational structures responsible for quality assurance and quality evaluation commissions at USV and at the SȘDSU and Doctoral schools of Economics.

On-site visit (general list of visited locations and categories of persons with whom debates have been organised);

During the visit, the following spaces and facilities were inspected: the acting rector office prof. univ. dr. Gabriela Prelipcean, the USV doctoral school director's office prof. dr. Laura Bouriaud, and ȘD-SSU doctoral office prof. univ. dr. Bogdan Popoveniuc, the Economics doctoral school director's office prof. dr. Carmen Nastase, lecture halls (E101, E005), seminar rooms/laboratories, library, loan room, reading rooms Building H: H001, Library, H 106, Building A: A036, A033, A013 Data Science and Business

Digitalisation Laboratory, Building E: E118 BRD HUB, E119, E126 Informatics Laboratory as well as the USV canteen, Book Caffee.

III. Judgement on the extent to which the standards and performance indicators are fulfilled

DOMAIN A. Institutional capacity

Criterion A.1. Managerial and administrative structures and processes involving students and other stakeholders

Standard S.A.1.1. Organisational components and institutional processes

The HEI has organisational components in its structure, which function based on adequate competences, responsibilities, processes, and implementation procedures, and ensure an effective management system.

Indicator I.P.A.1.1.1	For delivering the study programme/domain, the HEI has adequate organisational components and an adequate management system, which operate based on methodologies, regulations and procedures that are periodically reviewed as required by law.
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- ✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**
USV has a clear and sustainable institutional structure, with an efficient governance system, adequate material, financial and human resources, and transparent management mechanisms, including for student representation. The main structures (University Senate, Board of Administration, faculty councils, CSUD, department and doctoral school councils) operate according to the Charter and internal regulations. USV is the Institution Organising Doctoral University Studies (IOSUD), organized into two doctoral Schools: the Doctoral School of Applied Sciences and Engineering (ŞD-SAI) and the Doctoral School of Socio-Human Sciences (ŞD-SSU). IOSUD is managed by the Council for University Doctoral Studies (CSUD). CSUD ensures the management, organisation and development of university doctoral study programmes at USV. Academic and doctoral research activity is carried out within 13 fields of doctoral studies. USV is accredited as IOSUD by the Decision of the ARACIS Council dated 25.11.2021.
- ✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**
The organisational structure of ŞD-SSU ensures efficient coordination of academic and administrative activities, with well-defined responsibilities. The complex but well-defined procedural framework contributes to the coherent, transparent and compliant conduct of managerial and academic processes.
- ✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**
USV has a management structure based on clear organisational charts (academic, management, administrative) and specific regulations (such as R40, R11, PO-01), which are reviewed annually to comply with the legislative framework.
- ✓ **Recommendations**
Maintaining compliance with the USV Charter, the Organisation and Operation Regulations and other applicable regulations, in order to consolidate efficient and sustainable management of the doctoral program.
The indicator is: fulfilled

Standard S.A.1.2. Stakeholder engagement

The HEI proves that it engages the relevant stakeholders in developing methodologies and regulations, as well as implementation procedures.

Indicator I.P.A.1.2.1	The opinions of the faculty and department members, of the subsidiary or extension* and of other stakeholders are considered in the process of adopting and revising methodologies, regulations and implementation procedures.
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✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**

At USV, the development, updating and revision of methodologies, regulations and procedures related to doctoral studies are carried out by involving the management structures and advisory bodies with specific responsibilities at the institutional level and IOSUD-USV. The specialized committees of the University Senate analyze and approve the normative documents in their fields of competence, and the decisions adopted are published on the university website, under conditions of institutional transparency.

Amendments to documents of a strategic and normative nature are subject to consultation with the academic community before their approval by the University Senate, in accordance with national legislation and the internal regulations of USV. Representatives of teaching staff, students and other categories of beneficiaries of the educational act are involved in this process, contributing to the consolidation of a participatory and transparent decision-making framework.

Within the Doctoral School of Socio-Human Sciences (ŞD-SSU), the adoption and revision of methodologies, regulations and procedures are carried out by consulting the CSUD, the Doctoral School Council, doctoral supervisors, doctoral students and other relevant stakeholders. The Doctoral School Council has an essential role in analyzing proposals for amending documents specific to doctoral programmes and in formulating the necessary recommendations for the continuous improvement of academic and research activity.

The consultation process is carried out through periodic meetings, working meetings and mechanisms for collecting feedback from doctoral students and graduates. The opinions expressed are analyzed and integrated into the final form of the documents, contributing to the permanent adaptation of the regulatory framework to the requirements of the academic and socio-economic environment. At the same time, collaboration with educational institutions, cultural organisations, public institutions and partners from the socio-economic environment facilitates the correlation of the objectives of doctoral training with the needs of society and the labour market, in accordance with the ARACIS quality standards applicable to doctoral studies.

✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**

Active participation of stakeholders contributes to the development and implementation of policies and procedures adapted to the needs of the academic community and the socio-economic environment. PhD students are involved in the decision-making process, PhD supervisors are constantly consulted, and feedback from students and graduates is utilised to continuously improve study programmes and institutional regulations. At the same time, collaboration with the economic environment facilitates the integration of employers' requirements and expectations into the professional training process of PhD students.

✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

A participatory governance model is applied in which students have a share of at least 25% in decision-making forums (Senate, faculty councils), and employers are consulted periodically through various means to update the curriculum.

* The faculty, department, subsidiary, extension - hereinafter "organisational components"

- ✓ Recommendations
The indicator is: fulfilled

Criterion A.2. The material resources and optimisation of the use of the material resources

Standard S.A.2.1. Material resources

The HEI owns adequate movable and immovable assets to enable it to carry out the study programme/domain.

Indicator I.P.A.2.1.1	The HEI legally owns venues for the related education, research and administrative processes, as well as for services for students, doctoral students and trainees, thus providing an enabling environment for living and studying, including for disabled persons. Optimal venues are also provided for activities of the staff. Such venues are adequately equipped.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)
USV has a modern educational, research and social infrastructure, which contributes to the achievement of the institutional mission and objectives. Within the Doctoral School of Social and Human Sciences, doctoral students benefit from adequate spaces for teaching and research activities, specialized laboratories and research centers, as well as updated equipment and software programmes, in line with the current requirements of academic training and research. The study and research process is supported by the USV Library, which provides access to a diversified documentary fund and to important international databases and electronic resources. USV also ensures access to modern IT infrastructure and high-speed internet in all educational and accommodation spaces. Doctoral students benefit from very good living and personal development conditions through access to modern student dormitories, dining facilities in the university restaurant, and a complex sports facility, which includes a gym, swimming pool, fitness room, weight room, and sports fields.
- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled
USV has a complex material heritage, which effectively supports the achievement of the mission and academic objectives, including those related to doctoral studies. For the doctoral domain of Economics, ȘD-SSU uses the university's research infrastructure, including the ENACTED European Studies Center and specialized laboratories, permanently modernized through institutional investments and research projects, the Climate Innovation Laboratory - ILCA, the Data Science and Business Digitalisation Laboratory, the Business Incubation Laboratory (INCUBAF).
- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
For the domain of Economics, the Doctoral School of Social Sciences and Humanities (ȘDȘSU) also has an ENACTED European Studies Center as well as research laboratories with high-performance equipment. Through the major investments made in recent years in the equipment of the laboratories within the university, both from European and national projects won through competition, and from the university's own revenues, the equipment of these laboratories is constantly modernized, creating the conditions for the optimal conduct of doctoral research. Infrastructure accessible to people with disabilities (ramps, elevator, adapted bathrooms, special parking spaces).
- ✓ Recommendations
Future directions of action aim at the development of Campus 2, which will also include a new restaurant, investments in research infrastructure, and the continuation of digital transformation.
The indicator is: fulfilled

Standard S.A.2.2. Management of material resources

The organisational components manage the movable and immovable assets used for the evaluated study programme/domain in an optimal, sustainable manner.

Indicator I.P.A.2.2.1	The movable and immovable assets are properly maintained to ensure optimal conditions for studying, living and research, as well as for work.
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- ✓ [Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data \(documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER\)](#)
USV pays special attention to the sustainable development and management of the material base and infrastructure necessary for the implementation of a high-quality educational and research process. SD-SSU efficiently uses the spaces and resources made available by the university for teaching, research and administrative activities.
Classrooms, seminar rooms and laboratories are equipped with modern teaching and communication equipment, including computers, video projectors, multimedia systems and videoconferencing equipment. USV provides access to high-speed internet, both through the campus wireless network and through its own IT infrastructure, as well as access to educational platforms and specialized software necessary for teaching and research activities.
The USV library provides access to a relevant documentary fund and numerous international scientific databases, supporting the research activity of doctoral students and teaching staff. At the same time, USV constantly invests in the modernization of educational, research and accommodation spaces, as well as in the development of social and sports infrastructure, in order to ensure optimal conditions for study, research and personal development.
- ✓ [Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled](#)
The technical equipment and ICT infrastructure of USV efficiently support teaching, learning and research, with rooms equipped with video projectors, videoconferencing, workstations, furniture and air conditioning. Wireless networks and licensed software (basic, specialized and application) ensure a quality academic environment, and the library offers access to national and international databases for doctoral research. Movable and immovable assets are checked periodically, and malfunctions are promptly remedied by the technical-administrative structures.
- ✓ [Aspects that constitute best practice examples](#)
Modern equipment of all classrooms and laboratories, in accordance with curricular requirements. In order to ensure the sustainability and continuous development of the infrastructure for doctoral studies, USV and ȘD-SSU constantly carry out maintenance, modernization and optimization activities of the material base.
- ✓ [Recommendations](#)
Measures are being promoted to increase energy efficiency, develop spaces for interdisciplinary collaboration, and strengthen technical and administrative support, in order to ensure a modern, high-performance academic and research environment adapted to the needs of doctoral students.
The indicator is: fulfilled

Criterion A.3. Adequate human resources and transparent staff recruiting procedures developed according to the law

Standard S.A.3.1. Human resources

The HEI has the required human resources to organise and deliver the evaluated study programme/domain.

Indicator I.P.A.3.1.1	The human resources of the organisational component are suitable to perform the activities pertaining to the evaluated study programme/domain. The teaching staff
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	has the required qualifications and professional competences to teach the subject matters assigned to them in the job list.
✓	Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER) USV has qualified human resources for the organisation and implementation of the doctoral program in Economics. The recruitment of teaching staff and doctoral supervisors is carried out according to national and internal methodologies, and teaching and research activities are ensured by competent personnel during the years of doctoral studies.
✓	Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled In the doctoral domain of Economics, there are 5 full-time doctoral supervisors of USV and 1 associate doctoral supervisor, 3 of whom are habilitated. All doctoral supervisors meet the CNATDCU criteria in force and have a maximum of 8 doctoral students in coordination. The disciplines in the curriculum are taught by professors with relevant experience, demonstrated through studies, seniority and scientific publications, the recognition of their competence also resulting from student evaluations.
✓	Aspects that constitute best practice examples The human resources supporting the field of doctoral studies in Economics, IOSUD-USV are involved in international cooperation projects, are open to supporting integration into academic research networks (e.g. European School of Sustainability Science and Research), joint projects and exchanges of experience aimed at increasing the visibility and competitiveness of the field (NEOLAiA Project, Climate Engine, Innovation Laboratory for Climate Action), The Economics Field supports the increase in the degree of specialization of teaching activities for doctoral students, by diversifying the offers of optional courses and advanced workshops, the permanent integration of research results in doctoral training activities, by stimulating the participation of teaching staff in national and international competitive grants, with a direct effect on training opportunities for doctoral students.
✓	Recommendations Encourage teaching staff to obtain their habilitation in the field of Economics and to join the doctoral school of Economics. Continue the involvement of academic personalities from abroad with relevance for research in the doctoral field of Economics, including in the supervision and public defence of doctoral theses. The indicator is: fulfilled

Indicator I.P.A.3.1.2	The HEI ensures professional and personal development for its staff.
✓	Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER) USV promotes the continuous professional development of academic staff by implementing institutional projects dedicated to training and development, supporting the acquisition of the habilitation certificate and the development of digital competences, including those associated with the use of technologies based on artificial intelligence. Within the doctoral domain of Economics, these steps reflect the institutional commitment to increasing the quality of teaching and research, adapting to technological developments and supporting progress in the academic career. The professional development of academic staff is achieved through an integrated approach, which combines excellence in research and scientific activity with the acquisition of digital and transversal competences. Thus, the capacity of the teaching staff to respond to current challenges in education and research and to train specialists capable of adapting to the requirements of a society and economy in constant change is strengthened.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

Within the ȘD-SSU, Economics field, the participation of teaching staff and doctoral supervisors in national and international academic and research networks is encouraged, including through the European Alliance NEOLAiA. Professional development and the exchange of good practices are supported by participation in academic mobility and training programmes, such as Erasmus+ and CEEPUS, as well as by involvement in institutional projects dedicated to continuous improvement, such as the COACH USV project.

The doctoral supervisors in the Economics field constantly participate in international scientific conferences, are members of prestigious professional and scientific associations in the country and abroad and contribute to the editorial activity of specialized academic journals. They are also involved in international teaching, research and professional training mobilities, thus strengthening the international visibility of the doctoral school and its integration into the European and international academic community.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

The participation of teaching staff and doctoral supervisors in international conferences, publication in indexed journals and involvement in editorial teams facilitates the dissemination of research results, academic collaboration and the strengthening of the reputation of the Doctoral School of Economics at national and international levels.

Staff involvement in international professional development projects and programmes.

- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled

Standard S.A.3.2. Recruitment procedures

Teaching staff recruitment procedures compliant with the provisions of the law.

Indicator I.P.A.3.2.1	Recruitment procedures comply with the provisions of the law, and are established and carried out transparently.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The teaching staff of Doctoral University Studies Field Economics complies with the legal requirements for filling positions, according to the national and internal methodologies of the USV (Competitions for hiring teaching staff). The positions are public, and the selection procedures are transparent and non-discriminatory. The management staff (rector, vice-rectors, dean, department directors, CSUD director, ȘD director) are tenured, elected or appointed according to the legal framework. Doctoral supervisors are affiliated with ȘD based on a rigorous analysis of the fulfillment of the conditions of habilitation and affiliation to the doctoral school, followed by the endorsement of the Doctoral School and approval in the Doctoral School Council, Council for Doctoral University Studies, the Board of Administration and the Senate.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

USV and ȘD Economics fully comply with national and internal regulations regarding teaching and management staff, with transparent procedures for filling positions. Transparency is ensured by posting competitions and sending candidates' files for consultation to ȘD members. The election of the ȘD director, ȘD Council members and CSUD members is carried out according to internal procedures.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

The procedures for filling positions and affiliating doctoral supervisors comply with the legislation in force, ensuring fairness and non-discrimination.

The affiliation of doctoral supervisors is carried out through transparent procedures, involving multiple successive approvals, at levels of competence (ŞD Council, CSUD, Board of Administration, Senate), which confers legitimacy to decisions and strengthens academic governance.

✓ **Recommendations**

Continuing the periodic update of the methodology for filling teaching positions and the criteria for affiliation to the ŞD for doctoral supervisors in correlation with the applicable regulations.

The indicator is: fulfilled

Criterion A.4. Digitalisation of institutional processes

Standard S.A.4.1. Digital transformation

The digital transformation process in the organisational component seeks to achieve administrative simplification and improve the quality of the services provided to the members of its own community, as well as to third parties.

Indicator I.P.A.4.1.1	The organisational component uses IT tools in its own procedures, to improve access and provide good quality services for the members of its own community and the indirect beneficiaries of education.
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✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**

USV has a modern IT infrastructure that supports the digitalisation of educational and administrative processes. Admission and student records management are managed through dedicated online platforms (SmartUMS and SmartPortal), which facilitate students' and teachers' access to academic and administrative information. Teaching and research activities are supported by the use of the collaborative platforms Microsoft 365 and Google Workspace, the TURNITIN system for verifying the originality of works and access to international scientific databases through the ANELIS Plus program. Communication and transparency are ensured through institutional websites and electronic information services, within the continuous process of digital transformation supported by the USV DIGITAL project.

✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**

USV promotes a continuous process of digital transformation through the use of educational and collaborative platforms, the digitalisation of the admission process and the implementation of modern systems for verifying the originality of academic works. These tools facilitate permanent access to educational and administrative resources, contributing to increasing the efficiency of university processes and consolidating an institutional culture based on transparency, accountability and academic integrity.

✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

Fully digitalised admission: The application process is carried out through an online platform that allows for document upload, eligibility verification and electronic communication at all stages

Student records management: A new online platform is being implemented and tested (through the USV DIGITAL project) for the efficient collection and organisation of student activity, grade recording and management of school and PED (Pedagogy – Education – Digitalisation) documents.

Implementation of a new SmartUMS program <https://smartums.usv.ro/>

Dedicated website: IOSUD-USV and ŞD-SSU maintain constantly updated websites with information of public interest, regulations and announcements for candidates and doctoral students

<https://usv.ro/academic/csud/doctorat-2/>

✓ **Recommendations**



The digitalisation strategy of IOSUD-USV provides for the continued expansion of the IT infrastructure, the integration of new digital technologies into educational processes, and the provision of IT services adapted to European standards regarding the quality of doctoral education.

The indicator is: fulfilled

DOMAIN B. Educational efficacy

Criterion B.1. Content and relevance of study programmes

Standard S.B.1.1. Content of study programme/s*

The study programme is based on a curriculum designed so that students can acquire the expected learning outcomes.

Indicator I.P.B.1.1.1	The study programme is developed and structured according to the expected learning outcomes, and organised based on transferable study credits. It includes all learning, teaching, practical training, research and evaluation experiences, which, together, lead to a higher education qualification.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The curriculum for each doctoral university study program is in accordance with the regulations in force, complies with the normative requirements and the criteria, standards and performance indicators developed by ARACIS.

The curriculum is developed based on transferable study credits (ECTS), ensuring compatibility with the European Higher Education Area.

The advanced training plan focuses on the methodological and ethical foundation of research, including: common courses, courses specific to the field of Economics, optional courses.

The plan contributes to the formation of advanced competences based on: knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy, continuous assessment.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The curriculum for the doctoral domain of Economics within IOSUD-USV has a modern, rigorous curricular structure and is in line with both the national ARACIS standards and the European requirements for qualification level 8 (EQF 8). The curriculum is based on transferable credits (30 ECTS/semester) and focuses on research ethics and advanced methodologies. The course syllabi are posted on the Doctoral School's website. The curriculum will continue to be periodically revised in order to integrate emerging trends in the economic field, in line with ARACIS standards and international trends.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

Verification of learning outcomes is achieved through exams, monitoring of research progress, annual progress reports, and, finally, through the public defence of the thesis.

- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.2. Alignment of the curriculum with the qualification

Standard S.B.2.1. Alignment with the qualification level and the intended competences

* The term "programmes" concerns the external quality evaluation for the study programmes contained in a master/doctoral domain. The term "programme" shall be used hereinafter.

In the curriculum design and development process, the organisational component seeks to ensure the qualification level, as well as correlation with the envisaged occupations.

Indicator
I.P.B.2.1.2

The expected learning outcomes are correlated with the competences required by those occupations, according to the occupational standards and/or the European Skills, Competences and Occupations (ESCO).

- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The expected learning outcomes of the doctoral program are directly correlated with the objectives of advanced training and the National Qualifications Framework (EQF level 8). Successful completion of the academic course is confirmed by the award of the PhD degree in Economics, certifying the graduate's ability to conduct high-level scientific research.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The evaluation of the expected learning outcomes related to the doctoral domain of Economics at USV highlights a complex structure, linked to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF Level 8) and to the ESCO occupational standards. Reflected in the course syllabi through clear and measurable indicators, these competencies are systematically monitored by the Doctoral School Council in order to correlate with the labour market.

To maintain this standard, the Doctoral School strategy aims to periodically update the curricular offer and research lines in relation to contemporary scientific developments. In parallel, the emphasis will be on stimulating the participation of doctoral students in transnational research grants, mobilities and interdisciplinary networks, thus strengthening EQF level 8 training focused on excellence and innovation.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

International openness and interdisciplinary character are ensured through university partnerships, co-tutelle arrangements and the digitalisation of training and assessment processes. This approach guarantees the relevance of graduates' competences in relation to the dynamics of the labour market and emerging directions in scientific research.

- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.3. Student-centred learning, teaching and evaluation

Standard S.B.3.1 Principles

The organisational component implements the principles of student-centred learning.

Indicator
I.P.B.3.1.1

The organisational component ensures implementation of the student-centred learning in the curriculum and through the teaching strategies used in the learning and teaching activities and experiences.

- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The organisational component of the doctoral studies field in Economics within IOSUD-USV guarantees the operationalization of the student-centered learning paradigm. This objective is achieved through a dynamic governance structure, rigorous monitoring processes and an academic support environment adapted to contemporary demands.

The fundamental processes that define the functioning of this component are:

- Decision-making responsibility and strategic monitoring,
- Curricular flexibility and individualized trajectories,
- Support and wellbeing ecosystem,
- Digitalisation as a tool for autonomy,

- Feedback and quality culture through periodic evaluations of teaching staff by students, as well as evaluations of the training program itself,
 - Orientation towards competences and impact.
- ✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**
- The analysis of the factual situation demonstrates that the implementation of the principle of student-centered learning is achieved through the diversification of optional subjects, personalized mentoring, continuous formative assessment and the integration of digital platforms, thus facilitating the autonomy and flexibility of the doctoral student's research trajectory.
- IOSUD-USV assumes the maintenance of this strategic orientation by systematically reviewing the curricula, ensuring their alignment with global scientific and methodological advances.
- ✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**
- Design and implementation of advanced strategies to operationalize the principles of student-centered learning. This approach prioritizes stimulating interactivity, ensuring predictability, and cultivating originality and creativity.
- ✓ **Recommendations**
- The indicator is: fulfilled.**

Indicator I.P. B.3.1.2	The organisational component ensures opportunities for students to participate in academic mobility programmes organised in person and/or virtually.
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- ✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**
- The organisational component facilitates mobilities through the following mechanisms:
- Integration into strategic alliances and networks: USV is a member of the NEOLAiA Alliance (European academic network) and an ERASMUS+ partner, ȘDSSU (Doctoral School of Social and Human Sciences) and FEAA (Faculty of Economics, Administration and Business) actively collaborating with various European universities.
- Flexibility in the selection of mobilities allows doctoral students to directly correlate them with the objectives of their own research projects, maximizing the impact on their professional training. This mechanism contributes to raising the quality standards of research, to the international dissemination of results and to connecting the institution to the global scientific community.
- Transparency and security of the academic path during mobilities are ensured by the organisational component through specific procedures for the selection, organisation and recognition of credits.
- ✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**
- The organisational component of the Economics field facilitates academic mobility opportunities through a strategic framework that brings together prestigious international partnerships, rigorous operational procedures and integrated support services. This institutional approach transforms mobility into a fundamental pillar of EQF level 8 training. It provides the essential logistical and academic premises for the metamorphosis of doctoral students into agile, competitive researchers in a globalized professional environment.
- ✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**
- There are numerous opportunities to participate in international mobilities for doctoral students of the two doctoral schools, based on Erasmus agreements and existing bilateral partnerships (NEOLAiA, Climate Engine, M100 Academy).
- ✓ **Recommendations**
- Strengthen the visibility of opportunities by periodically sending concise calls for applications to all doctoral students.
- The indicator is: fulfilled.**

Standard S.B.3.2. Fairness

The organisational component provides fair opportunities for students.

Indicator I.P.B.3.2.1	The organisational component provides fair opportunities for students, in line with their potential and aspirations, taking into account the diversity of learning styles and abilities
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

USV promotes academic and social equity through four strategic directions:

- Personalized support: Adapting the teaching process to each student's style through diverse methods and integrated counseling.
- Inclusion and financial aid: Scholarships, direct support measures and adaptation of spaces for full physical accessibility.
- COACH USV Project: Major investments in human and financial resources dedicated to special counseling, international integration and continuous development.
- Digital equity: Facilitating equal access to modern technology and information resources.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the factual situation regarding ensuring fair opportunities for PhD students in the field of Economics reveals an integrated approach, which combines the institutional support of USV with the adaptation to the new requirements of inclusion and digital equity. USV guarantees equal opportunities by allocating places dedicated to vulnerable groups, ensuring an adapted infrastructure and offering psychological and IT counseling services through the COACH project.

The ŞD aims to implement a plan dedicated to diversity and inclusion, oriented towards the development of individual potential. It also aims to maintain an open and transparent dialogue with PhD students in order to identify and prevent problems related to access to resources, the risk of student dropout or difficulties in completing the study program early on. Last but not least, the institution will continue to actively promote the principles of equal opportunities, inclusion and non-discrimination in all its actions.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

Adapting to the new requirements of inclusion and digital equity; training and counseling services through the COACH USV project.

- ✓ Recommendations

Maintain and develop equity mechanisms by strengthening collaboration between responsible institutional structures, permanent monitoring of equal access to resources, continuous adaptation of support services to the needs of doctoral students.

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.4. Accessibility and efficiency of the resources and support services, adequate for learning

Standard S.B.4.1. Access to resources and services

The organisational component provides access to adequate resources and support services, according to the needs of the students.

Indicator I.P.B.4.1.1	The organisational component provides students, including those with special educational needs/disabilities, with access to resources and services designed to support the learning process, adequate for the individual learning needs, the study domain, the study cycle, and the form of organisation of the study programme.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

Within USV, ensuring students' access to resources and support services is based on a modern infrastructure, adapted to individual needs, and on a complex assistance ecosystem, structured on the following pillars:

- Physical accessibility and social inclusion: Adapting building infrastructure, implementing fair admission measures and providing material support.
- Learning resources and research infrastructure: Access to a modern library, extensive documentary resources and global databases, essential for EQF level 8 studies (doctorate), alongside specialized research centers.
- Integrated support services through the COACH USV project and continuous optimization of university spaces by installing ramps and elevators to guarantee easy access for people with physical disabilities.
- Digitalisation and IT tools: Developing a high-performance IT infrastructure, using advanced educational platforms and digitizing administrative processes.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

IOSUD-USV offers a supportive and high-performance learning environment, in which the adapted physical infrastructure is complemented by digital services and human support (counselling and wellbeing), aiming to maximize the potential of each doctoral student. They benefit from access to vast bibliographic resources, international databases and integrated counseling services, adapted to individual needs.

In addition to continuously monitoring the accessibility of support services, ȘD Economics aims to strengthen the training of doctoral students in the efficient use of electronic resources and digital research platforms. It will also continue to ensure optimal access of doctoral students and doctoral supervisors to personalized resources and services.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

Access to global databases,
Integrated support services through COACH USV.

- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.5. Learning outcomes

Standard S.B.5.1. Definition and evaluation

Learning outcomes are adequately defined and evaluated.

Indicator I.P.B.5.1.1	Learning outcomes are adequately described, and they support understanding of the students' and teachers' expectations regarding the content of the subject matters in the curriculum.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

Clear and measurable definition of outcomes: Learning outcomes are directly integrated into course syllabi, being closely correlated with specific objectives and assessment criteria.

Structuring on competence pillars: The description of learning outcomes is configured to meet the requirements of EQF level 8 (doctorate), being divided into three fundamental categories that clarify academic expectations: knowledge, skills, and responsibility and autonomy.

Communication and alignment of expectations: To ensure full transparency, learning outcomes are communicated to doctoral students from the beginning of the semester, giving them a clear picture of the assessment criteria and modalities.

Monitoring and verification of achievement of outcomes: The degree of understanding and assimilation of academic expectations is continuously strengthened and assessed through periodic verification mechanisms.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the factual situation highlights a rigorous system of design and transmission of information, designed to guarantee total transparency between students and teaching staff. Educational objectives are clearly and quantifiably integrated into the subject sheets, being presented to doctoral students from the beginning of the activity for an optimal correlation of the academic path. In addition to the constant monitoring of the link between the acquired competences and the dynamics of the labour market, ȘD Economics aims to facilitate the transition of master's graduates to advanced research. In this regard, the continuous adaptation of learning outcomes to developments in the economic environment will be ensured, through the periodic revision of curricula and subject sheets.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

Transparent communication to doctoral students at the beginning of each year and clear definition of the targeted objectives.

Annual review of learning outcomes based on feedback and field dynamics.

Integration of scientific performance (publications, mobilities, conferences) into the assessment of doctoral progress.

- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Indicator I.P.B.5.1.2	Achievement of the learning outcomes is checked in ongoing examinations and study completion exams.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

Verification of the achievement of learning outcomes is based on a suite of mechanisms and tools structured on three main levels:

- Continuous and on-going evaluation: Constant monitoring of the doctoral student's progress is essential and is achieved through the advanced training program, scientific and progress reports, as well as by monitoring research and publication activity.
- Final exams: The completion of the doctoral course represents the superior certification of the acquired competences, materialized through the evaluation and public defence of the doctoral thesis and through the official validation of the results.
- Evaluation tools and methodologies: In order to guarantee the quality and transparency of the process, modern solutions are used, focused on the digitalisation of evaluation procedures and on the rigorous observance of academic integrity.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The assessment and certification of specific EQF level 8 competencies — focused on niche knowledge, synthesis capacity and independence in research — follows a rigorous and multidimensional path. This system harmoniously combines classical academic verifications with constant monitoring of scientific activity. The performance of doctoral students is validated through specialized exams, annual progress reports and a mandatory condition: the publication of at least two scientific articles in ISI or Scopus indexed journals prior to the public defence of the thesis.

For the future, the management of doctoral schools aims to systematically analyze the results of these assessments, thus facilitating the transfer of good practices and identifying areas that require optimization. At the same time, special emphasis will be placed on the permanent modernization

and updating of the digital infrastructure (dedicated platforms and anti-plagiarism IT solutions), indispensable tools for maintaining high standards of transparency, ethics and procedural efficiency.

✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

Rigorous establishment of the stages of the doctoral journey and careful monitoring of how they are carried out.

Continuous and rigorous process, structured to validate EQF level 8 learning outcomes (advanced knowledge, synthesis competences and autonomy). This combines traditional examination methods with monitoring of research progress and publication standards. The process includes examinations, annual progress reports and the mandatory requirement to publish at least 2 ISI/Scopus papers before the thesis defence

✓ **Recommendations**

To update and expand digital tools for assessing and detecting plagiarism, including training modules on the ethical use of artificial intelligence in thesis writing.

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.7. Procedures and practices regarding the admission competition, the journey, recognition and equivalence of studies, and result certification

Standard S.B.7.1. Admission	
The admission procedures and principles ensure access to higher education.	
Indicator I.P.B.7.1.1	The organisational component applies the admission procedures.

✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**

Synthesizing the ways in which these procedures are put into practice highlights the structural pillars of the process:

- Normative basis and governance: The admission competition is regulated by its own institutional regulations, subject to annual review to permanently guarantee correlation with national legislation and labour market dynamics. Distinct from the doctoral course, postdoctoral programmes benefit from a specific selection methodology.
- Digital transformation: Application management is integrated into an IT ecosystem, taking place exclusively through a specialized online platform.
- Rigor of selection and evaluation: The evaluation of candidates is based on strict indicators of academic excellence. In this sense, the interview constitutes a mandatory eliminatory test, with the role of measuring the candidate's motivation and research skills.
- Guarantee of inclusion and equity: The organisational framework incorporates dedicated policies and concrete measures designed to ensure equal opportunities for access to doctoral studies for all categories of candidates.
- Institutional transparency: The promotion of the educational offer and the dissemination of technical details of admission are carried out publicly, through the web portals of IOSUD and the Doctoral School, as well as through local media channels.

✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**

The organisational component within IOSUD-USV manages the admission process through a standardized and fair system, permanently adapted to global trends in academic recruitment. The selection is characterized by total transparency, based on rigorous performance indicators and a mandatory interview. In conclusion, the admission mechanisms applied in the doctoral domain of Economics combine scientific rigor with technological flexibility, guaranteeing the recruitment of candidates capable of meeting the high publication standards required.

In the long term, the aim is to maintain strict compliance with the institutional requirements specific to enrollment in doctoral university studies. In this regard, a priority objective remains the systematic review of the admission methodology, in order to ensure permanent alignment with legislative changes at the national level.

✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

Annual publication of the research topics, number of places and the admission schedule.

Clear and rigorous selection method.

✓ **Recommendations**

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Indicator I.P.B.7.1.2	Admission in higher education study programmes complies with the principles of fairness and equal opportunities, and with the establishing of support measures to ensure access of vulnerable groups at social and educational risk, including candidates with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
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✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**

The admission process to university programmes, especially at the doctoral level, is guided by a multidimensional strategy that combines scientific rigor with clear inclusion policies, aiming to eliminate socio-economic barriers and guarantee equitable access. This approach is based on four fundamental pillars:

- Regulatory framework and allocation of special places: The process is governed by strict internal regulations within IOSUD-USV, which integrate explicit measures for respecting equal opportunities and social equity.
- Diversification of selection and orientation methods: To prevent the exclusion of candidates with atypical professional backgrounds or different learning styles, the assessment has a holistic character and is attentive to individual needs, recognizing a broad spectrum of skills.
- Support ecosystem: Integration of logistical and orientation services provided through the institutional COACH USV program.
- Financial and material support measures: Implementation of direct assistance mechanisms designed to facilitate the inclusion of all eligible candidates.

✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**

The analysis of the factual situation highlights a multidimensional strategy that correlates scientific rigor with clear inclusion policies, designed to diminish socio-economic barriers and guarantee fair access to all candidates.

Equal opportunities are actively ensured by allocating places dedicated to disadvantaged categories, as well as by offering personalized support to international PhD students.

Consistent application of the principles of equal access in the admission process is sought, through uniform compliance with institutional and national regulations.

✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

Protection of vulnerable groups: The institution reserves specific places for candidates from backgrounds at social and educational risk.

Ensuring accessibility: Active measures are implemented to support candidates with special educational needs or disabilities, guaranteeing both participation in the admissions competition and the adaptation of physical infrastructure (ramps, elevators) for the entire academic journey.

Financial sustainability: Inclusion is supported by dedicated financial policies, aimed at mitigating economic disadvantages and eliminating cost barriers.

✓ **Recommendations**

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Standard S.B.7.2. Academic journey of students

The organisational component carries out actions supporting the students' academic journey.

Indicator I.P.B.7.2.1	The organisational component applies the regulations concerning the students' professional activity.
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- ✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**
The regulation and streamlining of students' professional careers are ensured through an integrated methodological framework, composed of specific procedures and regulations.
In this regard, the evaluation of the performance and academic involvement of doctoral students is complemented by the Academic Performance Self-Assessment Form, a tool designed to stimulate critical reflection and a culture of professional responsibility. Also, the completion of doctoral studies is governed by a dedicated institutional procedure, which guarantees compliance with quality standards. The evolution of young researchers is systematically monitored through semesterly analyses of academic progression, allowing the early application of remedial measures aimed at preventing academic dropout.
- ✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**
The Doctoral School (ŞD) management ensures the implementation of the regulations regarding the professional activity of students through a well-defined system, characterized by procedural rigor and specialized administrative support. This coherent and transparent framework guarantees that the progress of young researchers is evaluated and stimulated through clear structures, oriented towards obtaining concrete results.
USV and ŞD Economics aim to maintain the efficient application of the norms specific to the professional career of doctoral students. A priority objective will be the continuous strengthening of the mechanisms of periodic evaluation and academic support, thus providing an environment conducive to excellence in research.
- ✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**
The existence of clear regulations regarding the activity of doctoral students, their periodic evaluation, as well as remedial measures.
- ✓ **Recommendations**
The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.8. Internationalisation process

Standard S.B.8.1. Internationalisation

Improving the quality of education and research through internationalisation actions.

Indicator I.P.B.8.1.1	The organisational component carries out international cooperation actions supporting mobility of the members of its own community and collaboration in academic and research activities.
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- ✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**
The evaluation of international cooperation actions highlights a coherent internationalisation strategy, which associates large-scale institutional consortia (such as the NEOLAiA Alliance) with specific collaborative research projects, adapted to a dynamic global context. This strategic path develops along three priority directions:
Strategic partnerships and academic networks: USV strengthens its European dimension by affiliating to prestigious university consortia. This openness offers doctoral students and teaching staff access to an expanded research space, facilitated by the opportunities within the NEOLAiA Alliance, ERASMUS+ mobility agreements and other relevant international affiliations.

Scientific coordination and cross-border expertise: The international dimension is directly integrated into the process of doctoral research supervision. This is materialized by including foreign specialists in the supervision committees and by recognizing the visibility of USV teaching staff in the global scientific community.

Recruitment and mobility of young researchers: The dynamism of the doctoral school is supported by active strategies to attract foreign students and by ensuring solid financial support for mobilities. This pillar is implemented through ERASMUS+ contracts, related funding programmes and mechanisms dedicated to the full integration of foreign researchers into the local university ecosystem.

- ✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**

The international dimension of the Economics Doctoral School is supported by a series of complementary initiatives, aimed at both early-stage researchers and the teaching staff. On the one hand, internationalisation at the level of doctoral students is stimulated by facilitating Erasmus+ internships, participation in Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs) and financing their presence at conferences abroad. On the other hand, doctoral supervisors consolidate this global openness by inviting foreign specialists, participating in international mobilities and congresses, moderating scientific sections within events organized in partnership and actively affiliating with international academic boards.

For the next period, the main objective is to multiply and diversify these cooperation channels, thus ensuring a superior international exposure and a closer connection of the entire academic community in the doctoral domain of Economics to global research networks.

- ✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

The international dimension of research is enhanced by USV's status as a member of the NEOLAiA Alliance, a powerful European academic network funded by the ERASMUS+ program, which boosts transnational cooperation in education and research. This affiliation is complemented by an extensive network of Erasmus institutional agreements dedicated to doctoral mobility, instruments that facilitate the exchange of best practices and access to modern study methodologies.

In addition, foreign specialists are systematically co-opted into the guidance committees, and some of the theses are written entirely in English to maximize the international visibility of the results.

Also, doctoral supervisors work as members of professional associations, scientific committees and specialized editorial boards, being periodically invited to thesis evaluation and public defence committees within prestigious European universities.

- ✓ **Recommendations**

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.9. Scientific research results

Standard S.B.9.1 Scientific research in the education process

Scientific research activities support students in achieving the learning outcomes.

Indicator I.P.B.9.1.1	Learning based on scientific investigation and research results support and are capitalised upon in achieving the learning outcomes envisaged through the study programme.
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- ✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**

The doctoral training process in the field of Economics is based on the paradigm of research-based learning, the results of scientific activity being directly translated into the acquisition of the competencies assumed at the program level. This educational approach focuses on advanced research, the purpose of which lies in the development of theses focused on current topics, of high sectoral relevance. The organic correlation between scientific investigation and the didactic path is

rigorously governed by specific internal regulations and subject to systematic monitoring throughout the duration of the studies, thus guaranteeing the achievement of the expected academic standards.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

Scientific investigation in the field of Economics represents the central pillar of higher-level academic training, going through a stage of structural redefinition under the impetus of new technologies and the imperative of societal impact. This doctoral training model organically integrates research topics into the advanced studies curriculum, rapidly evolving towards a hybrid and collaborative approach, in which traditional academic requirements are enhanced by state-of-the-art digital tools.

For the next period, special emphasis will be placed on intensifying the dissemination of scientific results. This objective will be supported by facilitating the participation of doctoral students in international reference conferences and by stimulating publication activity in globally recognized academic journals, indexed in the Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus databases.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

At the level of the doctoral school of Economics, a research project is being carried out: CulTech - Center of Digital Excellence for Cultural Heritage: Innovation in Digitization and Digital Exploitation through Cutting-edge Technologies, PN-IV-P6-6.1-CoEx 2024-0206 (2025-2030), project director USV, prof. dr. Gabriela Prelipcean, which will actively involve doctoral students.

- ✓ Recommendations

To permanently integrate research results into teaching activity;

To continue stimulating publication in internationally indexed journals and capitalizing on research results through publication in highly relevant journals.

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Standard S.B.9.2. Scientific research pertaining to the objectives of the study programme

The organisational component carries out scientific research activities aligned with the objectives of the evaluated study programme.

Indicator I.P.B.9.2.1	The results of scientific research are visible at national and international level in that scientific domain, and capitalised upon in an adequate manner.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The main directions of scientific research, both fundamental and applied, carried out within the Doctoral School of Social Sciences and Humanities (SDSSU), are organically integrated into the strategic plans of IOSUD and the University. In this context, the performance and results of research activity in the field of Economics are structured on two essential coordinates:

- Normative excellence and compliance with CNATDCU standards: The scientific activity of the six doctoral supervisors highlights full compliance with national requirements. All members of the teaching staff fully meet and even exceed the minimum standards established by the Commission for "Economic Sciences and Business Administration" for obtaining the habilitation certificate.
- Visibility and impact in the global scientific community: The validation of research results is achieved through their active integration into the international value stream. The doctoral supervisors have published articles in top journals indexed by the Web of Science (Clarivate), their impact being confirmed by a significant volume of citations in journals positioned in the upper quartiles (Q1 and Q2), with scores that clearly exceed the reference thresholds. The professors also exercise editorial functions, act as scientific referees (reviewers) for international publications and are part of the scientific committees of

prestigious conferences. This visibility also extends to doctoral students, through their involvement in research projects obtained by members of the doctoral school, as well as through active participation in conferences, symposia, summer schools and academic mobilities.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The dissemination of scientific research results is achieved through presentations at international scientific events and by publishing them in indexed volumes or in prestigious academic journals reflected in recognized international databases (IDBs), such as Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). This performance translates into increased visibility in top journals and impact scores that constantly exceed national minimum standards. The stability of human resources, correlated with the imposition of publication criteria for doctoral students superior to those established at national level, guarantees an upward evolution of scientific quality and impact in the field of Economics at USV.

For the next period, the aim is to intensify efforts to promote research results domestically and internationally. A priority objective is to optimize the valorization of scientific activity by directing publications to elite academic journals in the country and abroad. It is also aimed to expand and strengthen collaborative relationships with professional networks and professional associations of national and global scope.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

Currently, at the FEAA/USV level there is a specialized platform where research results are uploaded for each doctoral student/doctoral supervisor and thus the national/international visibility of these results can be very easily managed and highlighted.

- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

DOMAIN C. Quality management

Criterion C.1. Quality assurance strategies and procedures, including in the field of academic ethics and conduct, which involve students, employers and other stakeholders and are applied in a consistent, transparent manner

Standard S.C.1.1. Application

Adequately implemented strategic directions, actions, and procedures

Indicator I.P.C.1.1.1	The organisational component consistently carries out actions and applies procedures, proving their impact on improving the quality of education at the level of the study programme
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The institutional structure dedicated to quality management is configured in full accordance with the legal provisions in force and carries out its activity on a permanent basis, respecting the established internal rules. In this regard, CSUD annually prepares a self-evaluation report, a fundamental document for the adoption of strategic and operational decisions. Also, ȘD benefits from its own policy in this field, organically correlated with the strategic and operational plans and enhanced by the set of measures applied at the IOSUD level.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The consistency of the implemented measures is guaranteed by the organic interdependence between procedural rigor and monitoring based on empirical indicators. This synergy transforms the regulations from a simple formal framework into a dynamic tool for continuous optimization of

academic performance. For the next period, the Doctoral School of Economics aims to strengthen internal cooperation mechanisms and to achieve an improved operationalization of evaluation procedures, thus ensuring objective, systematic and predictable feedback on the quality of doctoral programmes.

✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

The quality management system is ensured through the CEAC and CSUD structures, annual internal audits and reports that substantiate strategic decisions.

✓ **Recommendations**

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Standard S.C.1.2. Stakeholder engagement

The HEI proves that it engages the stakeholders who have relevant activity in applying the procedures.

Indicator I.P.C.1.2.1	The opinions of the members of its own community and of other stakeholders are taken into account in the procedure implementation process.
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✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**

The transmission of information regarding the implementation of procedures to members of the academic community and stakeholders is carried out systematically via email or through the publication of online announcements. This mechanism also targets the dissemination of publicly relevant documents under consultation, providing the opportunity to submit proposals for their amendment or updating, with all information being fully accessible to the public. The operationalization of this open process is based on the following strategic pillars: equitable representation in decision-making bodies, active consultation with the socio-economic environment and employers, the implementation of rigorous feedback and continuous evaluation mechanisms, the promotion of public debate, and the assurance of full digital transparency.

✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**

The analysis of the factual situation reveals a participatory and transparent governance system, grounded in direct representation, systematic consultations, and digital tools for collecting feedback. The perspectives of the academic community and partners from the socio-economic environment are periodically assessed and incorporated into the process of revising internal procedures. Thus, stakeholders' opinions go beyond the stage of mere formal consultation, becoming a structural element in the regulatory workflow; they are validated through deliberative voting mechanisms, centralized through quality audits, and digitally processed to support continuous institutional development.

In the medium term, the aim is to optimize the use of digital ecosystems—such as mailing lists, forums, and collaborative platforms—in order to maintain a real-time communication flow and remove bureaucratic barriers from interaction with users.

✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

Active partnerships (e.g. CulTech, NEOLAIa, Climate Engine) with impact on research themes.

Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion C.2. Functionality of education quality assurance structures, including in the field of academic ethics and conduct, according to the law

Standard S.C.2.2. Operation

Quality assurance and academic ethics and conduct organisational structures adequately perform their specific role and functions.

Indicator I.P.C.2.2.2.	The academic ethics commission operates based on the regulation approved by the University Senate, and performs actions that are compliant with the law, independently from any other structure or person in the higher education institution.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)
The University Ethics Committee carries out its activity based on the regulations approved by the University Senate, benefiting from full operational independence from any other structure or person within USV, in strict accordance with the legislation in force. For the efficient management of the profile issues, a subcommittee dedicated to research ethics operates within its structure, responsible for analyzing and resolving specific aspects of scientific activities. The central role of the committee consists in protecting the academic integrity and deontological values of the community, demonstrating an active adaptation to new technological challenges. In this regard, the institution uses proactive mechanisms to prevent fraud and plagiarism, integrating advanced tools for detecting content generated by artificial intelligence within the Turnitin system; thus, all doctoral theses and scientific papers are rigorously verified to establish the similarity coefficient and originality of the contributions.
- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled
The USV Ethics Committee acts as a multidimensional filter of integrity, correlating rigorous administrative procedures with state-of-the-art technologies to guarantee that doctoral research is anchored in scientific truth and originality. In the medium and long term, the strategic directions of action aim at a paradigm shift, focused mainly on the ethical management of artificial intelligence and the consolidation of a deep culture of academic honesty. A priority objective in this regard is the development of an internal regulatory framework that governs the responsible and transparent use of AI tools in research activity.
- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
Annual publication of reports and decisions.
Mandatory anti-plagiarism check for all academic papers.
- ✓ Recommendations
The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion C.3. Procedures for the initiation, monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes and domains and of the performed activities, involving students, employers and other stakeholders

Standard S.C.3.1. Procedures and implementation of procedures The HEI has procedures for initiating, monitoring, and periodically reviewing the study programmes and domains and the performed activities, and applies them systematically.	
Indicator I.P.C.3.1.1	The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.

- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)
The process of initiation, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and fields of study is strictly governed by the *Procedure for the development, review and approval of curricula*, as well as by the *Framework Regulation on the initiation, approval, monitoring and periodic evaluation of study programmes*. The provisions of these internal rules are rigorously and consistently applied at all key stages: from the launch of a new study programme, to the specific procedures for provisional authorization and periodic evaluation.
- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the factual situation highlights an integrated management system, which correlates normative rigor, empirically based monitoring and adaptive leadership to guarantee a consistent and transparent execution of all academic activities. Through digital standardization and multi-level evaluation, the organisational component translates formal regulations into daily administrative practices, ensuring the management of each doctoral student's academic path in a spirit of equity, procedural excellence and orientation towards societal impact.

For the next period, the aim is to optimize the data collection and analysis process through the USV DIGITAL ecosystem. The implementation of new IT platforms will allow the automation of internal audit flows, as well as the real-time monitoring of the academic career and scientific results obtained by doctoral students.

✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

The application of the procedures is structured on a series of fundamental coordinates, defined by the stability of the regulatory framework, its periodic review and the implementation of functional quality management mechanisms. Through rigorous evaluations, study programmes are subject to systematic monitoring, demonstrating a real and quantifiable impact in maintaining and constantly improving academic standards.

✓ **Recommendations**

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Indicator I.P.C.3.1.2	Members of its own community and other stakeholders are involved in the procedure implementation process.
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✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**

USV and CSUD guarantee a participatory and transparent process in the implementation of quality management procedures, through the active involvement of doctoral students, teaching staff, administrative staff, as well as employers or other relevant actors from the external environment. In this ecosystem, doctoral students represent an essential pillar of the decision-making process and educational optimization. Their role is manifested both through direct representation in university management structures—such as the Senate, the Board of Administration, CSUD and the Doctoral School Council (CŞD)—and through participation in the periodic evaluation of the teaching staff and the disciplines studied. They also actively contribute to the revision of study programmes, providing valuable recommendations for aligning curricula with labour market dynamics, an objective complementarily supported by CSUD by maintaining close collaborative relationships with employers and professional organisations.

✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**

Students and employers actively participate in curriculum review and periodic evaluation of study programmes. This approach allows stakeholders to transition from mere beneficiaries of procedures into active decision-making partners, thus guaranteeing the sustainability and social relevance of doctoral fields in the context of a volatile global environment.

✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

Members of the academic community are not mere beneficiaries of institutional procedures, but active partners in their design and execution, thus guaranteeing an optimal balance between scientific rigor and the agility required by contemporary digital and economic transformations.

The application of these mechanisms and the co-optation of stakeholders are based on an advanced model of participatory governance, digital transparency and co-creation. This integrated approach facilitates a close alignment between the standards of academic excellence and the dynamic realities of the labour market.

✓ **Recommendations**

Systematic collection and analysis of feedback, integration of proposals into the review process of IOSUD-USV procedures.

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion C.4. Procedures for the periodic evaluation of the quality of the activities of teaching staff, auxiliary teaching staff, and administrative staff

Standard S.C.4.1. Procedures

Applying the methodologies and procedures contributes to improving the quality of the staff's activities.

Indicator I.P.C.4.1.1	The organisational component analyses the results of the students' biannual evaluation of teachers.
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✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The CSUD members coordinate the process of evaluating teaching staff by doctoral students, in accordance with the provisions of the *Regulation on the evaluation of teaching staff performance* and the *Procedure on the evaluation of teaching staff by students*. The results of this monitoring are published transparently on the university website and are officially communicated to doctoral supervisors during the semester meetings. In addition, a specific procedure is implemented at the institution level for evaluating the performance of auxiliary teaching and non-teaching teaching staff, the qualifications and results of these processes being also accessible to the public.

✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The results of the anonymous semester assessments, carried out by doctoral students, are analysed at the CSUD level and subsequently communicated to the teaching staff in order to constantly optimize the pedagogical and scientific performance. From an organisational perspective, these assessments go beyond the role of simple indicators of appreciation, being treated as strategic governance tools that allow decisions to be based on concrete data, in order to maintain excellence in a highly competitive university environment.

The transition from simple data collection to the systematic development and implementation of concrete action plans, based on the recorded feedback, is being pursued. Action is also being taken to better operationalize existing procedures, aiming to ensure objective feedback and to extend performance monitoring in doctoral fields, including from the perspective of graduates, for example by introducing graduate surveys.

✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

The analysis of how the organisational component—represented by CSUD and ŞD Economics—manages and evaluates the results of the semester monitoring carried out by students highlights a rigorously structured process. This is strategically designed to ensure both the continuous optimisation of the quality of the teaching act and the dynamic adaptation of the doctoral study program in Economics to the real and research needs of young doctoral students.

✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion C.5. Systematically updated databases on internal quality assurance

Standard S.C.5.1. Databases

The HEI uses databases to support internal quality assurance activities.

Indicator I.P.C.5.1.1	The organisational component systematically collects and analyses data required for the internal quality assurance process.
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✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

USV benefits from an integrated IT system, designed for the periodic collection of essential data necessary for institutional management. These information flows substantiate official reports to the Ministry of Education and allow for the rigorous assessment of the overall evolution of the university, through relevant performance indicators and structured analyses at regular intervals. In addition, through electronic mailing lists, the institution provides a virtual space dedicated to public debates on the academic dimension and quality management. Under the aegis of CSUD, discussion forums and opinion polls are permanently operating focused on the perception of doctoral students and teaching staff on the quality of the educational act, research activity and the student social environment, thus consolidating an organisational culture centered on participatory involvement.

- ✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**

Internal quality management in the doctoral domain of Economics is based on a continuous feedback loop, in which raw data, collected through IT systems and questionnaires, are processed and translated into annual audit reports. This mechanism generates concrete measures to optimize the educational process and research activity. For the future, the completion and full operationalization of large-scale institutional projects, such as USV DIGITAL and associated platforms, will facilitate the automated and structured collection of indicators regarding the doctoral path and performance.

- ✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**

USV uses an integrated IT system for the systematic collection of data related to doctoral activity and quality management. In this regard, the official website of CEAC-USV is constantly updated, constituting an essential resource in monitoring educational and administrative processes. At the level of specialized structures—CEAC-USV, CCOC and the Rectorate—data on the state of institutional quality and the dynamics of student life are constantly collected, processed and analysed, in order to substantiate strategic decisions and optimise campus conditions. Also, both at the faculty level and at the CSUD level, annual quality assessment reports are rigorously prepared and publicly disseminated through official web pages.

- ✓ **Recommendations**

Periodic data collection and analysis according to internal regulations;
Use of indicators to optimise processes within the doctoral school.

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion C.6. Transparency of information of public interest, including those regarding the study programmes and domains offered, and transparency regarding the related certificates, diplomas and qualifications

Standard S.C.6.1. Transparency

The organisational component ensures transparency of information, as required by the law.

Indicator	The organisational component ensures publication and access to information of public interest regarding the evaluated study programme.
I.P.C.6.1.1	

- ✓ **Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)**

Essential information on the doctoral study programmes subject to evaluation—including curricula, subject sheets, competencies associated with the qualification, and teaching schedule—is publicly accessible on the official USV web platform, in the section dedicated to doctoral studies. The organisational component guarantees transparency and free access to data of public interest through an integrated digital ecosystem, systematic annual reporting, and direct communication procedures. A summary of the dissemination and accessibility of these data highlights the following main directions:

1. Digital platforms and online accessibility;
2. Detailed content of published information;

3. Transparency of the graduation process;
 4. Institutional reporting and decision-making management.
- ✓ **Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled**
The organisational component guarantees institutional transparency and unhindered access to information of public interest through an integrated digital ecosystem, the annual reporting system and direct communication procedures.
 - ✓ **Aspects that constitute best practice examples**
Centralized and structured publication of information on dedicated websites
Transparency and free access to data of interest through an integrated digital ecosystem, transparency regarding doctoral supervisors and research areas.
 - ✓ **Recommendations**
The indicator is: fulfilled.

Indicator I.P.C.6.1.2	The organisational component ensures transparent decision-making processes.
✓	Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER) The transparency of decision-making processes is guaranteed through the university's website, where the decisions of the Board of Administration and the resolutions of the USV Senate are fully published. The main mechanisms that ensure this institutional openness include the systematic publication of decision-making acts, the promotion of participatory governance and academic representation, the implementation of public debate processes, as well as the development of efficient communication and monitoring channels.
✓	Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled Decision-making transparency is ensured by publishing all Senate and Board of Administration decisions online. Through this approach, the organisational component transforms the management process from a purely bureaucratic act into an open and participatory endeavor, using digital technology to allow members of the academic community to verify and influence the strategic directions of the university. For the coming period, the aim is to maintain these high standards of transparency through the periodic and systematic dissemination of all relevant institutional information.
✓	Aspects that constitute best practice examples Online publication of all decisions made by the Board of Administration and of the USV Senate.
✓	Recommendations The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion C.8. Participation in external evaluation processes, according to the law

Standard S.C.8.1. Compliance with the external evaluation obligation The HEI undergoes external quality evaluation as required by the law.	
Indicator I.P.C.8.1.1	The organisational component carries out the procedures pertaining to the external quality evaluation process, aiming to organise the evaluated study programme as provided by the law.
✓	Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER) During the most recent periodic evaluation, ŞDSSU successfully maintained its accreditation, a decision officially approved by the ARACIS Council. The organisational component manages the

external quality assessment procedures through a systematic and rigorous approach, based on compliance with national legislation and ARACIS standards, with the strategic objectives of guaranteeing institutional accreditation and increasing academic prestige.

The analysis of the way these procedures are carried out highlights the following essential dimensions:

1. Legal framework and periodicity of the evaluation

- Context of the establishment of the field: The Economics doctoral field was established under the law in 2009, capitalizing on the academic results and expertise previously accumulated within the bachelor's and master's cycles, both accredited by ARACIS.
- Continuity of periodic evaluation: The institution periodically undergoes external audits (such as those in 2008, 2013, 2019 and 2025), consistently obtaining the maximum rating of "High Confidence Rating". The most recent external evaluation visit specific to the Economics field took place in September 2021 (in hybrid format), ending with the proposal to maintain accreditation.
- Institutional validation: The results of the evaluation process were approved by the ARACIS Council in the meeting of 26.11.2020 and definitively validated in December 2021, confirming the full fulfillment of the general and field-specific performance indicators.

2. Procedural stages of the evaluation The conduct of the external evaluation process follows a logical sequence of administrative and academic actions, structured on the following phases:

- Planning and establishment of the official calendar;
- Preparation of the internal self-evaluation report;
- Active involvement of all stakeholders;
- External audit and compliance verification.

3. Management of recommendations (post-evaluation).

- ✓ [Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled](#)

The organisational component approaches external evaluation not only as a legal obligation, but as a strategic tool for self-regulation, leveraging expert feedback to ensure its financial, academic and technological sustainability in a volatile global environment. In this context, the Economics field systematically participates in the periodic evaluations conducted by ARACIS, maintaining its accreditation status with the maximum rating. For the next period, the aim is to integrate digital platforms is aimed at optimizing the collection of data necessary for external evaluation and automating quality reporting flows.

- ✓ [Aspects that constitute best practice examples](#)

Compliance with the legal calendar of external evaluations.

Implementation of ARACIS recommendations.

Continuous monitoring of compliance with accreditation standards.

[Recommendations](#)

Continuing the improvement process based on feedback from ARACIS and other evaluation bodies.

[The indicator is: fulfilled.](#)

IV. SWOT Analysis

Strengths: ✓ The program develops advanced research and critical analysis competencies, requiring doctoral students to publish at least two papers in prestigious international databases (Web of Science / Scopus). ✓ The field benefits from five USV doctoral supervisors, with international scientific experience and visibility, who ensure individualized guidance and careful monitoring of the progress of each doctoral student. ✓ Active internationalisation: The field benefits from USV's integration into strong academic networks, such as the NEOLAI Alliance and the ERASMUS+ program. There are collaboration agreements in the doctoral domain of Economics, and international experts are part of the guidance committees. ✓ 2 theses defended in English, which demonstrates the capacity and internationalisation of doctoral students and also of the teaching staff in the academic guidance and integrity committee ✓ Involvement of doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows in international research projects funded by Horizon, Climate KiC, as well as in national research projects ✓ Access to modern infrastructure and digital resources: Doctoral students have access to a complex material base, which includes specialized research centers (Center for European Studies ENACTED, Innovation Laboratory for Climate Action), libraries equipped with over 2,500 specialized volumes and access to international databases (Elsevier, SpringerLink, Scopus, etc.) through the ANELIS Plus program. ✓ Digitalisation of administrative and educational processes: The admission, schooling monitoring and originality verification processes (through the TURNITIN system) are completely digitalised. Teaching support is offered through collaborative platforms such as Google Classroom. ✓ Extended support services for PhD students: Through projects such as COACH USV, PhD students benefit from integrated counseling services (psychological, legal, IT), career guidance, mentoring and professional development webinars. ✓ The field encourages interdisciplinary collaborations and benefits from a solid institutional culture of quality, confirmed by the ARACIS "High trust rating".	INTERNAL FACTORS	Weaknesses: ✓ Risk of obsolescence of infrastructure and competencies: Although the material base is modern, there is a risk that it will become outdated if investments in complete digitalisation and advanced research equipment are not sustained at a rapid pace. Programmes that do not quickly integrate new technologies (including artificial intelligence in the methodology) risk training graduates with competencies not aligned with international standards. ✓ Risks related to academic integrity: Managing the originality of scientific works is an ongoing challenge. Although the TURNITIN system is used, technological evolution requires rigorous supervision of the research process to prevent academic fraud. ✓ Challenge of mentorship and dropout: Monitoring the academic path is essential to prevent doctoral dropout. The risk lies in the possible inefficiency of semesterly remedial measures in the case of doctoral students who fail to maintain the pace of advanced research.
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SWOT analysis		
Opportunities: ✓ EU funding is substantial and targeted: Horizon Europe and the EU AI streams prioritize ethical AI and industrial digital transformation — suitable for business-oriented research. ✓ Deep tech and AI initiatives create training pipelines: European doctoral programmes and networks require interdisciplinary training and co-supervision, which faculties of economics and business can integrate through AI-related managerial themes. ✓ AI as a strategic partner: AI technology offers the opportunity to move from simple writing assistance to a strategic research partnership. ✓ Strengthening international alliances: USV's integration into strong networks such as the NEOLAiA Alliance and the expansion of ERASMUS+ partnerships provides a solid basis for mobilities and exchanges of good practices. ✓ Co-tutelle arrangements and foreign experts: There is an opportunity to increase the number of jointly coordinated theses (such as the agreement with the University of Beira Interior in Portugal) and to involve more international experts in the supervision committees. ✓ Strategic partnerships: Expanding relationships with the economic sector to correlate thesis topics with real market needs, transforming academic research into a tool for practical innovation. ✓ Demonstrating impact: There is a trend towards "Global Thinking, Lasting Impact", where doctoral schools can demonstrate public value through direct contributions to regional regeneration and social inclusion.	EXTERNAL FACTORS	Threats: ✓ AI and methodological change: The rapid integration of artificial intelligence requires adaptation of research and PhD students' competencies, but also raises challenges regarding academic integrity and the authenticity of scientific results. ✓ Funding volatility: Recent reports show institutions postponing or reducing PhD admissions due to budgetary pressures, leading to fewer funded positions. ✓ The sustained demographic decline and shrinking university-age population are steadily reducing the pool of candidate selection. ✓ Changes in the international pipeline: Declines in student mobility rates and geopolitical tensions are reducing the pool of doctoral candidates and research assistants on which many faculties depend. ✓ Employment prospects: With limited employment in academia and industry, PhD graduates are facing more difficult placements, which increases the need for transferable competencies and non-academic pathways.

V. Extent to which the standards and performance indicators are fulfilled, and recommendations

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
DOMAIN A. Institutional capacity			
1.	I.P.A.1.1.1 For delivering the study programme/domain, the HEI has adequate organisational components and an adequate management system, which operate based on methodologies, regulations and procedures that are periodically reviewed as required by law.	F	Maintaining compliance with the USV Charter, the Organisation and Operation Regulations and other applicable regulations, in order to consolidate efficient and sustainable management of the doctoral program.
2.	I.P.A.1.2.1 The opinions of the faculty and department members, of the subsidiary or extension and of other stakeholders are	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
	considered in the process of adopting and revising methodologies, regulations and implementation procedures.		
3.	I.P.A.2.1.1 The HEI legally owns venues for the related education, research and administrative processes, as well as for services for students, doctoral students and trainees, thus providing an enabling environment for living and studying, including for disabled persons. Optimal venues are also provided for activities of the staff. Such venues are adequately equipped.	F	Future directions of action aim at the development of Campus 2, which will also include a new restaurant, investments in research infrastructure, and the continuation of digital transformation.
4.	I.P.A.2.2.1 The movable and immovable assets are properly maintained to ensure optimal conditions for studying, living and research, as well as for work.	F	Measures are being promoted to increase energy efficiency, develop spaces for interdisciplinary collaboration, and strengthen technical and administrative support, in order to ensure a modern, high-performance academic and research environment adapted to the needs of doctoral students.
5.	I.P.A.3.1.1 The human resources of the organisational component are suitable to perform the activities pertaining to the evaluated study programme/domain. The teaching staff has the required qualifications and professional competences to teach the subject matters assigned to them in the job list.	F	Encourage teaching staff to obtain their habilitation in the field of Economics and to join the doctoral school of Economics. Continue the involvement of academic personalities from abroad with relevance for research in the doctoral field of Economics, including in the supervision and public defence of doctoral theses.
6.	I.P.A.3.1.2 The HEI ensures professional and personal development for its staff.	F	
7.	I.P.A.3.2.1 Recruitment procedures comply with the provisions of the law, and are established and carried out transparently.	F	Continuing the periodic update of the methodology for filling teaching positions and the criteria for affiliation to the \$D for doctoral supervisors in correlation with the applicable regulations.
8.	I.P.A.4.1.1 The organisational component uses IT tools in its own procedures, to improve access and provide good quality services for the members of its own community and the indirect beneficiaries of education.	F	The digitalisation strategy of IOSUD-USV provides for the continued expansion of the IT infrastructure, the integration of new digital technologies into educational processes, and the provision of IT services adapted to European standards regarding the quality of doctoral education.
DOMAIN B. Educational efficacy			
9.	I.P.B.1.1.1 The study programme is developed and structured according to the expected learning outcomes, and organised based on transferable study credits. It includes all learning, teaching, practical training, research	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
	and evaluation experiences, which, together, lead to a higher education qualification.		
10.	I.P.B.2.1.2 The expected learning outcomes are correlated with the competences required by those occupations, according to the occupational standards and/or the European Skills, Competences and Occupations (ESCO).	F	
11.	I.P.B.3.1.1 The organisational component ensures implementation of the student-centred learning in the curriculum and through the teaching strategies used in the learning and teaching activities and experiences.	F	
12.	I.P.B.3.1.2 The organisational component ensures opportunities for students to participate in academic mobility programmes organised in person and/or virtually.	F	Strengthen the visibility of opportunities by periodically sending concise calls for applications to all doctoral students.
13.	I.P.B.3.2.1 The organisational component provides fair opportunities for students, in line with their potential and aspirations, taking into account the diversity of learning styles and abilities.	F	Maintain and develop equity mechanisms by strengthening collaboration between responsible institutional structures, permanent monitoring of equal access to resources, continuous adaptation of support services to the needs of doctoral students.
14.	I.P.B.4.1.1 The organisational component provides students, including those with special educational needs/disabilities, with access to resources and services designed to support the learning process, adequate for the individual learning needs, the study domain, the study cycle, and the form of organisation of the study programme.	F	
15.	I.P.B.5.1.1 Learning outcomes are adequately described, and they support understanding of the students' and teachers' expectations regarding the content of the subject matters in the curriculum.	F	
16.	I.P.B.5.1.2 Achievement of the learning outcomes is checked in ongoing examinations and study completion exams.	F	To update and expand digital tools for assessing and detecting plagiarism, including training modules on the ethical use of artificial intelligence in thesis writing.
17.	I.P.B.7.1.1 The organisational component applies the admission procedures.	F	
18.	I.P.B.7.1.2 Admission in higher education study programmes complies with the principles of fairness and equal opportunities, and with the establishing of support measures to ensure access of vulnerable groups at social and educational risk, including candidates with special educational needs and/or disabilities.	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
19.	I.P.B.7.2.1 The organisational component applies the regulations concerning the students' professional activity.	F	
20.	I.P.B.8.1.1 The organisational component carries out international cooperation actions supporting mobility of the members of its own community and collaboration in academic and research activities.	F	
21.	I.P.B.9.1.1 Learning based on scientific investigation and research results support and are capitalised upon in achieving the learning outcomes envisaged through the study programme.	F	
22.	I.P.B.9.2.1 The results of scientific research are visible at national and international level in that scientific domain, and capitalised upon in an adequate manner.	F	
DOMAIN C. Quality management			
23.	I.P.C.1.1.1 The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.	F	
24.	I.P.C.1.2.1 The opinions of the members of its own community and of other stakeholders are taken into account in the procedure implementation process.	F	
25.	I.P.C.2.2.2. The academic ethics commission operates based on the regulation approved by the University Senate, and performs actions that are compliant with the law, independently from any other structure or person in the higher education institution.	F	
26.	I.P.C.3.1.1 The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.	F	
27.	I.P.C.3.1.2 Members of its own community and other stakeholders are involved in the procedure implementation process.	F	Systematic collection and analysis of feedback, integration of proposals into the review process of IOSUD-USV procedures.
28.	I.P.C.4.1.1 The organisational component analyses the results of the students' biannual evaluation of teachers.	F	
29.	I.P.C.5.1.1 The organisational component systematically collects and analyses data required for the internal quality assurance process.	F	Periodic data collection and analysis according to internal regulations; Use of indicators to optimise processes within the doctoral school.
30.	I.P.C.6.1.1 The organisational component ensures publication and access to information of public interest regarding the evaluated study programme.	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
31.	I.P.C.6.1.2 The organisational component ensures transparent decision-making processes.	F	
32.	I.P.C.8.1.1 The organisational component carries out the procedures pertaining to the external quality evaluation process, aiming to organise the evaluated study programme as provided by the law.	F	Continuing the improvement process based on feedback from ARACIS and other evaluation bodies.

Summary Table of Performance Indicators – Degree of Fulfillment

Evaluation Domain	Number of Performance Indicators		
	Fulfilled	Partially fulfilled	Unfulfilled
Domain A. Institutional capacity	8		
Domain B. Educational efficacy	14		
Domain C. Quality management	10		
Total	32		

VI. Conclusions

The PhD program in Economics, offered by the Faculty of Economics, Administration and Business within ȘD-SSU-USV, is continuously aligned with the evolving global economic and research landscape, as well as with the expectations of employers and international standards of academic excellence. In accordance with the USV Charter and the strategic objectives of the university, the PhD program in Economics emphasizes quality scientific research, publication of results in prestigious international journals, development of advanced analytical and research skills, as well as international collaborations. PhD students benefit from modern research infrastructure, access to international scientific databases, academic and professional support services, as well as opportunities for mobility and cooperation within European university networks. Thus, the doctoral domain of Economics contributes to the training of specialists and researchers capable of responding to contemporary economic challenges.

A key strength of the program lies in the high academic and professional qualifications of its doctoral supervisors. All supervisors meet CNATDCU standards, are actively involved in research and participate in international projects and scientific conferences. Through personalized mentoring, they guide doctoral candidates in conducting high-quality research and support the development of advanced competencies, facilitating their integration into the global academic community.

The program structure is designed to provide a complete and competitive academic experience. It combines advanced courses, rigorous research and dissemination activities, periodic assessments, international mobility opportunities (including Erasmus and other exchange programmes) and active participation in scientific conferences. Doctoral candidates benefit from access to updated digital resources, international research databases and modern teaching and supervision methods, all of which contribute to a high-performance learning environment. Furthermore, USV has digitalised its administrative processes through the USV Digital program.

The Economics doctoral program is distinguished by its national attractiveness as well as its relevance to the socio-economic and cultural environment. Continuous collaboration with public institutions and the business sector through consultations on research topics, joint projects, and the involvement of employers in decision-making ensures the practical relevance of doctoral research and supports the alignment of graduates' competences with labour market requirements.



Continuous investments in digitalisation, internationalisation and strategic partnerships, together with the academic and scientific excellence of its doctoral supervisors, position this program as a highly attractive, competitive and internationally recognized path for developing future leaders and researchers in the doctoral domain of Economics.

Following the visit of the **ARACIS External Committee** for the quality evaluation of the doctoral study domain **Economics** and the completion of the accreditation renewal procedure, it was decided ****maintaining accreditation (MAC)****.

No.	Doctoral Study Programme	Location	Form of education	Number of credits (ECTS)
1	<i>Economics (scientific and professional)</i>	<i>Suceava</i>	<i>Full-time education/Part-time education</i>	<i>240</i>

VII. Annexes

1. The timetable for the evaluation of the external quality evaluation visit for the doctoral university study domain
2. Minutes of the meetings.