



**FACULTY OF LAW
UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA**

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH STRATEGY 2016-2020

(Consolidated version)

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1. Scientific Research at the Faculty

As an independent higher education institution since 1976, the Faculty of Law of the University of Rijeka provides education and engages in scientific research in the field of law. Research at the Faculty is carried out as individual research outside research projects or within research projects, both international and domestic, competitive and/or supported by the University. The research portfolio of mentors and doctoral students of the Doctoral Study Programme, ongoing since 2012, is important in enabling development of young scientists as well as development and growth of mentors' capacities at the Faculty. It is also a fertile ground for networking the mentors' potential in the European Research Area, such as through double mentoring. Research results are disseminated at many international and national scientific conferences organized by the Faculty, Chairs, or members of the academic staff, through formal or informal cooperation with scientific institutions from home and abroad. The Collected Papers of the Faculty of Law of the University of Rijeka, published by the Faculty, are an essential platform for the dissemination of research results. It features scientific papers written by domestic and foreign authors alongside the papers by the Faculty academic staff.

The starting point for the development of this Strategy is the Self-Analysis of the Faculty of Law from 2014, created within the reaccreditation process. In contemplating the ways to enhance the management of research activities, the Faculty has asked the Chairs to draft plans for research and publication with the aim of monitoring the scope and excellence of scientific production. These plans were adopted at the 148th Faculty Council Meeting on 8 December 2015, while at the 159th Faculty Council Meeting on 22 November 2016 they were extended to include the total period of five years, They make an integral part of this Strategy.

Scientific excellence is the guiding principle in the preparation of this Strategy and designing all features of scientific research at the Faculty including scientific research projects involving the Faculty academic staff, scientific conferences and seminars organized by the Faculty or participated by the Faculty academic staff, managing the scientific publications (The Collected Papers of the Faculty of Law of the University of Rijeka) and entire scientific production of the Faculty academic staff. An important prerequisite for achieving excellence in scientific research is the constant efforts aimed at improvement of organizational and institutional support for professional and scientific development of the Faculty academic staff.

2. Projects and Academic Staff Research Portfolio

The Faculty academic staff comprises 19 scientific advisers, 8 senior research associates, and 19 research associates. Since the most recent assessment within the 2014 Self-Analysis, the Faculty research portfolio is continuously being strengthened as a result of a linear increase in academic staff promotions up the scientific titles structure. Especially emphasised is an increase in the number of research associates, which demonstrates that maturing of young scientists contributes to formation of a strong research base of postdoctoral fellows and newly appointed assistant professors. This opens the possibilities of greater inward networking and team work within the Faculty where research topics are closely connected, as well as of outward networking both

with Croatian or foreign scientists from the same discipline and with those in interdisciplinary areas. The result is a permeation of scientific production of authors who explore related topics in order to perfect their skills needed in the course of research, which ultimately leads to a more effective use of the Faculty's scientific potential. On the other hand, research and publication of scientific papers in co-authorship intensify the scientific production of each researcher.

Given the fact that academic staff elected into scientific titles is focused not only on strengthening their own production, but also as mentors on facilitating the creation of new generations of young scientists, it seems essential to prepare potential mentors for their future engagement within the Doctoral Study Programme. In doing so it is necessary to bear in mind that the profile of research scientists nowadays includes development of generic skills and competences in addition to scientific ones. Particularly significant are project management skills and competences considering that a significant part of the scientific production is linked to research projects. It is therefore useful and necessary to assess the development of these competences while passing them onto new generations of doctoral students (through training provided by the University and elsewhere).

Regarding the research projects, in the last tender announced by the then Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (hereinafter: MSES) for project proposals (the call was made in 2007, while the project funding ceased in 2014), the Faculty was granted funding for ten projects grouped within two scientific research programs. A total of 47 members of the Faculty academic staff were involved in these projects, of which 24 scientific novices. This enabled the Faculty to achieve several important goals: In addition to the exceptional increase in the Faculty's scientific research base, which has in the meantime worked their way to associate titles, 17 assistants and research novices earned their doctoral degrees and fulfilled the conditions for further scientific and teaching advancement throughout the duration of these projects.

Three of the ten MSES projects continue to be funded by the University support for scientific research, and a total of 15 members of the Faculty academic staff participate in them. These are: *Consumer protection on the Croatian and European market for financial services* (project leader: Prof. Dr. Edita Čulinović-Herc), *Social Security and Market Competition – European Requirements and Croatian Solutions* (project leader: Prof. Dr. Nada Bodiroga Vukobrat), and *Interdisciplinary Approach to Research on the Status of Persons with Mental Disorders through the Prism of Convention Law* (project leader: Prof. Dr. Velinka Grozdanić). Already during the reaccreditation period, the members of the Faculty academic staff applied for competitive research projects in two tender rounds (IP 2013 and UIP 2014) of the Croatian Science Foundation (hereinafter: CSF). As a result, the Faculty was granted funding for three competitive research projects and one early-career project for young researchers. These are: *Perspectives of Preserving the Welfare State: Transformation of the Social Security System for Individuals in Personalized Medicine* (2014-2018, project leader: Prof. Dr. Nada Bodiroga Vukobrat); *Legal Aspects of Corporate Acquisitions and Knowledge Driven Companies Restructuring* (2015-2019, project leader: Prof. Dr. Edita Čulinović-Herc), *Legal Status and Actual Position of Persons with Mental Disorders – An Interdisciplinary Approach and European Perspectives* (2015-2018, project leader: Prof. Dr. Velinka Grozdanić), and *Flexicurity and New Forms of*

Work – Challenges of Croatian Labour Law Modernization (2015-2018, project leader: Assist. Prof. Dr. Sandra Laleta). A total of 24 members of the Faculty academic staff are involved in these projects, as well as a large number of domestic and foreign researchers from the field of law and beyond.

Because these are competitive scientific research projects providing dedicated funding for research and the CSF invites applications for the employment of new doctoral students who would be included in the one of the approved projects, the Faculty academic staff should make an effort to increase the number of tender applications for research and early-career CSF projects and other competitive projects in the forthcoming years. This would reinforce the research project potential and ensure a greater share of formal research team work in the overall scientific structure. This would also ensure the continuity of funding for scientific research and increase the prospects for the engagement of new full-time doctoral students. Given that the participation in these projects and their management requires a significant allocation of the researchers' work time, the Faculty should proportionately value their work as project leaders and team members. In addition to competitive domestic projects, the faculty's aspiration in the upcoming period should be to actively explore the possibilities of drafting a larger research project and applying for EU funding, preferably together with partner institutions with which it has developed cooperation.

This having been said, the Faculty is a partner institution in a growing number of international projects, which also indicate possible networking directions: European Commission funded project *Business and Human Rights Challenges for Cross-Border Litigation and the European Union - Brussels I* (JUST/2013/JCIV/AG/4661), managed on the behalf of the Faculty by Prof. Dr. Eduard Kunštek and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivana Kunda (2014-2016); European Commission funded project *European Documentation Centre* (EDC), the grantees being the Faculty and the Jean Monnet Inter-University Centre of Excellence, and the managers on behalf of the Faculty Prof. Dr. Eduard Kunštek and Prof. Dr. Nada Bodiřoga-Vukobrat and Dr. Dejana Golenko, Head of the Faculty Library (2015-onwards); European Commission funded project *EU Judiciary Training on Brussels IIA Regulation* (JUST/2014/JTRA/AG/EJTR/6854) managed on behalf of the Faculty by Prof. Dr. Eduard Kunštek and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivana Kunda (2015-2017); European Commission funded project *Remedies against Enforcement of Foreign Titles according to Brussels I Recast*, managed on behalf of the Faculty by Prof. Dr. Eduard Kunštek and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivana Kunda (2016-2018); SEELS Network Database (SEELSNDb), managed on behalf of the Faculty by Prof. Dr. Eduard Kunštek and Dr. Dejana Golenko, Head of the Faculty Library. In addition, there are many other international projects in which the Faculty academic staffs participate individually.

Applying for EU funding dedicated for research projects is certainly in line with the strategic objective of the University of Rijeka, which lays an emphasis on increasing the number of competitive projects, and with the corresponding objective of increasing research funding from EU programs.

3. Doctoral Study Programme

Since its founding, thirteen doctoral dissertations have been defended at the Faculty. Many of these doctoral students have participated in national or international research activities of the Faculty. Since 2012, when the Postgraduate Doctoral Study Programme in the Field of Social Sciences, the Subject of Law was introduced, research by doctoral candidates counts for an important part of scientific research at the Faculty. Members of the Faculty senior academic staff act as mentors or co-mentors, while young researchers at the Faculty have either enrolled in or completed their doctoral studies. With the Doctoral Study Programme, and the earned academic degree of Doctor of Legal Science (PhD), the Faculty ensures continuous renewal of the scientific portfolio owing to the fact that assistants employed by the Faculty and other higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia constitute important part of the enrolled students. The Faculty's strategy is focused on increasing the involvement of as many doctoral students into formal research teams within national and international research projects, whose leaders and members are academic staff and mentors at the Doctoral Study Programme, as well as the informal research teams gathered around researchers affiliated with particular Chairs. Since a new generation of potential mentors has emerged at the Faculty as a result of being elected into higher scientific titles, it is necessary to work on the advancement of the mentor portfolio so as to ensure sustainable development of the Doctoral Study Programme (participation of young mentors in workshops, educating mentors within the institution based on the principle "training the trainers" and the like).

In a view of the fact that in 2013 the Republic of Croatia adopted the Croatian Qualifications Framework Act (*Zakon o Hrvatskome kvalifikacijskom okviru*, HKO) and that the learning outcomes for doctoral education (HKO level 8.2) is described not only in terms of acquiring knowledge, but also a variety of skills (cognitive, psychomotor and social, principles of independence and responsibility), it is important to provide conditions for the development of these competences in doctoral students. As part of the development of generic and transferable skills, the Doctoral Study Programme already envisages that doctoral students have to present the results of their scientific research at international conferences, which corresponds to a specific number of ECTS credits. However, doctoral students are expected to carry out some of these activities extracurricularly, which contributes to the development of their generic and transferable skills. As a form of institutional support, the Faculty organizes conferences for doctoral students and encourages the participation of doctoral students in such conferences both at home and abroad. It makes sure that these conferences include the participation of academics and legal experts from home and abroad. The Faculty also organizes or recommends the participation of doctoral students in professional training that aims at development of generic competences indispensable to every young scientist (workshops on methodological aspects of research; workshops on ethics, academic integrity, and respect for copyright in research; workshops developing innovative approaches to research; workshops on legal writing and expression; workshops that enable networking of doctoral candidates, etc.). In addition, doctoral students are included in formal research teams within research projects, where mentors are leaders or researchers in the project. Thus the doctoral students perform certain research tasks enabling them to master their skills of teamwork and project management.

As part of measures intended for the internationalization and achievement of greater international visibility of the Doctoral Study Programme and other study programmes, the Faculty particularly supports and encourages the final theses and doctoral dissertations in English, French and other foreign languages, looking to attain their greater impact. It also encourages the mentors and members of commissions for evaluation and defence of doctoral dissertation topics from outside the Faculty – a higher education institution from home or abroad. Whenever possible, doctoral students are encouraged to publish their work, either in the proceedings of international conferences, or (foreign) reputable journals relevant to the field of law. The Faculty also encourages enrolled doctoral students to apply for scholarships at home and abroad, including for exchange programs (Erasmus+) in order to increase their mobility, enable them to develop competences in an international environment, and create their own research networks. These are means of institutional support in meeting their study obligation related to a four-month long study period abroad. In addition to the already commenced activities aimed at the internationalization and mobility, in the upcoming period the Faculty will continue its attempts to increase and make available these forms of support, both to doctoral students who are employed and who are not employed by the Faculty.

Given that the Agency for Science and Higher Education has launched the process of reaccreditation of doctoral study programmes, and the Doctoral Study Programme at the Faculty is planned for evaluation in 2017, in the upcoming period the Faculty will work to achieve full compliance with the six mandatory requirements specified by the Agency in its document *Reaccreditation of Postgraduate University Study Programs in the Republic of Croatia: Principles and Criteria*, and all or most of the recommended requirements. The process of reaccreditation comes at a time when a periodic internal evaluation of the studies is to be carried out, while the external evaluation process strongly intensifies the Programme self-evaluation and is additional drive for achieving high quality by all parameters.

Since the inauguration of the Doctoral Study Programme, the strategic orientation of the Faculty has been to avoid initial pre-regulation due to contemporary conceptual changes in doctoral studies. Therefore, a conscious retreat has been made from extensive regulation, resorting at the same time to selective standardization of certain focal issues in implementing the Doctoral Study Programme. It should be noted that the legal security for doctoral students is at satisfactory level, while the practices within the Study Programme are to a significant extent standardized by means of University regulations, along with forms for monitoring the progress of doctoral students that are of great practical value. Starting from the premise that it is necessary to monitor the situation in the Doctoral Study Programme for several generations in order to set a true measure of standardization, and bearing in mind that, according to Salzburg Principles, doctoral studies should last at least three to four years for full-time students (the majority of the students at the doctoral study Faculty are studying part time), the work on the consolidation of the regulatory framework will be done in 2017, because at that point the majority of the students will enter the final phase of their studies. This will be preceded by collecting data based on anonymous questionnaires providing the students the opportunity to express their satisfaction with the Study Programme. This approach

is necessary because the Doctoral Study Programme is not intended for large numbers of students, so the results of the analysis will be statistically relevant only if the pool includes doctoral students at all stages of their studies.

Bearing in mind the Salzburg Recommendation number 6, which states that doctoral programs should develop an “innovative practice” and that “different solutions may be appropriate for different contexts” to achieve a critical mass of students, the Faculty’s is reluctant to standardize all processes and relations at the Doctoral Study Programme through the so called “hard law”. Instead, “soft law” (e.g. guidelines for students and mentors that describe recommended behaviour of both) could be more appropriate. The processes and relations that require stricter rules will be standardized through decisions and/or policies. Achievement of the highest levels of quality and compliance with applicable heteronomous and autonomous sources of law will be taken into account when taking regulatory actions. In this context, a high quality of the Doctoral Study Programme in accordance with European and Croatian parameters should be aspired for, along with introducing the measures facilitating successful and timely completion of the studies.

In order to ensure a high level of completion of the Doctoral Study Programme it is necessary to monitor in detail the scientific production of academic staff and mentors, and especially to monitor and analyse joint scientific production of mentors and doctoral students. Actually, the scientific production at the level of Chairs is monitored through information on the implementation of plans on scientific research and publications that are an integral part of this Strategy. Given the number of doctoral students enrolled, the bodies responsible for the management of the Study Programme can obtain information about the satisfaction with the Programme directly from the students. However, the Faculty is implementing measures in order to enhance the successful completion of the Programme also on the basis of an analysis of the results from the anonymous questionnaire concerning the doctoral students’ satisfaction with the Programme, the difficulties they have faced etc. Seeing this issue as important for the viability of the Programme, the Faculty has already regulated the question of temporary suspension of doctoral obligations by limiting the use of this option to strictly defined situations. This was done with the aim of putting an end to untimely performance of individual obligations by some doctoral students due to their overload in the workplace, which has substantially reduced their available time intended for doctoral studies.

In the near future, the Faculty will devise measures to encourage greater interest of candidates for enrolment into the Doctoral Study Programme. The strategic commitment of the Faculty is to preserve the attribute of a non-massive Programme and to create a critical mass of high-quality and diverse research. A significant interest in the Doctoral Study Programme is shown by the candidates with careers in law and to whom doctoral studies represent an additional career development. Their doctoral education has a positive social impact as it directly affects the quality of performance in their professions, especially due to the fact that topic selected for doctoral research at the enrolment in the Programme results from their rich professional experience. On the other hand, there are doctoral students who are recruited among the best graduate students and to whom the position of an assistant is their first employment. The

relevance of the topic of their doctoral research and its link to the needs of the labour market is matter for assessment of the mentors, who are subject to selection procedure themselves. In addition, mentors actively participate in the research projects, whose financing was approved by the EU, the CSF or the University on the basis of evaluation of the project proposals.

Important characteristics of the Doctoral Study Programme are the enrolment quota and the student selection process. Unlike some other Programmes, prior to enrolling the candidates are required to prepare a personal study plan in agreement with the potential mentor. This enables the implementation of the selection process in a way that high-quality candidates are identified even prior to enrolment as they are asked to demonstrate elements of their ability to perform doctoral research. With the new measures of attracting doctoral students, especially in terms of its transparency, internationalization and promotion, the Faculty will attempt to enlarge the pool of applicants from which doctoral students are admitted to the Programme. Within these measures, the Faculty will also direct future candidates to mentors whose potential has not been sufficiently exploited, and who are leaders or researchers in international or national research projects.

Within the emerged opportunities and in the light of the need for its positioning in the European Research Area, the Faculty has taken steps to establish a joint doctoral study program in cooperation with the Faculty of Law University of Maribor (Slovenia) and the Portucalense Institute for Legal Research of the Universidade Portucalense (Portugal) called *European PhD in European and Comparative Law*. The programme is structured as a three-year program corresponding to 180 ECTS credits. The accreditation of joint doctoral study programme will create conditions for a more intensive international exchange of mentors and doctoral students between partner institutions, research activities gain in dynamic and international visibility, and mentoring and academic staff capacities will be strengthened. This is also in line with the strategic objectives of the University of Rijeka, which aims at integrating the University of Rijeka into the European Research Area.

4. Equipment Used in Scientific Research

With the aim of providing funds and tools necessary for the implementation of scientific research, the Faculty subscribes to pertinent legal and multidisciplinary databases which provide access to full text resources, such as Westlaw, Beck Online, JSTOR, HeinOnline, EBSCO, Web of Science, and the like. The Library of the Faculty of Law in Rijeka qualified for a European Documentation Centre (EDC) in June 2014 and thus we became part of the information network of Europe Direct in EU Member States. Taking part in the EDC network has greatly facilitated the role and tasks which the Faculty of Law University of Rijeka and the Jean Monnet Inter-University Centre of Excellence have regarding the dissemination of research results, achievements and knowledge in the field of European Union law on the Croatian, regional and European level. The importance of availability of scientific, political professional resources within EDC allows for the promotion and development of research, including doctoral study research, in the field of European integrations. It also facilitates the free access of

professionals, academics and public to information and resources about the EU and its policies in the academic and university environment. In the upcoming period, the Faculty should continue maintaining and enlarging the scientific literature in its possession, as well as improving the equipment necessary for scientific research.

5. Dissemination of Research Results

Dissemination of research results is carried out by publishing papers in renowned international and national scientific publications as well as through the Faculty's dynamic conference activity. The Faculty has in the last five years organized and co-organized more than 30 national and international scientific conferences, where the results of scientific research of the Faculty's teachers and associates have been systematically presented, and it has developed recognizable places of dissemination of scientific research results of its teachers.

The biggest factor in the social response is certainly the Faculty's traditional conference *Peter Simonetti (property - obligations - procedure)*, which has been continuously organized for more than 20 years and which, in addition to Faculty teachers, is attended by numerous scientists from home and abroad, prominent judges, ministry officials, regulatory agencies, lawyers, and the like. Although this conference developed out of the tradition of scientific disciplines which are taught within the branches of civil law, which was its founder's field of interest, based on its thematic range it has grown into a place of dissemination of scientific research results and other legal branches in the field of law, such as administrative law and administrative proceedings, commercial law, company law, civil procedure law, financial law, labor law, and so on. The scientific production of the conference is published in a special issue of the Collected Papers of the Faculty of Law of the University of Rijeka, which is classified as a journal with an international peer review (A1). On March 29, 2016, the Faculty received an award from the Foundation Jadranko Crnić, PhD, for a long-term successful organization of this conference "that has been held in Poreč since 2014 with the aim of connecting legal theory and practice, and has an international character."

More than 20 international scientific conferences and three seminars for doctoral students have been organized since the establishment of the Jean Monnet Inter-University Centre of Excellence in Opatija in 2010. This Centre has become an important platform for the organization of international scientific conferences and a large number of interdisciplinary conferences that are essential to the field of law. Faculty scientists regularly participate as presenters at these conferences, and papers presented are published in conference proceedings published by reputable international publishers. In 2009, the international scientific conference entitled *Petar Šarčević Conference* (the last, fourth, took place in 2015) was organized for the first time by the Faculty's Institute of European and Comparative Law in collaboration with renowned Croatian and international research institutions. At these conferences, the results of scientific research were presented from those scientific topics that marked the work of the late Prof. Petar Šarčević, for instance, from private international law, family law, international civil procedure law, but also the theme of maritime law, and competition law observed within the European and international context.

Faculty Institutes also participate in the organization of other international scientific conferences, as well as individual researchers with the support of the Faculty and other external stakeholders. In the upcoming period it is necessary to maintain and develop the existing infrastructure of dissemination and to develop new (physical and virtual) places of dissemination organized by the Faculty so as to include the full scientific potential of the Faculty, which would also include those scientists who do not belong to the field of law (economics, sociology, English studies, etc.). Regarding the dissemination of research results by publishing scientific papers, scientists from the field of law at the Faculty take the relevance and quality of European scientific journals that are published by eminent publishers from appropriate field as the main criterion of choice when choosing a journal. Scientists take into account the relevance of internationally recognized publishers of scientific books, authored and edited books, classified as A, B or C according to the most recent WAAS-SENSE list of book publishers, the relevance of internationally recognized publishers of scientific books (authored and edited), which are grouped in the top 40 Spanish publishers in the most recent list of Scholarly Publication Index, as well as the list of scientific journal excellence, the so called *Exc. Excellence Rate*, which is published by the database Scopus, and it includes a list of the 10% of the most excellent scientific journals in every scientific discipline represented in the database Scopus. However, legal scientists are also guided by the criteria and standards laid down in the Regulations on conditions and procedure for the election to scientific titles, Official Gazette no. 84/05, 100/06, 138/06, 120/07, 71/10, 116/10, and 38/11. Given that the Collected Papers of the Faculty of Law of the University of Rijeka, based on the decision of the then Ministry of Science, Education, and Sports, has been equated with recognized international serial publications and that its visibility, thereby the work of scientists of the Faculty as well, is available in international bibliographic databases, it is a suitable medium for dissemination of scientific research. Scientific papers published in the Collected Papers are indexed in the following databases: Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals (HeinOnline), Sociological Abstracts, Worldwide Political Science Abstracts, Linguistic and Language Behavior Abstracts - CSA (ProQuest), and Political Science Complete (EBSCO), and are published on the Portal of Scientific Journals of the Republic of Croatia (Hrčak). In the next period it will be necessary to work on meeting the conditions for the inclusion of university collections and other relevant databases.

6. Range and Quality of Scientific Production

The scope and quality of scientific production can be traced primarily by examining the database of the Croatian Scientific Bibliography (CROSBI). For its effective monitoring, the University of Rijeka has created the so called teaching portfolio in which each scientist from the University can enter data about his or her own scientific productivity (see website: <https://portal.uniri.hr>). Through the interface, it is easy to keep track of the scope of scientific production and of every researcher has a *Google Scholar* profile. One of the points of reference for monitoring the quality of published work is certainly the citation data for each scientist of the Faculty, which is visible on *Google Scholar*.

At the institutional level, the associates' scope and quality of scientific work so far has been accompanied with systematic monthly reporting by teaching associates, i.e. senior

assistants, assistants, and research novices, or postdoctoral fellows, with annual work reports to be adopted at the sessions of the Faculty Council. The scope and quality of the associates' scientific activities (scientific novices or postdoctoral fellows) is also monitored by heads of research projects for all researchers on the project and their institutional mentors. The scope and quality of scientific activities of doctoral students in the doctoral studies is monitored through their semi-annual and annual reports on the progress of the studies. The reports also include a presentation of their scientific production in the form of paper publications and presentations of research results at scientific conferences.

After creating the plans of scientific research and the publication for each individual Chair, the requirements are met that the scope and quality of scientific production is systematically monitored also at the level of Chairs, with the obligation of accepting the report on the implementation of plans of research and publication on an annual basis at the meetings of the Faculty Council.

Since the quality of scientific production is essential not only for setting the criteria for scientific advancement, but also for determining appropriate mentors for doctoral studies who are responsible for the development of young scientists, the Faculty has adopted an additional quality criteria of scientific production by implementing the so-called Minimum criteria for the selection of a mentor/co-mentor for social sciences and humanities that have been adopted with the Regulation on Studies of the University, based on which the Faculty passed the Decision on Mentor Requirements for Doctoral Studies at the Faculty of Law, University of Rijeka in 2013.

In the upcoming period it is necessary to expand the mentoring base for doctoral studies, i.e. allow scientists elected to associate titles to become active mentors, while ensuring them conditions for acquiring the role of a co-mentor or to educate them to independently manage doctoral students. This is in line with the strategic objectives of the University of Rijeka, which requires an increase in the number of teachers who are active mentors. The expansion of the mentor base is also a prerequisite for a greater absorption capacity of doctoral studies and maintaining an acceptable mentor – doctoral student relationship, at the ratio of 1:3, which is one of the recommended criteria for the reaccreditation of doctoral studies. This is also the way to achieving the goal of increasing the number of doctoral students, and thus the number of defended doctoral theses, as well as a strategic goal of the University of Rijeka.

7. International Visibility

Faculty scientists regularly update their information on the scientific work in the base CROSBI - Croatian Scientific Bibliography, which is linked to the profile of scientists in *Google Scholar*. This enables greater visibility of the scientific production in the wider international scientific community. Within *Google Scholar*, H-index, as a scientometric indicator, is mainly used for comparison of scientists only within the same field and of approximately the same experience, and the same can be stated for journals. When interpreting the values with the H-index, as it is the case with other indicators of scientific work, it is essential to keep track not only of the discipline or field, but also of branches, as well as the actuality of the work the scientist deals. In the study of the H-

index of doctors of science from natural and social sciences in Croatia, in the period of five years for the social sciences as a whole, the values obtained from the H-index ranged between 1 and 6. This range for Faculty scientists is between 1 and 8, which is higher than the value specified for social sciences. However, Faculty scientists should regardless of this indicator continue to independently look for opportunities to increase their international visibility and thereby to increase the number of citations. Also, due to the fact that a significant part of the scientific production in the field of law is published in the proceedings of international conferences, scientists should look for opportunities to publish in those proceedings that are cited in the Thomson Reuters ISI Conference Proceedings Citation Index.

At the institutional level, with the aim of increasing international visibility of the scientific production and increasing in the number of citations of scientists (such as Web of Science and Scopus), the Faculty should strive for listing its Collected Papers into the database Scopus in which the Republic of Croatia so far has only two legal journal (*Collected Papers of Zagreb Law Faculty* and *Croatian Yearbook for European Law and Policy*). Apart from the fact that this will further increase the reputation of the journal published by the Faculty, it will increase the selection of scientific journals from the field of law, which are referred to in these databases.

8. Regional Positioning – Construction of a New Bibliographic Database

Within the SEELS network (Law faculties of South East Europe), Faculty of Law, University of Rijeka has been approved for the project of creating a SEELS Network Database (SEELSNDB). One of the reasons for starting the project is examining the indexed scientific journals in the field of law within a couple of relevant international bibliographic databases notes still insufficient representation of legal journals in the field of South East Europe. Although there are numerous bibliographic databases in the world and Europe, they are all part of the mainly commercial, large global publishers within which small peripheral academic communities are not sufficiently visible in the global market of knowledge. There is a lack of a specific virtual place which would allow dissemination and access to legal research, and which would mutually connect all legal disciplines and all law faculties in South East Europe, given the specificity of law as a scientific field. For this reason the project has been accepted to create bibliographic databases of related institutions, which are relevant to the area of law in South East Europe - SEELS Network Database (SEELSNDB). The purpose of the SEELS Network Database (SEELSNDB) project is the creation of a central place - base of scientific publications in the field of law - which would enable systematic collection, analysis, and presentation of scientific production of scientists from all law schools in South East Europe and would thus become part of a network of relevant European and world bibliographic databases. This would contribute to highlighting the scientific quality of law faculties in the region and internationally, and would help to established a center of information related to the field of law in South East Europe.

Benefits of creating the SEELS Network Database (SEELSNDB) lie in obtaining a comprehensive insight into the scientific publications of the academic and research community in the field of law in South East Europe, in the emergence of a central

repository of works of scientists in South East Europe, as well as in providing legal scientists with a network access to the most relevant and latest information on published works in the field of law in Southeast Europe. This includes storing the data of original scientific papers published in scientific journals of law faculties from the region, other types of papers published in journals, books, authored books, edited books, chapters in books and textbooks, scientific papers from proceedings that were subjected to international peer reviews, papers with local reviews, other works from proceedings, and abstracts in books of abstracts, doctoral dissertations, and master's theses. All this aims at providing greater visibility, availability, thus facilitating greater market competitiveness of scientific information in the field of law in Europe and the world, of legal scientists from South East Europe as well as to allow the legal thought of smaller peripheral academic communities in South East Europe to be included in the world system of legal research and professional information. Ultimately, it is the intention to establish a high quality database of faculties of law, from the SEELS member countries, and to recommend to national competent authorities that they include it in their regulations relating to the conditions and procedure for the election to scientific titles within the field of law. Therefore, one of the strategic objectives of the Faculty is to take actions necessary for the realization of this project.

9. Connection between Research and Teaching and Social Influence

Scientific production within and outside the scientific research projects significantly enhances the learning process at all levels and within all study programs of the Faculty, considering that a large part of the scientific production consists of scientific monographs, proceedings, authored and/or edited books used in the teaching process. The Faculty is fully involved in the transfer of its scientific research results into the society and the economy as a whole, as well as into the local community. In addition to conference activities in which representatives of judicial institutions, local governments, international and national scientific and professional associations and organizations participate, the Faculty is working on developing a variety of other forms of formal and informal cooperation with various relevant stakeholders. The social impact of the Faculty as a whole and its scientists is visible, among other things, in the involvement of its scientists in working groups and committees for the creation of laws, appointments to ministry committees, holding prominent legal roles, public functions, and the like. In the following period measures should be taken for a further expansion and increase of this impact, taking thereby into account the specific competences of individual scientists from the Faculty and their thematic orientation in research, whereby the abovementioned activities, apart from the strictly scientific ones, would spread to the popularization of science, media appearances, participation in science festivals, etc.

10. Development of Young Scientists (Doctoral Students and Postdoctoral Positions)

The Faculty systematically encourages scientific activity of young scientists by co-financing their participation in international scientific conferences, facilitating their scientific training in the form of shorter or longer stays at prestigious international

research institutions, whereby it is contributing to the international visibility and scientific excellence of the Faculty, the development of scientific research, and generic skills of doctoral students, as well as to the establishment and expansion of cooperation and networking in the European research area. The Faculty supports young scientists financially, logistically, and spatially in the organization of scientific conferences, public lectures, and panel discussions, and co-finances publications of their scientific monographs and university textbooks. This ensures a dissemination of their research results conducted within and after the completion of doctoral studies, increases the visibility of the Faculty as publisher, and enriches the fund of the Croatian scientific legal literature. The Faculty also makes sure that its scientists (and students) adhere to the highest ethical standards in research and are invited to comply with the values and principles enshrined in the European Charter for Researchers, in an attempt to guarantee and promote the highest ethical and professional values in the implementation of their fundamental teaching tasks, scientific work, and service to society. In the upcoming period, the Faculty should continue to develop the existing institutional infrastructure that supports the development of scientific youth. It should be borne in mind that students are also one of the fundamental bases of human capital and research potential, therefore monitoring the excellence of students during their education, their gradual inclusion into the research carried out at each Chair or on a project is the most profitable investment in potential future colleagues and junior researchers, which the Faculty wishes to attract after their graduation. Therefore, given the current budget constraints, the need is emphasized even here to recruit new staff (new doctoral and postdoctoral candidates) within the context of scientific research projects, which enables this possibility for the purpose of sustainable development of the scientific production at the Faculty.

In the upcoming period, the Faculty should strive to increase the international mobility of the total number of scientists and young researchers by increasing the so called outgoing mobility, but also to provide the conditions for the “circulation of brains,” i.e. to increase the number of incoming mobility, using the established exchange programs (ERASMUS +), as well as through newly established formal and informal collaborations. This is in line with the strategic objective of the University of Rijeka to increase the number of researchers in a “circulation system.”

11. Faculty’s Scientific Program and Scientific Research Plan

In line with the key elements of its scientific research portfolio, the Faculty is aware of the constant expansion and changes in research within scientific fields; therefore, in designing its plans and programs of scientific research, the Faculty has taken into account the fact that a number of scientific and research activities are conducted as part of research projects that combine the scientific research portfolio of one or more Chairs, but also that the scientific research activity takes place outside the projects, i.e. when scientists participate in two or more projects, as well as when external partners participate in the project headed by the Faculty scientists. With the aim of facilitating the tracking of all these activities, research plans, i.e. plans of scientific research and publications were adopted at the level of Chairs and their implementation will be monitored at the same level to ensure an effective use of scientific research capacities.

The aim of the adoption of plans and programs of scientific research and publications is to establish a mechanism of monitoring scientific production at the Faculty. It also serves to determine possible points of authors' collaborations, i.e. internal networking of scientific work at the Faculty as a basis for a consolidation of the research base and stepping out into the "research market." In addition, external international research networking, as a natural extension of the internal one, allows a doubling of the Faculty's scientific production and greater international visibility in the European and international knowledge market. This is in line with achieving a strategic objective of the University of Rijeka, which insists on the doubling of scientific production. Research plans of each Chair provide a good thematic review of the scientific interests of individual Chairs and as such are connectible with topics suitable for doctoral studies of potential candidates.

The task of the aforementioned Plan of research and publication is to determine the time frame of implementing the research, researchers, and research groups which will address specific research topics, as well as expected results of these studies, i.e. indicators of research success. When choosing a topic, special attention is paid to the actuality of controversial issues in legal science, multidisciplinary nature of research, consolidation of research teams, and the like.

12. Compression of Strategic Objectives and Measurable Indicators of Accomplishment

An increase in the volume of scientific work, with particular emphasis on improving the quality of overall research activities, monitoring of its quality and volume, enhancing the effectiveness and coherence of educational and scientific-research components the Faculty's activities are in accordance with the development needs of the legal profession and science, economics and society form the fundamental strategic determinants of scientific activity. The Faculty must also continue its proactive participation in the European Research Area and the European Higher Education Area, and to systematically organize to stimulate output and input mobility of scientists and doctoral candidates. It is necessary to make a scientific-research step towards scientific research involvement in international projects, especially projects financed from EU funds. At the same time, this strategic orientation should not bring into question, in accordance with the principle of public activities of the Faculty, the potential of the knowledge society applicable in the local community, nor should it neglect the opportunity to offer scientific and scientifically-based professional services within the direct institutional environment of the Faculty. In addition to the existing forms and dynamics of domestic and international scientific cooperation, it is necessary to actively support, rather than rely on inter-institutional inertia, to seek opportunities for new (virtual and physical) forms of dissemination of results of scientific research with the aim of developing a scientific research legitimacy of the Faculty.

In developing its research portfolio the Faculty must intensely look for opportunities to send young researchers to reputable conference, schools, and study training. This is too significant an investment in the most vital human potential to be left exclusively to the enthusiasm and individual ambitions of young individuals, teachers, and associates. This

also includes the special responsibility of experienced researchers at the Faculty in the transfer of knowledge and providing any form of support to younger colleagues, guided by the pedagogical principle that the goal of every true, ethical, and responsible scientist is the creation of at least two new scientists. The strategy of the Faculty in the upcoming period is to maintain a cooperation with reputable foreign higher education institutions and research institutes, to create a new study platform at the doctoral level, new forms of dissemination of scientific results, and to strive to achieve new forms of cooperation with other institutions. The aforementioned is crucial for creating preconditions for application to international, primarily European public tenders, and projects as an important factor of international cooperation between scientific institutions. This will serve the development of the local, but also national community since these are important projects focused primarily on the well-being of life, labor-social, social, and other conditions.

Objective/task	Indicators
1. to increase the number of research applications and development projects; to increase the number of Faculty's researchers in applied research projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of applied research projects • number of researchers involved in research projects
2. to institutionalize the cooperation with scientific research institutions in the field of law and other areas of social sciences and humanities with the aim of improving the quality of scientific cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number, content, and scope of signed cooperation agreements and other formally realized forms of institutional cooperation
3. to improve the quality of research and monitor the quality of scientific research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of published papers per researcher in international publications and in excellence comparable to equivalent domestic publications • monitoring the plans of scientific research and publications on an annual basis
4. to expand mentor offers in doctoral studies while preserving the ratio mentor/doctoral student 1:3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of mentors who meet mentor requirements • acceptable ratio of mentor/doctoral student
5. to provide young mentors with mentoring training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of young mentors involved in co-mentoring • number of young mentors who have undergone training to supervise doctoral students
6. to increase the effectiveness of doctoral studies and maintain a high level of quality of doctoral studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of enrolled students into doctoral studies • average duration of completed doctoral studies • number of defended doctoral theses • taking measures to harmonize doctoral studies with the criteria and principles of evaluating doctoral

	studies laid out by the Agency for Science and Higher Education
7. to encourage the organization of joint doctoral programs with international institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of accredited joint doctoral study programs in which the Faculty is participating
8. to increase the research portfolio through employment of new doctoral students on approved research projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of applications for employment of new doctoral students
9. to provide institutional care for career development of researchers and collaborators by taking care of human resources and scientific progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • institutional analysis of the effectiveness of scientific advancement and personal research achievements
10. to strengthen institutional conditions which stimulate scientific training of researchers abroad (outgoing mobility) as well as to realize input mobility of foreign researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of days which researchers spend on training abroad • number and duration of incoming mobility
11. to provide institutional support for training researchers to increase the competence of presenting scientific research results in English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of researchers trained to present scientific research results in English • institutional support in the preparation of scientific research results in English
12. to provide adequate organizational and financial support for the development of research activities by continuously taking care of upgrading equipment for scientific research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sources and amounts of financial support the research activities and supply of scientific information sources
13. to maintain and improve the quality of the Faculty journal (Collected Papers) and construct a new bibliographic database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inclusion of the journal in prestigious international databases • construction of a new bibliographic database
14. to maintain the existing and introduce new places of dissemination of scientific research results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of domestic and international conferences and meetings organized with the support of the Faculty • number of new places and forms of dissemination of scientific research results
15. to encourage the involvement of researchers in national and international scientific bodies and associations in order to establish and spread the impact at home and abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of researchers actively involved in national and international scientific bodies and associations
16. to enable full access to scientific information and increasing the exposure of the Faculty website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase in the scientific content to be published on the Faculty website and the number of entries on the website

17. to systematically and thoughtfully popularize legal science and profession through scientific research which the Faculty realizes or provides with support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of public opinions, appearances of Faculty researchers or public presentations of research
18. to strengthen international cooperation with foreign higher education institutions and research institutes by increasing the number of signed agreements on cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of agreements on international cooperation
19. to encourage the involvement of Faculty researchers in EU programs and international projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of international projects and inclusion of Faculty members in them
20. encouraging Faculty teachers' visits to foreign institutions using the funds from scientific research projects with the support of the Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number and length of study visits
21. encouraging organization of joint programs with international institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of accomplished joint study programs

13. Scientific Research and Publications Plan of the Faculty of Law of the University of Rijeka (2016 - 2020)

Scientific-research work will be conducted at the organizational units (Chairs) of the Faculty according to the following plan:

Chair of Roman Law

Chair of History of Law and State

Chair of Theory of Law and State, Philosophy of Law, Human Rights, and Public Policy

Chair of Sociology

Chair of Economic Sciences

Chair of Constitutional Law

Chair of International Law

Chair of Financial Law

Chair of Criminal Law

Chair of Criminal Procedural Law

Chair of European Public Law

Chair of Civil Law

Chair of Civil Procedural Law

Chair of Administrative Science

Chair of Commercial Law and Corporate Law

Chair of Maritime and Transportation Law

Chair of Administrative Law

Chair of Labor and Social Law

Chair of Family Law

Chair of International and European Public Law

Chair of Foreign Languages