



**The Report on Internal
Quality Evaluation of
Educational, Creative and
Associated Activities**

**MASARYK
UNIVERSITY**

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Introduction

In preparation for institutional accreditation and in response to the amendment to the Higher Education Act, the University formally and legislatively established an internal quality assurance and evaluation system. In many respects, it followed a relatively long tradition, as the University had many of the mechanisms and institutes in place for a long time. However, some of them were created and started to work relatively recently, namely the Internal Evaluation Board and approval of degree programmes. Therefore, the Internal Quality Evaluation Report serves as an opportunity to evaluate and/or revise the set-up and functioning of the whole system in this “half time”.

The present document is the second Report on the Masaryk University Internal Quality Evaluation of Educational, Creative and Associated Activities (hereinafter referred to as the “Internal Quality Evaluation Report”). It focuses on the period between 2018 and 2022 and evaluates the first half of the decade for which Masaryk University was granted institutional accreditation.

Compared to the first report, which was produced in response to the external evaluation of the EUA carried out in 2015, this report has a different objective and is structured accordingly. The report does not focus on a mere listing and description of the activities implemented, but primarily on the evaluation of the processes and measures that were implemented in the given period with the aim of ensuring and evaluating the quality of educational, creative or associated activities. The description of the qualitative shifts of the University within its agendas focuses on the analysis of key activities, set processes, measures taken and conclusions drawn from institutional surveys. It also evaluates the impact of these activities and measures, including suggestions for further development and improvement. The individual chapters of the report include key quantitative indicators¹⁾ in the development over the previous 5 years as a basic and necessary metric

to justify the activities and measures implemented on the one hand, and to measure their effect where possible on the other.

The report should first of all evaluate and verify the functionality of the internal quality assurance system (how the processes are defined in internal regulations and other documents, whether the management structure and division of responsibilities are set up appropriately, whether effective inspection and feedback processes are functioning effectively, etc.) in all areas – educational, creative and associated activities of the University. The first chapter of the report is devoted to the quality assurance and evaluation system, while the next three chapters deal with the evaluation of educational, creative and associated activities.

The University is based on the assumption that the internal quality assurance and evaluation system is a “living organism”, the functioning of which is conditioned by the work and interaction of many bodies and actors, not only administrative, but especially academic ones. As such, the internal quality assurance and evaluation system is therefore gradually changing and developing, it is not an “empty temple” built for institutional accreditation purposes. Therefore, in this “half time” of the period of institutional accreditation granted to Masaryk University by the National Accreditation Bureau, the Internal Quality Evaluation Report serves as an opportunity to evaluate, revise and further develop the set-up and functioning of the entire system and its individual processes.

The Report of Masaryk University on Internal Quality Evaluation of Educational, Creative and Associated Activities will be made available to members of the bodies of Masaryk University and members of the bodies of its parts, the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

1) Where no year is given in the data and diagrams, these are the current numbers and status at the date of this Report.

Internal Quality Assurance and Evaluation System

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Setting up an Internal Quality Assurance and Evaluation System

In preparation for institutional accreditation and in response to the amendment to the Higher Education Act, the University formally and legislatively established an internal quality assurance and evaluation system. In many respects, it has continued a relatively long tradition (e.g. in terms of regular degree programme evaluations or institutional surveys and investigations), while some bodies and processes have been introduced in a completely new way, namely the Internal Evaluation Board. The system was legislatively anchored in two internal regulations, to which supplementary methodologies and manuals etc. have been gradually created, which gradually introduced the normative rules into the everyday life of the university.

The quality assurance system at Masaryk University is anchored in two internal regulations in relation to legislative requirements: *The Rules of the Quality Assurance System for Educational, Creative and Associated Activities and Internal Quality Evaluation of Educational, Creative and Associated Activities at Masaryk University* (hereinafter referred to as “Rules of the Quality Assurance System”)

and *Masaryk University Degree Programme Quality Approval, Management and Evaluation* (hereinafter referred to as “Degree Programme Regulation”).

The basis for quality assurance of MU activities is the internal evaluation system; the MU Internal Evaluation Board, as the central MU body responsible for quality assurance of MU activities, plays a key role in planning the evaluation and determining the methods and forms of evaluation output. The evaluation involves relevant internal and external stakeholders – academic staff, MU students and graduates, Czech and foreign experts and employers.

The internal evaluation procedures allow for the specifics of MU degree programmes, units and parts to be taken into account and are based on discussions between internal and external stakeholders. The evaluation of MU activities is carried out regularly and the findings obtained in it are integrated and evaluated at predefined time milestones.

The Rules of the Quality Assurance System are a standard that covers other MU regulations that describe individual areas of quality assurance in greater detail (in particular the Degree Programme Regulation). Their purpose is to establish the basic principles and procedures for quality assurance of key MU activities and to create a basis for integrating these principles and procedures into a coherent and internally interrelated system. The Rules define individual elements of the quality assurance system, including a description of their role. In particular, attention is paid to all stakeholders, their competences, powers and responsibilities.

The quality assurance and evaluation system at MU is based on close cooperation at the level of the University, individual faculties, guarantors of degree programmes and academic staff, as well as students, graduates and their employers. An enduring culture of quality, based on close cooperation and trust between all stakeholders,

is a priority for Masaryk University. Masaryk University therefore strives to continuously improve the quality of educational, creative and associated activities.

It also promotes dialogue and cooperation between students, teachers and other university staff.

The RMU Quality Department provides support for the development of the quality assurance and evaluation system. There is a network of quality coordinators at faculty level. They work closely with degree programme guarantors who are responsible for the quality of the degree programme, its regular evaluation and development. The advisory body of the degree programme guarantor is the Programme Board, composed of representatives of teachers and students in the given degree programme, as well as external members representing institutions employing graduates of the degree programme. In the case of doctoral degree programmes, this function is fulfilled by Doctoral Board, which is composed of external members from other research or educational institutions in addition to MU

Internal Quality Assurance and Evaluation System



Actors of the Internal Quality Assurance and Evaluation System



academic staff. External evaluators are also involved in the processes of establishing and evaluating the quality of degree programmes, contributing to the improvement of the quality of the programmes through feedback, unbiased external perspectives and experience from other, often foreign universities. The Degree Programme Regulation governs the issue of degree programmes as a key component of MU's internal quality assurance system. It defines processes for the establishment of degree programmes and other related procedures (e.g. change or extension of degree programmes) that MU implements both when approving proposals within the framework of institutional accreditation and in the case of proposals subject to approval by the National Accreditation Bureau. In the area of internal evaluation of degree programmes, the Degree Programme Regulation follows the existing practice established at Masaryk University since 2008. The described procedures make maximum use of existing best practice tools, linking them to degree programme decision-making procedures and enriching them with new elements of the quality assurance system, such as the involvement of Programme Boards in the ongoing evaluation and development of the degree programme.

The Masaryk University Degree Programme Quality Standards (hereinafter referred to as the "Standards") are an annex to the Regulation; they are a set of criteria according to which existing and newly proposed degree programmes are assessed at MU. The Standards are designed to enable verification of the compliance of the degree programme with legal requirements and at the same time to assist in the continuous improvement and development of the degree programme, taking into account its uniqueness and specificity. In addition to the requirements of legal regulations and MU strategic objectives, the Standards incorporate the European Standards for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, developed by internationally recognised professional organisations.

General information about the quality assurance and evaluation system at Masaryk University is available on the website kvalita.muni.cz and also on the MU Employee Portal, where it is possible to download relevant methodologies and forms for individual processes related to accreditation or evaluation of degree programmes.

Planned actions and measures:

- Develop a **culture of quality** and contribute to the embedding of quality principles/standards through regular communication between relevant stakeholders.
- Complete a **website dedicated to the quality assurance and evaluation system (kvalita.muni.cz)** in order to promote the development of a quality culture at the University and to present the topic externally.

1.2

Activities of the Internal Evaluation Board

The MU Internal Evaluation Board (hereinafter referred to as "MU IEB") is governed in its decision-making within the *Higher Education Act and the Government Decree on Accreditation Standards in Higher Education by the MU Internal Quality Assurance System Rules, in particular by the Masaryk University Degree Programme Quality Approval, Management and Evaluation Regulations, which include the MU Degree Programme Quality Standards as an annex, and MU Directive No. 11/2017 – Rules for the Establishment of Degree Programmes*. In addition, the MU Internal Evaluation Board bases its decision-making on established practice from previous years. It also informs the faculties of the conclusions of this established decision-making activity. The aim is both to prevent the most frequent mistakes when submitting new proposals and to strengthen the transparency of the IEB decision-making and its predictability for the faculties.

The Statute of Masaryk University in its article 8(1) confers on the Internal Evaluation Board the competences referred to in Article 12(1)(b) and (c) of the Act, and Article 9 specifies the manner of filling of the Board (in conjunction with the transitional provision in Article 55(1)) and its other powers. The Internal Evaluation Board of Masaryk University thus:

- Approves degree programmes submitted by the Rector on the proposal of the Faculty's Scientific Board, within the framework of institutional accreditation;
- Approves the proposal to submit to the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as "NABHE") an application for accreditation, extension of accreditation or extension of the period of validity of accreditation of degree programmes submitted by the Rector on the proposal of the Faculty's Scientific Board, outside of institutional accreditation;

- Approves the draft rules of the quality assurance system of educational, creative and associated activities and internal evaluation of the quality of educational, creative and associated activities of the public higher education institution submitted by the chairman of the Internal Evaluation Board before submitting the draft to the Academic Senate of the public higher education institution;
- Manages the course of the internal quality evaluation of educational, creative and associated activities of the public higher education institution, keeps continuous records of this evaluation and prepares a report on this evaluation and supplements to it;
- On the Rector's proposal, the MU IEB expresses its opinion on the proposal to waive institutional accreditation, the proposal to cancel a degree programme and the proposal to waive accreditation of habilitation proceedings or proceedings for an appointment as a professor.

Composition of the MU IEB

The MU Internal Evaluation Board consists of 15 members, one of whom is always appointed from among the students and at least two from outside the MU academic community. By law, the Rector (who is also the Chairman of the Board) and the President of the Academic Senate are members of the Board, both for the duration of their respective offices. The length of the term of office of the Vice-Chairman of the IEB is determined by a decision of the Rector. The current Vice-Chairman of the Internal Evaluation Board has served in this capacity since the start of the IEB operation, currently in his second term, which expires at the end of 2023. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the MU IEB, the Vice-Chairman is entrusted most of the powers of the MU IEB Chairman.

The remaining 12 members of the Board are appointed by the Rector for a term of six years, or two years in the case of the student representative. When the MU IEB was first appointed in 2016, the six-year terms of office of some randomly selected academic members were shortened. One third of these twelve members thus took the office for 6 years, one third for 2 years and the

remaining third for 4 years. The aim was to rotate the Board gradually and to maintain some continuity. The same person may be appointed as a member of the IEB for a maximum of two consecutive terms. In an effort to strengthen the independence and impartiality of decision-making and to ensure sufficient criticality, the IEB is structured in a way that significantly reduces the risks arising from potential conflicts of interest. According to the MU Statutes, membership in the MU IEB is incompatible with the positions of Vice-Rector, Dean, Vice-Dean and a director of a university institute held at MU. According to the *MU Statutes*, the composition of the MU IEB reflects the areas of education within which degree programmes are implemented at MU. In practice, MU also tries to ensure that all faculties are represented on the Board.

On the occasion of the last major personnel change of the IEB (the ending mandate of 5 members, two of whom continued for a second term and three were newly appointed), it was decided to prepare a manual for the new members, covering as many aspects of the IEB member office as possible, from the legislative framework to the practical details of working with the MU Information System and shared documents. A pilot version of this manual is already available to new and existing members of the IEB, its final form will be one of the outputs of the central development project in 2023 “IEB – PRO: Internal Evaluation Boards – practice, development and organisation. Analysis of current practices and further development of the work of Internal Evaluation Boards”.

Composition of the MU IEB

Name	Position
prof. MUDr. Martin Bareš, Ph.D.	Chairman of the IEB – Rector
Mgr. Josef Menšík, Ph.D.	Member of the IEB – Chairman of AS MU
prof. PhDr. Ladislav Rabušic, CSc.	Vice-Chairman of the IEB
Mgr. Natálie Antalová	Member of the IEB (student)
doc. Mgr. Světlana Hanušová, Ph.D.	Member of the IEB
doc. PaedDr. Emanuel Hurych, Ph.D.	Member of the IEB
prof. PhDr. Josef Krob, CSc.	Member of the IEB
doc. PharmDr. Kateřina Kubová, Ph.D.	Member of the IEB
doc. RNDr. Lenka Luhová, Ph.D.	Member of the IEB (external)
doc. PhDr. Markéta Pitrová, Ph.D.	Member of the IEB
prof. JUDr. Naděžda Rozehnalová, CSc.	Member of the IEB
prof. Ing. Antonín Slaný, CSc.	Member of the IEB
doc. RNDr. Josef Tomandl, Ph.D.	Member of the IEB
prof. RNDr. Michaela Wimmerová, Ph.D.	Member of the IEB
prof. Dr. Ing. Pavel Zemčík, Dr. h.c.	Member of the IEB (external)

In the future, it is not planned to increase the number of members of the IEB (including additional student representatives), but it was decided to strengthen the role of students in the quality assurance process, specifically in the approval of proposals submitted

by the IEB. The aim is also to emphasize the role of doctoral students, who currently do not have a similar institutional representation in the process of quality assurance of education as students of undergraduate programmes (they are members of Programme Boards).

Planned actions and measures:

Establish an **informal advisory body of the student representative** (e.g. a “student quality panel”). In terms of assessing proposals submitted by the IEB, this panel would act as a collective student reporter, complementing the perspective of a reporter appointed from among the (academic) members of the IEB. The student panel should reflect the representation of faculties and the representation of types (degrees) of study.

Functioning of the IEB

The MU IEB holds regular meetings. In accordance with the rules of procedure, these meetings are usually held ten times a year (i.e. once a month outside the summer holidays) according to a schedule published in advance on the MU IEB website. Meetings are convened and chaired by the MU IEB Vice-Chairman. The organisation of the meetings and administrative support of the Board’s activities is provided by the MU Rectorate Quality Department, whose staff prepares the agenda for the next meeting at regular meetings with the Vice-Chairman of the IEB. The invitation to the meeting, together with the agenda, is sent out and published on the website usually one to two weeks in advance of the meeting.

Meetings are usually held in the Rector’s Office of Masaryk University. If necessary (during epidemic measures) or appropriate (minimum number of items to be discussed, impossibility of attendance of a large number of members or guests known in advance), they are held online via the MS Teams application. Voting in this case is done electronically, using the Microsoft Forms tool or the voting application in the MU Information System. There is also the possibility of a hybrid form of meeting with only some members or guests connecting remotely, again using Microsoft Teams. The rules of procedure also allow per rollam voting, but only in urgent matters; this option cannot be

used in cases where a MU internal regulation explicitly guarantees the right to attend the meeting to a person who is not a member of the MU IEB.

In 2022, the need arose to address purely conceptual issues of the internal quality assurance system during the IEB; to do so, one or two meetings per year are reserved for which no faculty proposals are submitted. They are usually two days long and are held as an off-site event outside the MU premises.

The MU IEB is quorate if an absolute majority of all members (i.e. 8 or more persons) is present at the meeting. In order for a resolution to be adopted, a majority of all IEB members (regardless of the number present), i.e. at least 8 persons, must vote in favour of the resolution. If a member of the IEB is the guarantor of the discussed degree programme, the rules of procedure prohibit them from participating in the vote on that programme. A member of the IEB whose facts indicate that their participation in the discussion and decision-making of a matter could result in an advantage or disadvantage for them (conflict of interest) is obliged to disclose this fact before the IEB meeting on the matter. The Board will then decide, depending on the nature of the matter, whether that member will participate in the vote.

In addition to the members of the IEB, the Vice-Rector for Education and Quality and staff from the MU Rectorate Office Quality Department normally attend the meetings. Minutes are taken of the meetings, including the resolutions adopted, which are then published on the website in accordance with the rules of procedure.

Before the meeting, the documents for the proposals under discussion are made available to all members of the MU IEB in the MU Information System's record management application, where they also have access to data and statistical data on degree programmes. For proposals that involve the study of more extensive materials whose approval has significant consequences (typically, e.g. a proposal for the establishment of a degree programme, its substantial change, extension of the study plan or study mode, or extension of accreditation), the Vice-Chairman of the MU IEB appoints the reporter for the proposal. Their task is to prepare a reporting opinion based on a detailed study of the submitted documents and their assessment, which then serves as the basis for a decision by the IEB. In determining the reporter, the Vice-Chairman shall take into account the expertise of the reporter and also who was a reporter in previous decisions on the same programme or who participated in the evaluation meeting (see below). After examining the proposal and its annexes, the reporter will summarise their findings in a reporting opinion. It should conclude with a statement as to whether or not the reporter recommends accepting the proposal.

Based on the reporting opinion and the subsequent discussion of the submitted proposal during the meeting, the MU IEB will then come to a conclusion on whether or not to accept the proposal and will adopt a resolution accordingly.

If the IEB decides to accredit a new programme or to extend it for a period shorter than the maximum possible (up to 7 years for the establishment of completely new programmes, up to 10 years for the conversion from an original field of study to a degree programme, or up to 10 years for the extension of existing degree programmes), it should be clear from the resolution and the requirements or recommendations expressed therein

why this has been done. This rule has only been applied more consistently in recent years; in the early days of the IEB, when a large number of degree programmes were approved, the resolutions (and reporting opinions) were much briefer. The absence of this type of information then causes problems in practice when extending (re-accrediting) degree programmes, especially those that were initially approved for a short period of time for some reason (usually inadequate staffing assurance) and which were already extended once or twice between 2019 and 2022.

Members of the MU IEB also participate in its activities between meetings, for example by taking part in working groups (these are usually set up, among other things, for thematic evaluations – see 2.2). Members of the MU IEB are also entitled to participate in evaluation meetings, either as part of internal evaluations of degree programmes or when new programmes are established. Their role is to oversee the formal and procedural aspects of the evaluation. In the case of the use of this authorisation, the members of the IEB also have a more accurate picture of the evaluation process than can be obtained by studying written documents alone when making subsequent decisions on the degree programme in question.

Members of the IEB broaden and deepen their knowledge of quality assurance of higher education according to their possibilities, for example by sharing their experience with members of the IEB of other universities or by participating in conferences devoted to this topic (e.g. the Conference on Quality Assessment of Higher Education Institutions organised by Masaryk University or the Days of Educational Activities of Higher Education Institutions organised by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports). They also participate in regular meetings with degree programme guarantors and student members of Programme Boards. As part of their academic profession, they also explain the role of the IEB in the higher education system and promote discussions on the quality of higher education.

1.3

Activities of Other Bodies within the Quality Assurance System

Degree Programme Guarantor

The activities of the degree programme guarantor are regulated by the Degree Programme Regulation and their position within the organisational structure of the faculty may be regulated by the internal regulations of individual faculties.

The degree programme guarantor is an expert in the field and represents the degree programme. The main activities of the degree programme guarantor include:

- Responsibility for the quality of the degree programme, its development and regular evaluation;
- Coordination of teaching in the degree programme in cooperation with the head of the unit;
- Communication related to suggestions, requests and questions about the degree programme;
- Preparation of documents for regular internal evaluation of the degree programme;
- Preparation of a draft plan for the development of the degree programme;
- If necessary, a proposal for the extension, modification or extension of the degree programme;
- Proposing to the Dean an appointment of members of the Programme Board (except the student representative);
- Convening a meeting of the Programme Board at least once a year;
- Responsibility for storing the complete documentation of the degree programme evaluation (minutes of the Programme Board meetings) on the degree programme document server.

In these activities, the guarantor has at their disposal an advisory body, which is the Programme Board.



The range of degree programmes offered at MU is continuously updated and changed, so there are inevitably changes in the positions of degree programme guarantors. For this reason, it has proved beneficial to organise regular meetings of guarantors with members of the IEB, always focused on one area of activity that is within the competence of the degree programme guarantors. These meetings, which usually take place once a year and are administered by the RMU Quality Department, provide a platform not only for sharing good practice, but also for discussing the needs and problems of degree programme guarantors.

General information on the agenda of the degree programme guarantor is available at kvalita.muni.cz and also on the MU Employee Portal, where it is possible to download relevant methodologies and forms for individual processes related to accreditation or evaluation of degree programmes.

Programme Boards

Since 2019, Masaryk University has been operating the institute of Programme Boards. The Programme Board is conceived as an advisory body of the degree programme guarantor and is one of the key elements of the quality assurance and evaluation system at Masaryk University. The activities of the Programme Board are regulated by the internal Degree Programme Regulation.

The Programme Board is appointed for each Bachelor's or Master's degree programme within three months of the start of teaching in the newly implemented degree programme or within three months of the expiry of the term of office of the previous Programme Board. Individual follow-up degree programmes or degree programmes otherwise related to each other may have a common Programme Board. The chairperson of the joint Programme Board is then appointed on the basis of an agreement of the guarantors of individual

degree programmes, or by decision of the Dean. There are currently 345 Programme Boards at MU, including shared Programme Boards, which have a total of 884 internal, 700 external and 406 student representatives.

Programme Boards are primarily intended to mediate ongoing feedback and provide a platform for critical debate on the design, operation and quality improvement of the degree programme. Joint Programme Boards can then place the debate about the degree programme in the wider context of related degree programmes or the faculty.

The Programme Board shall be composed of at least five members and shall consist of the programme guarantor, who is also the chairperson of the Programme Board, at least two other academic staff members who teach in the degree programme, at least one representative of the students of the degree programme or its graduate

actively studying at MU and at least one representative of employers or graduates who is not a member of the faculty's academic community.

Members of the Programme Board from among academic staff, employers and graduates are appointed and dismissed by the Dean on the basis of a reasoned proposal by the programme guarantor. Student representatives are appointed by the Dean on the basis of direct nomination by students of a given degree programme via the nomination application in the MU Information System, or on the basis of nomination by the Student Chamber of the Faculty Academic Senate.

A meeting of the Programme Board shall be held at least once a year with the participation of at least half of the members of the Programme Board and minutes of the meeting shall be taken in the prescribed structure, which shall become part of the documentation of the degree programme. During the academic year, the Programme Board discusses, proposals for substantial and non-substantial changes, a proposal of extending the degree programme

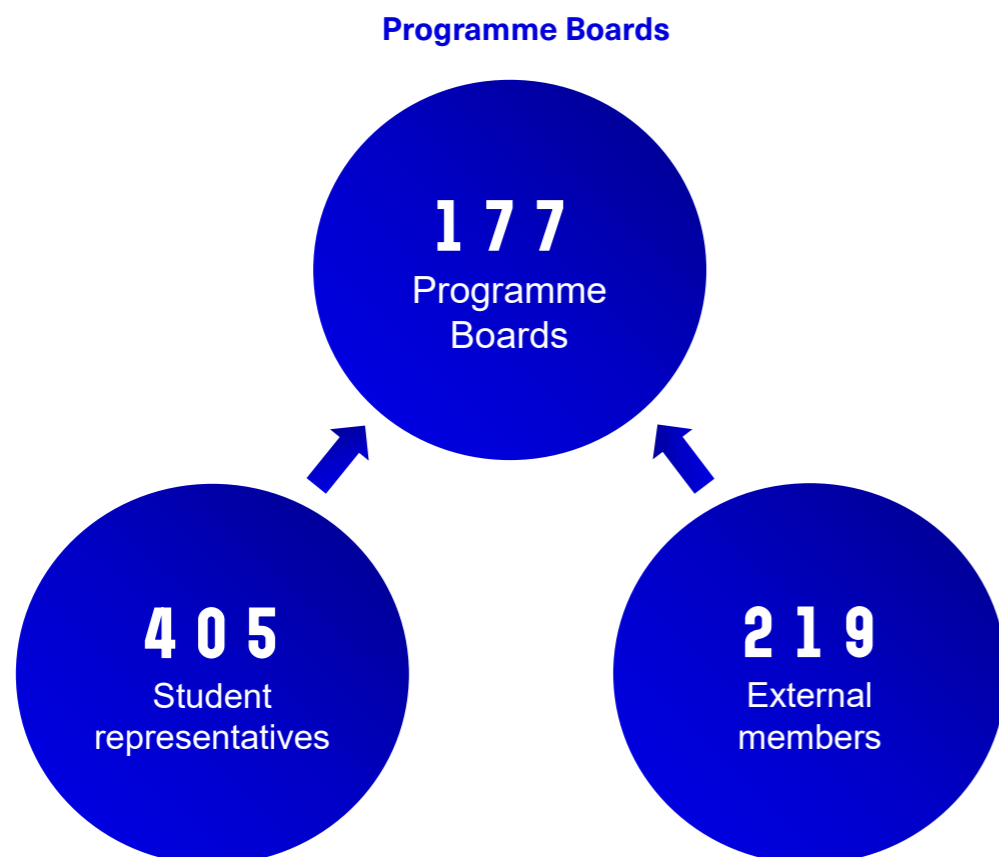
- Summary of non-significant changes in the degree programme over the last period;
- Results of the admission procedure;
- The course and results of state final examinations and defences of qualification theses;
- Results of the course opinion poll for the previous period;
- The state of internationalisation of the degree programme;
- The rate and causes of academic failure;

Although Programme Boards are an important element of the quality management and evaluation system at foreign universities, in the Czech Republic, Programme Boards were a unique phenomenon at Masaryk University when they were established. However, it can be said that the activity of Programme Boards is an

important contribution in providing ongoing feedback and critical debate on the design of a given degree programme.

In 2022, Article 9 of the internal *Masaryk University Degree Programme Quality Approval, Management and Evaluation Regulations* was amended regarding the method of appointing student representatives to Programme Boards – now the student representatives are appointed by the Dean on the basis of direct nomination by students of a given degree programme via the MU Information System or on the basis of nomination by the Student Chamber of the Faculty Academic Senate. The main aim of this modification was to make the process of appointing student representatives in the Programme Boards more transparent and to promote the activities of the Programme Boards among students. For direct nominations of students, a new application has been developed in MU IS, which is permanently accessible to all students in a given degree programme, giving them the opportunity to nominate their representative to the Programme Board anonymously. Each student is entitled to up to three nominations, including their own. Membership in the Programme Board is a voluntary activity, therefore the nominated person has the right to refuse their nomination directly in the application or subsequently withdraw their refusal.

In addition, the possibility was added to the regulations that not only any student of a given degree programme, but also its graduates with active study at MU could be nominated as a student representative in the Programme Board. This extension brings the possibility of retaining on the Programme Board, for example, a student who successfully completes a given degree and continues in a follow-up degree.



Programme Boards are a living mechanism and their composition can change or expand as needed. For this reason, a simple manual called A Quick Guide for Programme Boards has been created. It summarises information on the role of Programme Boards as well as the rights and obligations of Programme Board members and degree programme guarantors. This document should strengthen awareness of how the Programme Board can participate in and directly influence the direction and further development of the degree programme. Last but not least, the document should motivate members of Programme Boards, including student representatives, to be more active and critical in their discussions. This document, together with an information email, will be sent automatically to all newly appointed members of the Programme Boards.

An evaluation of the experience with the application for nomination of student representatives to Programme Boards will be carried out in 2023, on the basis of which partial adjustments may be made. There is already a demand for greater involvement of candidates for membership in Programme Boards and the Student Chamber of the MU Academic Senate proposes to supplement the nomination application with a space for candidates to express their motivation for membership in the Programme Board, the so-called motivation window.

To increase the user experience for Programme Boards in foreign language degree programmes, we are working on translating the interface for Programme Boards in the MU Information System into English. Most of the support materials already exist in English, but it would be useful in the future to organise workshops with student representatives on the Programme Boards in both Czech and English, where student members would be informed about their role on the Programme Board and how they can contribute to the direction of their degree programme.

The activity of Programme Boards has shown that the role of students in the quality assurance system is particularly valuable in providing feedback. However, this type of students' participation is missing in doctoral

degree programmes, where Doctoral Boards are set up in which students are not represented. In the future, there is a debate on the appropriate way of involving students in doctoral degree programmes in the quality assurance system at MU.

Network of Faculty Quality Coordinators

As part of the methodological management of the quality assurance and evaluation system, a network of quality coordinators has been operating at individual MU faculties since 2017, whose job is to provide administrative support, particularly in the area of quality assurance of educational activities, but also during the accreditation process or in processes related to the evaluation of degree programmes.



The RMU Quality Department works closely with faculty quality coordinators. Regular meetings are held at fortnightly intervals, alternating between online and face-to-face meetings. Within the framework of personal meetings, a system has been introduced where faculty coordinators meet with the Quality Department staff at individual faculties. This setup to some extent erases the imaginary barrier between the Rectorate and the faculties and thus strengthens mutual belonging and cooperation. On the platform of regular meetings, the RMU Quality Department informs coordinators about new developments in the field of quality, upcoming processes and routine administration and

learns about the needs of individual faculties through mutual discussions. This ensures both the transfer of information to the faculties and feedback to the quality evaluation and assurance processes.

Information System

Many processes are already computerised via the MU Information System, which also increases user comfort. The RMU Quality Department receives suggestions for improving and streamlining the quality assurance and evaluation system at MU in addition to its own observations through proposals from faculty quality

coordinators. The Programme Boards, the network of faculty quality coordinators and the MU IS are essential for the effective functioning of the entire system.

For processes related to accreditation, quality assurance and evaluation, the Garant application within the MU Information System is crucial, as it contains all data and information on degree programmes, programme and course boards, state examination committees, individual study plans, courses and teachers.

Planned actions and measures:

- Develop cooperation and seek further means of **coordinating the cooperation of all stakeholders of the internal quality assurance system.**
- In the future, place more emphasis on **the involvement of doctoral students** in the functioning of the internal quality assurance system and on the involvement of **English-speaking students.**

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Degree Programme Approval and Evaluation

The establishment and operation of degree programmes are governed by the Degree Programme Regulation. It defines related but formally distinct procedures in relation to the evaluation of degree programmes:

a) When approving degree programmes (internal accreditation), the fulfilment of the MU degree programme quality standards and the standards resulting from Government Regulation No. 274/2016 Coll. on standards for accreditation in higher education are evaluated, and the result is either a decision to grant authorisation to implement a degree programme (in the case of degree programmes in areas of education for which MU has institutional accreditation), or a decision to submit an application for degree programme accreditation to the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education (in the case of degree programmes in areas for which MU does not have institutional accreditation). The procedure differs slightly depending on whether a completely new degree programme is being established or whether the programme is being established in a transitional period in direct continuity with an existing field(s) of study (the so-called “conversion”) – in the latter case, some procedural steps are simplified.

b) The regular evaluation of existing degree programmes should primarily serve the function of formative feedback. The result is therefore not a decision on the authorisation to implement the degree programme (accreditation), but a plan for its further development based on the self-assessment and recommendations of external evaluators.

c) Other procedures related to the functioning of the degree programme, such as approval of changes in the degree programme, its extension or changes in the degree programme guarantors.

Degree Programme Approval

On the basis of institutional accreditation, the University began to approve degree programmes independently, thus also testing in practice some newly introduced internal procedures, especially the process of converting an existing field of study into a degree programme and the establishment of a new degree programme.

In accordance with the comprehensive revision of MU’s study offer and also due to the long-unresolved situation of the original study fields, the University proceeded during 2018 to discuss and approve proposals for new Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programmes in all 23 areas of education for which it has received this authorisation. It has thus created the conditions for applicants for Bachelor’s and Master’s studies to be admitted and enrolled mainly in new degree programmes in 2019.

In accordance with the above-mentioned typology of procedures, MU dealt exclusively with the approval of degree programmes in 2018. However, in the case of the transitional institute of the conversion of existing fields of study into new degree programmes, the formative component of the evaluation was also significantly emphasised alongside the assessment of the fulfilment of the relevant standards. In these cases, the external evaluators and the IEB could significantly take into account the results of the original fields of study to which the newly approved degree programmes are directly related.

The structure of degree programmes at MU has undergone significant changes as part of the conversions, which were intended primarily to clarify the study offer for foreign applicants, improve the permeability across study levels, help reduce academic failure, meet new trends and needs of modern society and, in particular, increase the quality of degree programmes and education at MU. For these reasons, the most significant transformation has therefore affected primarily the Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees, where the space provided by the amendment to the Higher Education Act

of 2016 has been fully exploited and new types of study plans have been used according to the rules of the MU Directive.



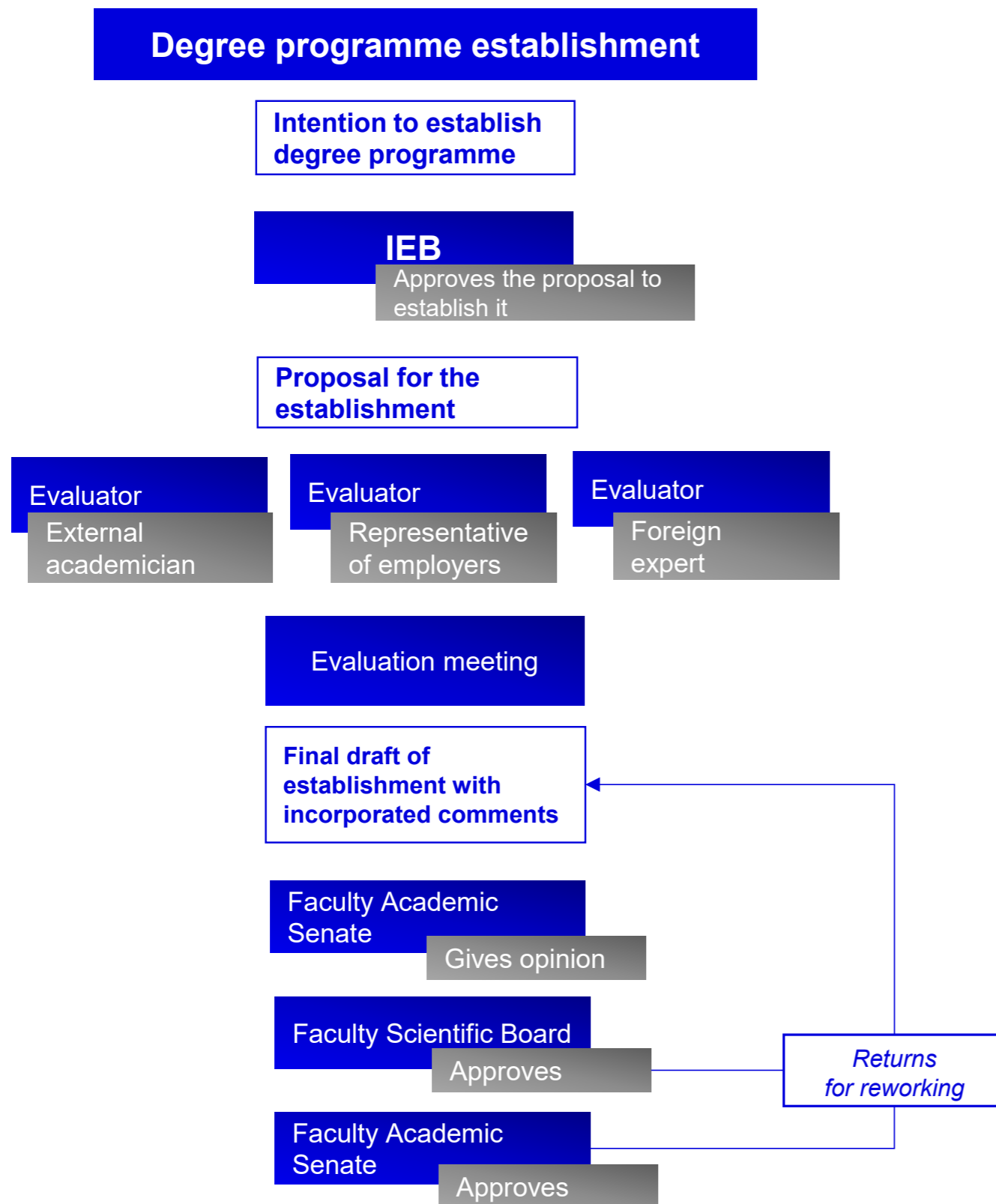
The University thus had the opportunity to introduce a new form of the formerly two-field study in the admission procedure for the academic year 2019/2020, which began in November 2018, which is a combined study in the form of a combination of major and minor plans according to the new rules

Also in 2019, a significant share of the capacity of the internal quality assurance system was devoted primarily to the degree programme agenda. The IEB also focused more intensively on other topics that are closely related to the functioning of degree programmes, e.g. extension of a degree programme with a new mode or plan, re-accreditation of a degree programme or changes in degree programmes. In 2019, the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education extended Masaryk University’s institutional accreditation in the area of cooperation with institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences. The conversion of the original study offer in Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programmes to the new structure of degree programmes has been completed and the first students were enrolled in the academic year 2019/2020.

In 2019, MU implemented the first comprehensive amendment to its internal regulations, reflecting practical experience with the functioning of its internal quality assurance system. The amended internal regulation was registered with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in June 2019. The following processes have undergone key changes:

- In the process of establishing the degree programme, the rules for the involvement of evaluators were revised in order to better exploit the potential of external evaluators, while at the same time placing more emphasis on the importance of the different parts of the process (proposal and establishment). The assessment of the proposal to establish the programme is fully within the competence of the MU IEB, which is able to adequately evaluate the compliance of the degree programme with MU strategic documents and the position of the proposed programme in the context of the overall study offer at MU. The proposal of establishment (a complete dossier containing a detailed description of the degree programme) is then evaluated by two evaluators, one of whom must have relevant foreign professional experience. The programme establishment process was further complemented by an evaluation meeting, which proved to be a successful outcome of the degree programme conversion process.
- The conditions of accreditation for a degree programme in a foreign language have been simplified if it corresponds in content to an already approved degree programme in the Czech language. In such a case, the submitter documents only the necessary documents closely related to the language variant of the degree programme, not the full accreditation dossier (this is a practice similar to the procedures of the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education).

Chart of the Process of Degree Programme Establishment



- The change of the degree programme guarantor after the amendment of the Regulations is made exclusively on the basis of approval by the Faculty's Scientific Board and appointment by the Dean in accordance with Article 7 of the Regulations. The Faculty's Scientific Board will therefore assess whether the guarantor's proposal takes into account the requirements resulting from the MU degree programme quality standards. The Internal Evaluation Board shall be notified of the change of guarantor within 30 days of the appointment. If the IEB considers that the new guarantor does not provide sufficient guarantees for the proper staffing of the programme, it will discuss the situation with the Dean and the guarantor; based on the outcome of the discussion, it may request a remedy within a reasonable period.
- The extension of the degree programme was also newly made possible by cooperation with another university or other legal entity – regardless of whether it is a domestic or foreign institution.

As in previous years, a significant share of the capacity of the internal quality assurance system was devoted to the degree programme agenda. Other topics that are closely related to the functioning of degree programmes, such as the extension of a new study mode or changes to the degree programme, have become increasingly important.

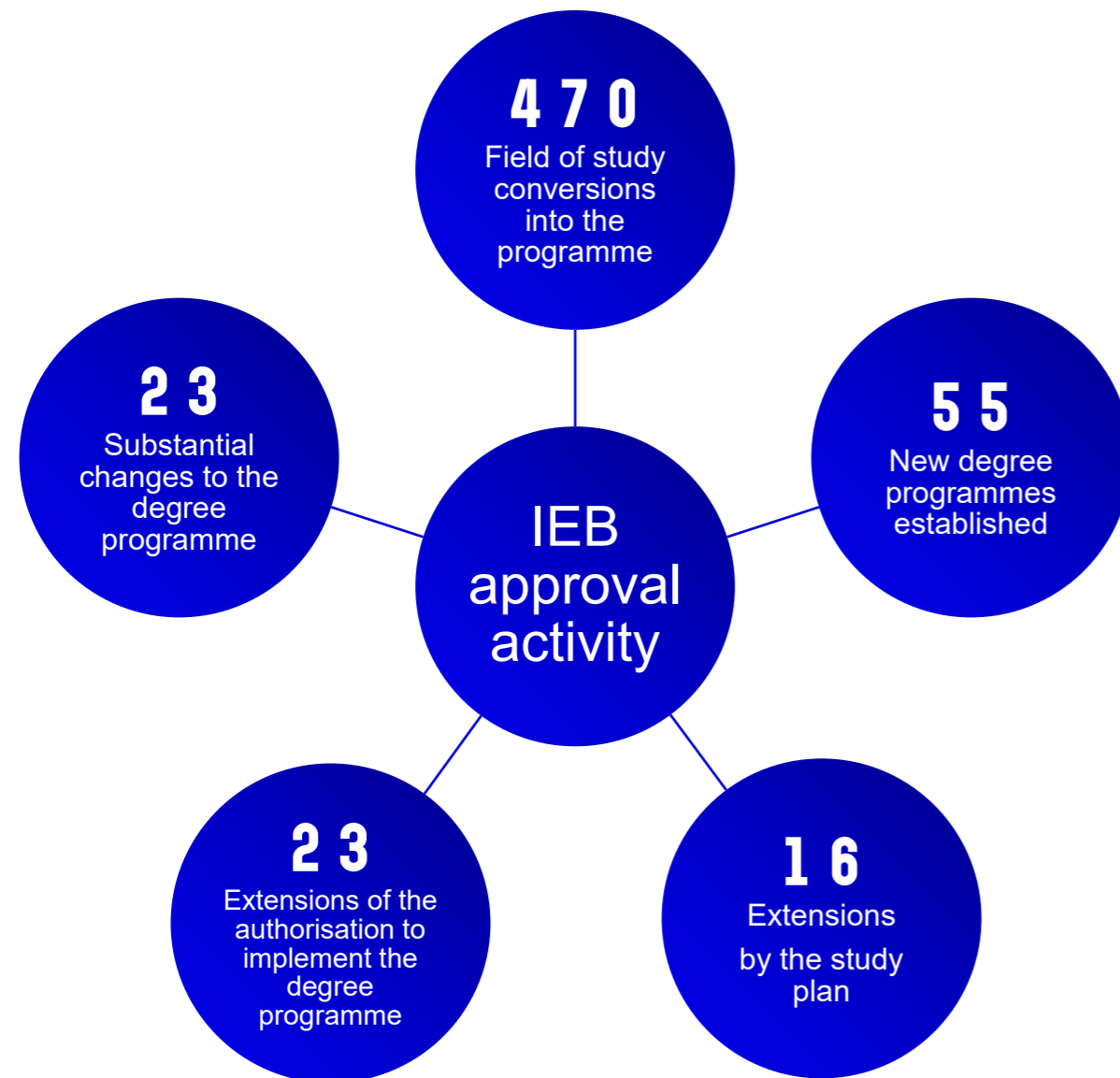
In 2021, for the first time, proposals for the operation of existing degree programmes matched the number of proposals submitted for the approval of new degree programmes.

In March 2022, the third amendment to the internal Masaryk University Degree Programme Quality Approval, Management and Evaluation Regulations, prepared in the previous year, came into force. The amendment to the Regulations, which codifies important elements of the internal quality assurance system, reflected some important elements of the existing practice of the IEB in approving and evaluating degree programmes, modified the method of appointment and composition of Programme Boards and also established the linking of internal evaluation of doctoral degree programmes with research evaluation at MU.

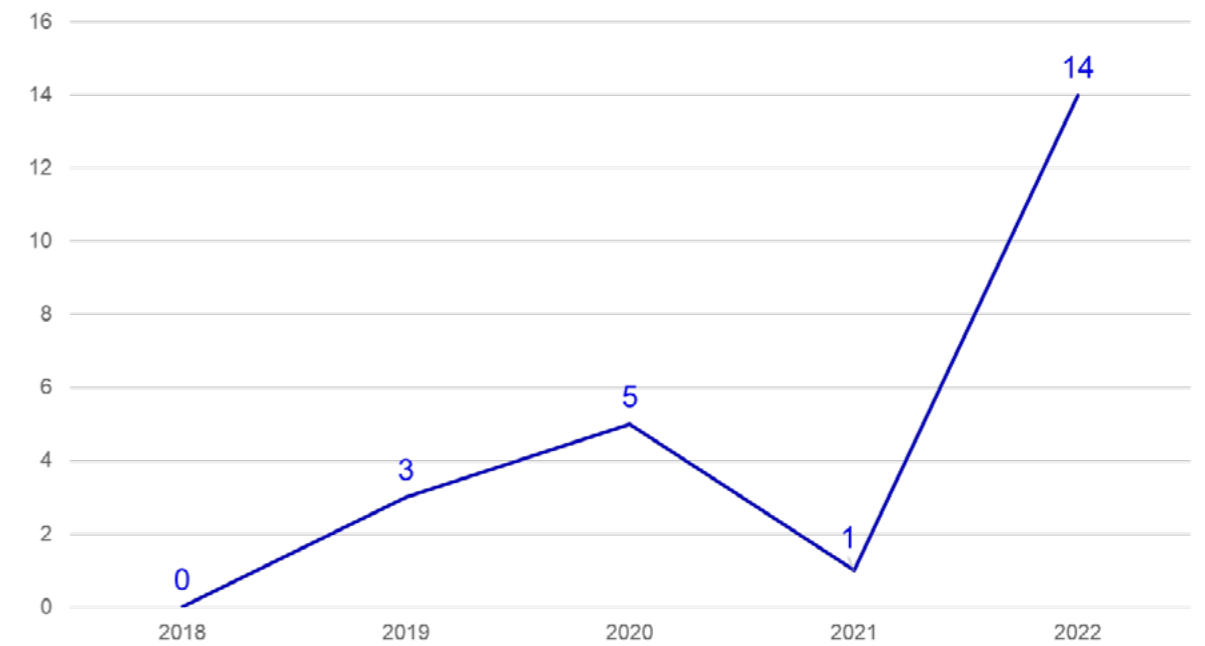
For the first time in 2022 and 2023, decisions on proposals to extend the accreditation of degree programmes appeared more frequently on the agenda of degree programmes. This type of process will continue to be a significant part of the MU IEB activities in the coming years, culminating in 2028, when more than 250 degree programmes will have their authorisations terminated.

On the contrary, the conversion of original fields of study into degree programmes has been completed, with a few exceptions, and the number of completely new degree programmes has also been decreasing compared to previous years. Newly established programmes are mainly multidisciplinary, foreign-language programmes or those whose establishment contributes to the rationalisation of the study offer (for example, by combining two previously implemented smaller programmes into one).

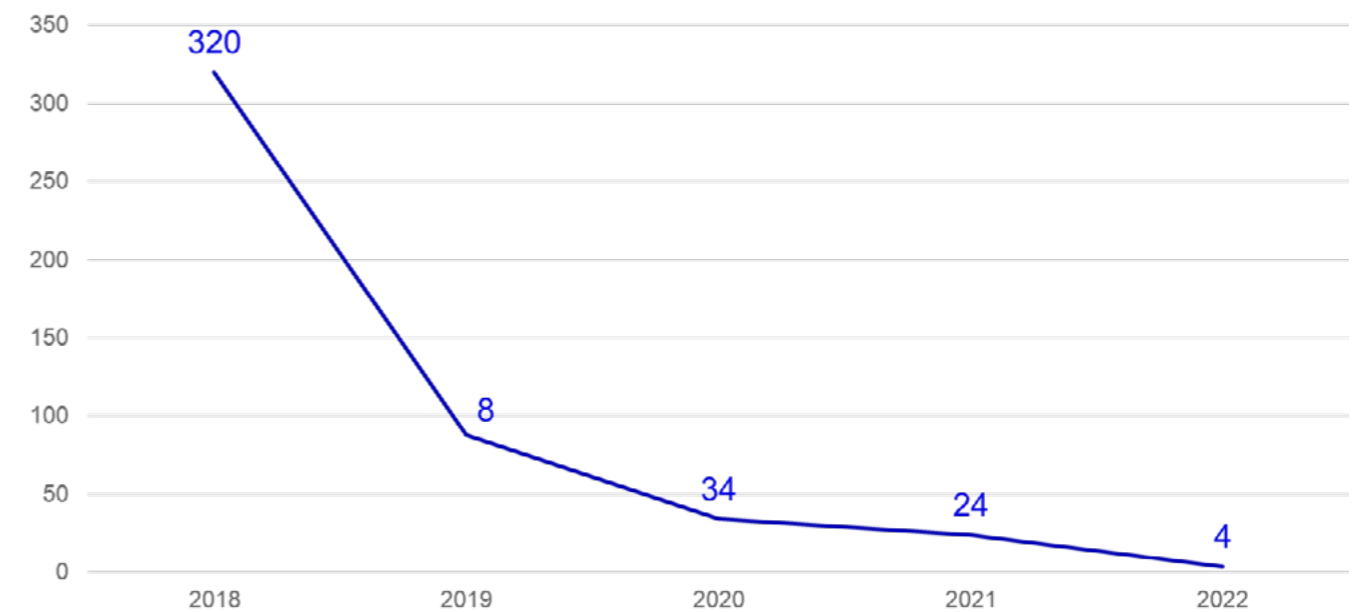
IEB Approval Activity in 2018 – 2022 Period



Evolution of the Number of Approved Extensions in 2018 – 2022



Development of the Number of Approved Conversions of Fields of Study to the Programme in 2018 – 2022

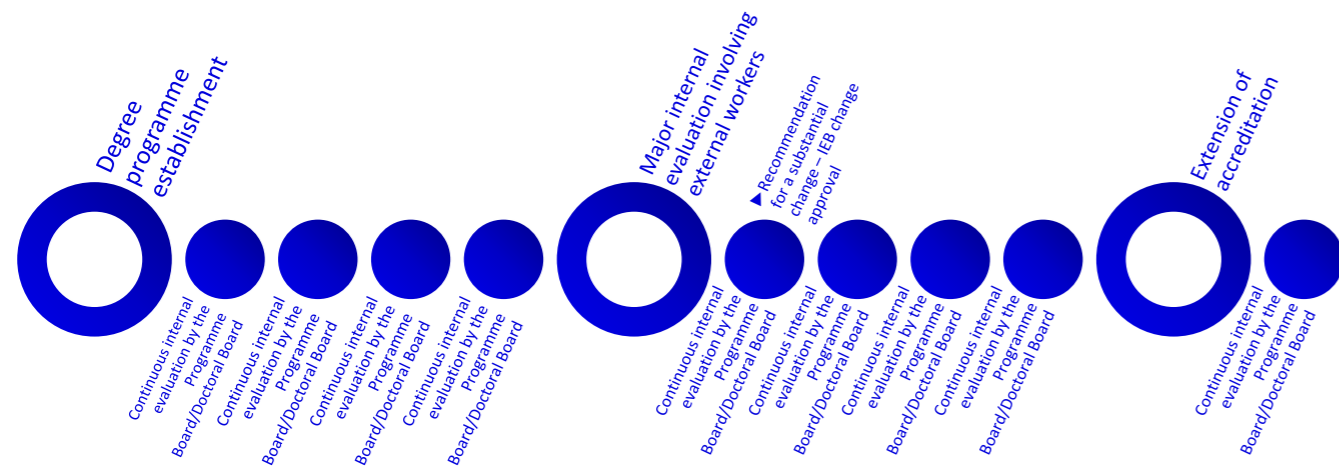


Internal Evaluation of Degree Programme

In 2020, the IEB approved a revised concept of internal evaluation of Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes as a core element of the quality assurance system for degree programmes. Since 2017, the basic parameters of internal evaluation of degree programmes at Masaryk University have been anchored in the internal *Masaryk University Degree Programme Quality Approval, Management and Evaluation Regulations*. These parameters include, first and foremost, that the evaluation takes place in five-year cycles and involves three evaluators (a student representative, an employer representative and an academic staff working in the given or a related field), while at the same time the evaluation should be formative and provide critical reflection on the functioning of the degree programme.

However, the principles of evaluation, the focus of evaluation and the overall organisation of evaluation, including the preparation of all accompanying forms and methodological materials, needed to be clarified within the framework of the approved concept. The basic general principles are common for all types of degree programme evaluation at Masaryk University (e.g. predictability and transparency of evaluation procedures, use of available data on degree programmes, combination of self-assessment and perspectives of other key stakeholders as external evaluators, etc.). The first internal evaluation of Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes during their implementation was also a crucial step.

Cycle of Internal Evaluations of the Degree Programme



Despite the original assumption that the internal evaluation of doctoral degree programmes would be carried out according to the same rules as the evaluation of Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes, MU has abandoned this proposal in view of the newly introduced mechanism of regular institutional research evaluation at MU, a substantial part of which is also to be devoted to doctoral degree programmes (see Chapter 3). Given the strong links between doctoral programmes and research, their evaluation is therefore subsumed under regular research evaluation. Therefore, in 2021, MU introduced a comprehensive methodology of internal evaluation of

doctoral degree programmes, which was implemented in 2022 as part of the internal system of quality assurance and evaluation of research and doctoral studies at the level of individual units or doctoral degree programmes. The most important element of the whole process is the *on-site visit* by the international evaluation panels, which provided targeted feedback with sufficient space for discussion on the further development and direction of individual units and doctoral programmes.

The MU IEB and the MU management continue to work with the evaluators' recommendations. Among other things, the results of the evaluation show the need for a fundamental reduction and rationalisation of the study offer in doctoral studies. In response, the MU IEB called on the MU faculties in early 2023 to prepare specific measures with an emphasis on reducing the number of doctoral degree programmes using synergies and/or integration at the faculty level, possibly also on inter-faculties bases.

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Planned actions and measures:

– Following the results of the thematic evaluation in 2022, which focused on combined modes of study, there was a need to focus more on **distance learning elements in the internal evaluation**. A revision of all quality assurance and approval processes for degree programmes is proposed for the next period, with the aim of supplementing them with questions specific to the combined/distance mode, which will enable their quality to be assessed (whether they are assessed separately or together with the full-time mode). Specifically, it will become an obligation to specify in more detail both the teaching methods, organisation and conditions of study, and the references to the study materials for combined/distance learning.

Programmes Implemented in Cooperation with a Foreign University

One of MU's long-term goals is to strengthen the internationalisation of education, an important element of which is degree programmes implemented in cooperation with a foreign university (*joint degree, double degree, multiple degree*). Due to the specificity of such degree programmes, a comprehensive methodology "Preparation of degree programmes in cooperation with a foreign university" was prepared in 2020 in cooperation between the Quality Department and the Centre for International Cooperation. The methodology addresses three important areas of joint degree programmes, such as their definition and preparation with emphasis on the cooperation agreement and the process of approving these degree programmes at MU.

The most significant change in the process of approving shared programmes is the possibility to simplify the generally valid procedure if some parts of the internal approval process can be replaced by external procedures of a similar nature. This can typically be applied in a situation where a degree programme proposal is also undergoing another type of independent external evaluation, e.g. in the context of an Erasmus Mundus or similar grant scheme. The purpose of these changes was to avoid duplication of processes, particularly in the area of programme evaluation. In addition, when submitting a degree programme, if the IEB determines so in the discussion of the proposal, it is possible to use the documentation created for the purposes of the relevant external evaluation.

Affiliation of the Faculty of Pharmacy

One of the significant events for MU was the establishment (or affiliation) of the Faculty of Pharmacy in 2020. Within the quality assurance system, this meant new degree programmes and their integration into the existing system. On the basis of an agreement between MU and the Veterinary and Pharmaceutical University of Brno (VFU), of which the faculty has been a part since July 2020, thus transferring all students of the Faculty of Pharmacy of VFU (approximately 800) and most of its employees. Since July 2020, new degree programmes (8 doctoral and 2 Master's programmes) have also been accredited in which the transferred students continued their studies.

The accreditation of degree programmes, or the transfer of faculty from one public university to another, was an unprecedented event and tested the ability of MU, the NABHE and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Health to cooperate and coordinate with each other in a relatively tight schedule so as not to endanger current and future students who were only due to join the faculty from the autumn term 2020. The faculty's degree programmes were fully integrated within the MU quality assurance system (e.g. in terms of the regulation of rigorous examination procedures according to MU standards, the establishment of Programme Boards for Master's degree programmes) and the preparation of regular internal evaluations began, as well as the training of staff and students in the key rights and obligations arising from MU internal regulations. The Faculty of Pharmacy has created the position of Quality Coordinator, similar to other MU faculties, providing methodological and administrative support to degree programme guarantors.

2.2

Thematic Evaluations

According to the Higher Education Act (Section 21), the university is obliged to regularly carry out an internal evaluation of the quality of educational, creative and associated activities. The implementation of the internal evaluation of activities is understood by the law as one of the conditions for the implementation of the internal quality assurance system.

The internal evaluations at Masaryk University can be distinguished according to whether they are held in regularly recurring cycles or, on the contrary, they are exceptional (one-off) evaluations, whose focus responds to the current needs and topics of the University. In addition to the internal evaluation of the IEB curricula, a number of regular institutional evaluations and surveys are carried out at MU, which are related to quality assurance of educational, creative and associated activities. These activities include evaluations related to the fulfilment of the Long-Term Plan or the Strategic Plan; institutional evaluations carried out by the International Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB), evaluations of individual faculties; various institutional surveys and, last but not least, individual evaluations of academic staff. Although the regular evaluations cover educational, creative and associated activities of the University to a large extent and in a cross-sectional manner, a new element of annual thematic evaluations conducted by the Internal Evaluation Board was introduced into the MU internal quality assurance and evaluation system in order to fulfil the legal requirements. This should respond flexibly to the current needs and goals of the University and at the same time shift the emphasis from the legally required "extensive" version of the across-the-board evaluation to an "intensive" version, allowing for more focused and in-depth attention to a given topic.

Article 8(a) of the MU *Internal Regulation – Rules of the Quality Assurance and Internal Evaluation System* stipulates that, in addition to approving degree programmes, the MU Internal Evaluation Board "decides on the evaluation of MU activities". The purpose of this provision was to anchor in the internal regulations, the institute of thematic evaluations across faculties, which would gradually cover key areas of priority interest of

the University and whose outputs would serve, among others, as a basis for both the annual Supplements and the "big" Internal Quality Evaluation Report.

Following international practice and taking into account national and university specificities, a *Methodological Guide for the Thematic Evaluation of IEB* was prepared in 2020, which sets out the basic principles, goals and methodology of this type of evaluation.

In 2020, two thematic evaluations took place in parallel. The thematic evaluation of *Care for the Quality of Final Theses at Masaryk University* was conducted in connection with the implementation of the strategic priorities of the Plan for the Implementation of the Masaryk University Long-term Plan for 2020. The evaluation focused on Bachelor's, Master's and rigorous theses and, contrary to the original assumptions, was not completed until the spring of 2021 due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The evaluation followed up on the main findings from the extraordinary audit of Bachelor's, Master's and rigorous theses, which took place in the first half of 2019 at all faculties of Masaryk University and was primarily driven by the effort to reveal the level of plagiarism or other cases of unethical behaviour regarding theses submitted in 2000-2018. At the same time, it used methodological suggestions from the cooperation within the centralised development project of nine Czech universities aimed at strengthening the prevention of plagiarism in student theses, which Masaryk University coordinated in 2020.

In contrast to the previous orientation on plagiarism and academic ethics, the thematic evaluation focused more on preventive tools and possible support for students and academic staff in the preparation of qualification theses. Plagiarism remains the most visible phenomenon in this area, but attention needs to be devoted to all aspects of professional text production, which is one of the key responsibilities of most university students.

The thematic evaluation of Internationalisation also took place in 2020 and focused on degree programmes in the Czech language and the internationalisation of their curricula.

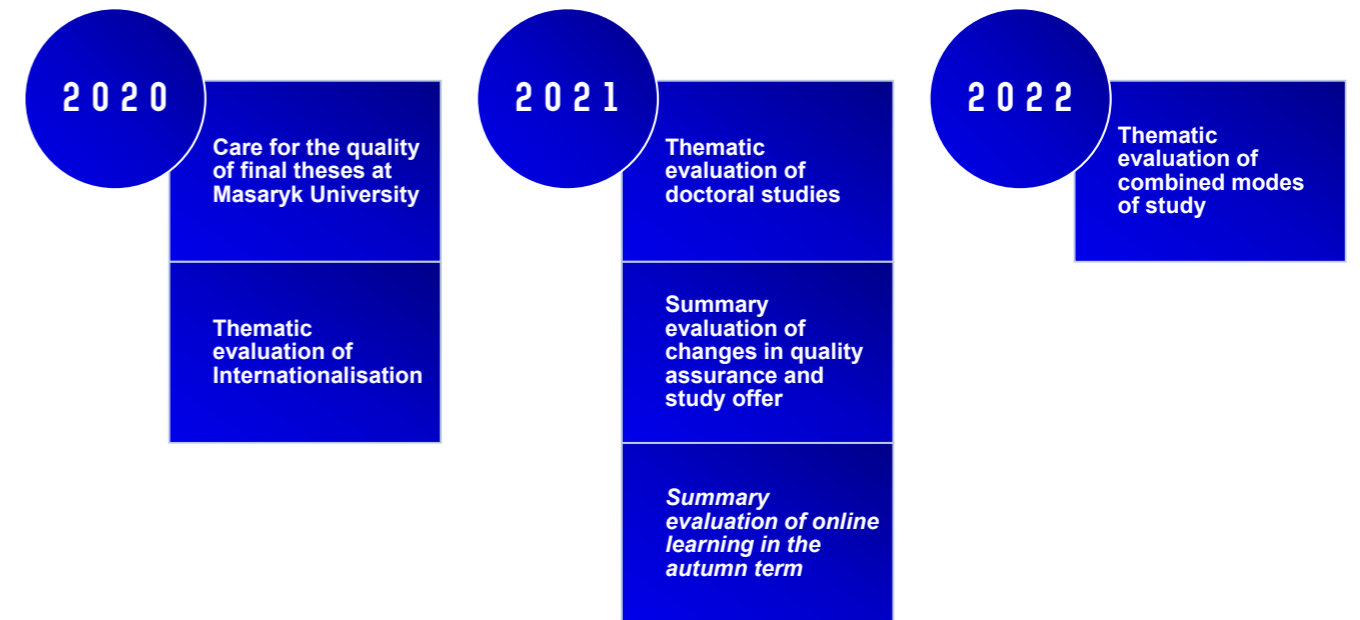
In 2021, three thematic evaluations took place. The Thematic Evaluation of Doctoral Studies responded, among other things, to the current need for an ongoing discussion on the concept of internal evaluation of doctoral studies and to the conclusions of the evaluation of science and research at MU according to Methodology 17+ in 2020. The aim of the thematic evaluation was to provide information on the current state of doctoral studies from the perspective of the University and individual faculties, with the aim of providing a comprehensive basis for the planned implementation of internal evaluation of research and doctoral degree programmes.

In that year, a thematic evaluation was also carried out, focusing on the *Summary Evaluation of Changes in Quality Assurance and Study Offer* and, in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, the *Summary Evaluation of Online Learning in the Autumn Term 2020*.

For 2022, the area of combined studies was selected for thematic evaluation. The evaluation focused primarily on an inter-faculty comparison of the system of combined degree programmes, their settings and conditions of operation with the aim of future systematisation of combined study and its individual forms across the University. The implementation of the thematic evaluation also became one of the outputs of the centralised development project for 2022: *Implementation of Standards for Quality Assurance of Educational Activities for Various Forms of Study into The Accreditation Process and Quality Assurance System at Individual Universities*.

The institute of thematic evaluations as part of the internal quality assurance and evaluation system has proved itself and is operational. It allows to deal with the topic in more depth and conceptualize it comprehensively. The thematic evaluation always results in a series of recommendations/follow-up actions leading to a revision of one of the mechanisms/elements of the internal quality assurance system. Over time, faculty management and the academic community have been increasingly involved in the preparation of thematic evaluations by setting up working groups on the topics.

Thematic Evaluations Implemented in 2018 – 2022



Planned actions and measures:

- However, the original idea of conducting 1-2 evaluations per year turned out to be unrealistic due to capacity reasons. In order to comprehensively cover the topic under study, the **number of thematic evaluations should be limited to one per year**.
- In the future, involve the **academic community even more intensively in thematic evaluations**, or use more **focus groups** with representatives of the academic community, depending on the topic under study (faculty management, academics, students).
- Better **communicate the outcomes and specific recommendations of thematic evaluations**, including their implementation within the university.
- A thematic evaluation focusing on the **validation of learning outcomes** was planned for 2023.

Teaching Quality and its Innovation

In 2015, the Masaryk University management began to intensively address the possibilities of pedagogical development of university teachers, which was later, along with other educational areas, incorporated into the *University's Long-term Plan for 2016-2020*, specifically into strategic priority number 9 entitled "Personnel Management and Professional Development of Employees" and strategic objective number 9.3 "Creating a Comprehensive System of Education of Masaryk University Employees".

Currently, the topic of teaching quality is emphasized by the *Masaryk University Strategic Plan 2021-2028*. Here, the quality of teaching and education is the subject of the first chapter of the document and is expressed in five basic strategic objectives, which are further developed in several key results and indicators. In terms of the development of teaching competences of teachers, these indicators include in particular: the full integration of teaching competences and experience into the criteria of the habilitation and professor appointment procedure as well as consideration and specification

in job descriptions (Indicator 1. 1. 1), as well as setting up a system for rewarding excellent pedagogical work, where individuals and academic teams will be rewarded and the creation and dissemination of teaching innovations will be supported by specific tools (Indicator 1. 1. 2). To meet these indicators, the Strategic Plan proposes a number of specific measures, such as. support for academic staff in the area of teaching methods, strengthening the prestige of the pedagogical work of academic staff, identification of examples of teaching excellence, standardisation of the development of pedagogical competences of academic staff and PhD students, use of knowledge on the quality of teaching obtained through student evaluations, support for the development, implementation and appreciation of teaching innovations, support for teaching following modern trends, increasing interactivity in teaching, support for project and simulation teaching, etc.

Development and Support of Pedagogical Competences of University Teachers

The area of development and support of pedagogical competences of university teachers is primarily provided by two closely cooperating units: Centre for the Development of Competences (CERPEK) and the Department for Quality of the Rectorate of Masaryk University. The role of CERPEK is primarily practical in the field of quality of teaching and education, for example through training and workshops. The RMU Quality Department is primarily responsible for the area strategically and conceptually, for example by producing conceptual and methodological documents and recommendations or through internal project calls to develop and support the quality of teaching and learning.

Since 2015, a concept for the establishment of CERPEK – Centre for the Development of Pedagogical Competences (now the Centre for the Development of Competences) has been prepared within the Institute of Pedagogical Sciences of the MU Faculty of Arts. In this context, four key areas of pedagogical competences of university teachers were defined: competences related to the teaching profession (e.g. motivation for teaching activities related to self-management and self-reflection, identification with the role of a teacher, etc.); competences related to the design of teaching (e.g. working with curriculum, working with goals, methods and forms of teaching, assessment of learners' work, etc.); competences related to student leadership and management (e.g. communication skills, ability to motivate students to learn, etc.); and finally competences related to the use of new technologies.

In 2017, the Centre for the Development of Pedagogical Competence (hereinafter "CERPEK") was established. Initially, it worked as a university-wide professional unit based on the MUNI project 4.0 at the Rectorate of Masaryk University as part of the Department of Academic Affairs.

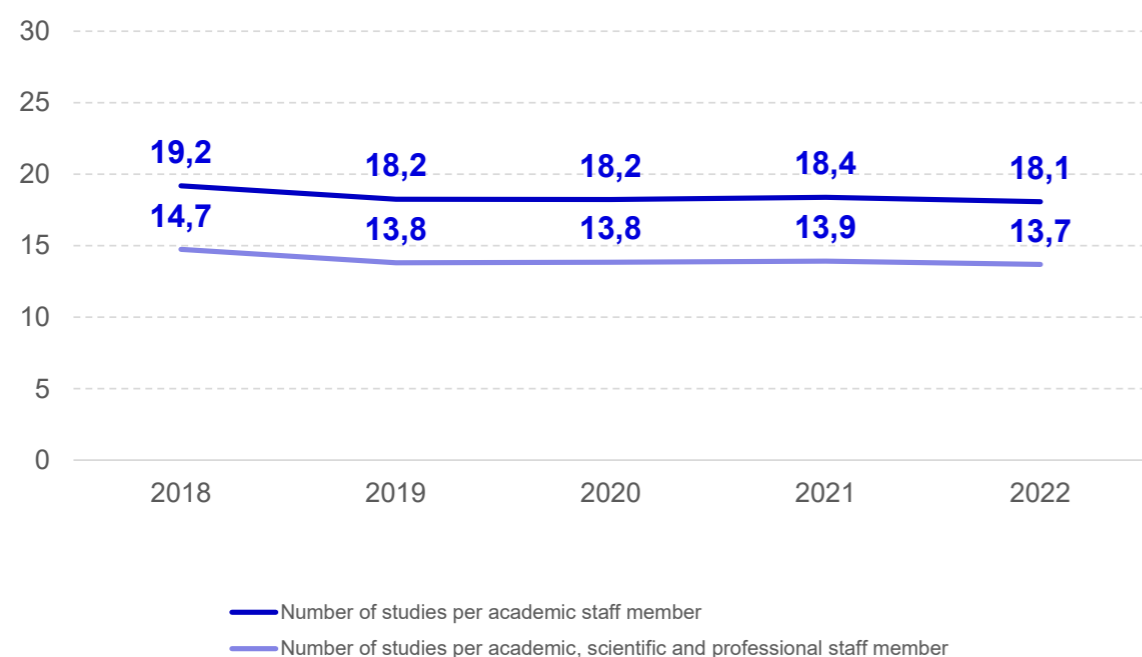
This Department provided methodological guidance and support to the faculties in the field of academic staff personnel policy (qualification procedure, evaluation of academic staff, etc.). In January 2019, CERPEK became independent and thus an original unit within the Rectorate of Masaryk University, which enabled the expansion of the agenda and the offer of other types of educational activities. At that time, it was the only centre of this type not only at Masaryk University but also in the whole Czech Republic.

In 2022, the Centre expanded the range of competences it develops through its activities – the original area of pedagogical competences was supplemented by competences for leading people and personal competences.

The current CERPEK offer includes a wide range of development and training opportunities for MU employees, which are constantly being innovated according to the requirements and needs of MU in accordance with current trends in higher education and based on the results of research in this area. The main task of CERPEK is to systematically raise the level of pedagogical competences of university teachers. CERPEK's activities are mainly directed towards four target groups:

- It offers university teachers highly individualised development of pedagogical competences, increases the level of identification with the role of a university teacher, strengthens teachers' self-confidence and provides them with traditional and innovative tools that support the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of teaching, and last but not least helps to build a learning community;
- It provides students with the opportunity to learn under the guidance of trained teachers, which contributes to their better opinion of teaching, and this can become a motivation for student retention, thereby reducing academic failure;

Development of the Number of Studies per Academic Staff Member in 2018-2022



— It enables Masaryk University as an institution to strengthen its brand as a modern world university that cares for its staff and students and provides effective support to university teachers. Through the existence and good functioning of CERPEK, Masaryk University can get closer to prestigious foreign universities where such education is common;

— CERPEK can bring current trends and innovations in the education of university teachers closer to domestic universities and Masaryk University can become an example of good practice.

In addition to the permanent staff (director, managers and lecturers for the development of pedagogical competences, managerial and personal competences, workshop coordinator, methodologist and analyst for educational development, etc.), CERPEK's activities are also carried out by external lecturers, mentors and experts in the field of higher education teaching and education and related competences.

Current CERPEK Offer



CERPEK has so far carried out a wide range of activities, including educational programme “Development of Pedagogical Competences” (annual educational programme for MU teachers), workshops focused on the development of university teaching (highly specialised workshops), individual mentoring, educational programme “Fundamentals of University Pedagogy for Doctoral Students”, training programme “Effective Training for Internationalisation” (for teachers of foreign students), courses “Academic Writing for Publication” (development of academic writing in English), workshops “Improving and Innovating the Preparation of Future Teachers at MUNI” (for educators of future teachers), training programme “Workshop on the Development of Pedagogical Competences” (term-long training programme for staff and doctoral students), informal meetings for graduates of CERPEK educational activities (group reflective activities focused on teaching CERPEK graduates), discussions about teaching (sharing experiences on specific topics).

The specific activities leading to the support and development of teachers’ pedagogical competences are based, among other things, on pedagogical research procedures, on which CERPEK and the Department for Quality collaborate. Examples include meetings with teachers of the so-called CORE courses of the common basis, the preparation of which is supported by centralized calls issued by the RMU Quality Department. Using guided group interviews with teachers of CORE

courses their current needs for the development of pedagogic competences are determined and, based on this, an offer of specific training activities is compiled.

The development of CERPEK’s activities in the coming years is based on the thesis that teaching is considered a full-fledged part of the work of an academic. It is expected that all MU teachers will have the opportunity and motivation to systematically develop their pedagogical skills. It is also assumed that systematic improvement of pedagogical competences of university teachers Development of pedagogical skills will be based on clearly formulated criteria for the quality of university teaching and on the competence framework for university teachers.

The aim is to achieve a conception of university teaching where teaching becomes at least as essential and important component of academic work as scientific performance. This will be reflected, for example, in the finances that will be directed towards the development and support of teaching quality, but also in the inclusion of the issue of the quality of university teaching in the prerequisites and requirements for the qualification growth of academic staff, where the topic of teaching quality will be included among the requirements for habilitation and professor procedures.

Planned actions and measures:

The framework of basic pedagogical competences, which was defined in 2015 in connection with the preparation of the establishment of CERPEK, will be modified and developed in 2023 in connection with the CRP project – Standards of Teaching Quality at Czech Universities:

— **A draft competency model for MU university teachers and a draft set of teaching quality indicators** will be created – this will be usable for the daily practice of university teachers and will not only help them to increase their motivation for teaching, but will also help them to develop their self-concept as teachers. The competency model proposed within the Proformance – Assessment Tool and Incentive Systems for Developing Higher Education Teachers’ Performance

Developing and Promoting Teaching Excellence

The “Masaryk University Strategic Plan 2021-2028” envisages, among other things, the identification of excellent pedagogical work of individuals and teams in the field of teaching, as well as the creation and dissemination of teaching innovations (Indicators 1. 1. 1 and 1. 1. 2). In this context, the Strategic Plan proposes measures aimed at introducing and systematically supporting excellent teaching, which are implemented in cooperation between the RMU Quality Department and CERPEK. Among other things, the Strategic Plan envisages the identification of degree programmes of excellence in the teaching field, strengthening the

importance and prestige of teaching work, identifying examples of quality teaching and introducing and supporting innovative teaching methods and forms.

RMU Quality Department organizes and administers internal project competitions aimed at developing and promoting teaching excellence. CERPEK representatives are professionally involved in the content design of these project calls, in the evaluation of project applications and also provide methodological support to teachers involved in these projects, for example in the form of training, workshops or individual consultations.

Planned actions and measures:

- In April 2023, RMU Quality Department announced an internal project call – **Support for Excellent Degree Programmes at Masaryk University** – Excellence in Teaching, within the framework of the Programme for Supporting Strategic Management of Universities for 2022-2025 (PSSM). The aim of the project call is to identify and support the further development of excellent degree programmes (DP) at Masaryk University. An excellent DP is an already existing, i.e. implemented, Bachelor's, further Master's or Master's DP with excellent teaching, i.e. one that demonstrably achieves exceptional quality in the defined fields.
- The development and support of excellent teaching at Masaryk University will be ensured, among other things, also through the call – **Innovation in Teaching of Key Courses of Masaryk University Degree Programmes**. This call was launched by the RMU Quality Department in March 2023 and is also part of the 2022-2025 Strategic Management Support Programme for Universities. Approximately 40-50 project proposals are expected to be supported under the call, with implementation taking place between July 2023 and June 2024. The second round of the project call with the same parameters is planned for 2024 and projects under this second round will be implemented from July 2024 to June 2025. As part of the project work, the members of the project implementation teams will further develop their pedagogical competences and participate in the dissemination of good practice in the field of excellent teaching at Masaryk University.
- A number of **other measures** are also planned, e.g. work on methodological materials for other MU units, organising or participating in workshops (CERPEK is expected to participate), creating a popularisation video on teaching methods and teaching procedures in the programme, publishing contributions on the MU website (website of the RMU Quality Department), enabling visits during teaching (hospitalization), continuous reflection in the form of participation in reflective meetings with the RMU Quality Department and CERPEK, creation of a development portfolio for teaching, etc.

Teacher Appreciation System

Teacher appreciation at Masaryk University is also based on the theses of the “Masaryk University Strategic Plan 2021-2028”, which includes a system of appreciation of outstanding pedagogical work of individuals and academic teams in key results and indicators in the field of teaching. The main objective of this system is, in addition to the dissemination of good practice within the University, also to strengthen the prestige of the teaching work of academic staff, as stated in the measures for fulfilling the objectives of the Strategic Plan.

Masaryk University promotes and recognises examples of excellent teaching through three annual internal awards for outstanding quality teaching. These are: the Masaryk University Rector's Award for Outstanding Teachers, the Masaryk University Rector's Award for Innovation in Teaching and finally the Academic Senate (AS) Student Chamber Award for Student Contribution to Teaching.

The Masaryk University Rector's Award for Outstanding Teachers is intended to recognise the quality teaching activities of MU employees; therefore, only the nominees' teaching activities are deliberately assessed. A total of three teachers are awarded according to the focus of their teaching activity (one for each category), namely for the field of natural sciences and medicine, for the field of social sciences and humanities and for the field of economics and informatics.

The Masaryk University Rector's Award for Innovation in Teaching is intended for MU employees (or teams of which they are members – a group of persons may be nominated) for their creative and innovative approach to teaching, technical support, and the introduction and development of tools and methods leading to improved teaching, e.g. in online mode. The prize is awarded in two subcategories: teaching area, teaching support area.

The AS Student Chamber Award for Student Contribution to Teaching is intended for MU students involved in teaching in the form of direct teaching, possibly also by supervising theses or creating teaching materials. One student is always awarded in the same categories as the MU Rector's Award for Outstanding Teachers.

Planned actions and measures:

- To work systematically **with award-winning teachers** and to actively promote/use them as examples of good practice in relation to the field specifics of the degree programmes.

Academic Ethics in Teaching and Education

In 2020, as part of the implementation of development projects, the Quality Department expanded its portfolio to include the topic of academic integrity as part of quality assurance of teaching and educational activities. The centralized development project Strengthening the Prevention of Plagiarism in student theses focused on supporting students in the areas of academic writing and academic integrity. Its starting point was intensive cooperation of Czech universities in assessing the current state of affairs, identifying and disseminating examples of good practice, developing common recommendations of an institutional nature and, last but not least, defining common criteria for evaluating manifestations of plagiarism and explaining them to academic staff and students.

The output of the project was a set of recommendations aimed at promoting the teaching of academic writing and preventing phenomena contrary to academic ethics, using examples of good practice from Czech and foreign universities, as well as manuals for students and academic staff that summarise the rules of academic writing.

The project has continued successfully with follow-up measures in the following years, and the topic of academic integrity has gained importance and relevance, especially in the context of the use of artificial intelligence in teaching and education, which currently represents the main direction of development for the future. It is based on the assumption that the development of artificial intelligence (AI) tools used primarily for text generating and making them available to the general public (such as ChatGPT) will undoubtedly lead to extraordinary changes in the field of teaching and education and academic integrity.

In connection with this, a working group for the use of AI tools in teaching began its work at Masaryk University. The group, which currently has 17 members,

operates under the gestion of the Vice Dean for education and quality and is coordinated by the RMU Quality Department. The members of the group are representatives of Masaryk University management, representatives of individual faculties of the University and experts in the fields of university didactics and pedagogy, informatics and law.

In April 2023, the working group issued a document “Opinion on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Teaching at Masaryk University”. The document presents the basic position of Masaryk University on the issue of using AI in university education. The intention of Masaryk University is to promote the use of AI tools and at the same time to formulate conditions and recommendations for their active use by both students and teachers. The aim is to formulate principles that can become the starting points for ethical, creative, beneficial and safe use of AI tools in the university environment. In the course of 2023, the group intends to continue working on specific methodologies and recommendations, as well as on the preparation of tutorials and workshops on AI for teachers and students, and to continuously respond to the dynamic developments in the field of AI tools.

Planned actions and measures:

It is anticipated that generative AI tools such as ChatGPT will be used in higher education, particularly in the following areas:

- **Personalised learning**, where generative AI can help learners with different levels of knowledge and ability by providing them with personalised feedback and learning support. AI tools can be used as an interactive learning tool to help learners understand concepts, solve problems, and even self-monitor as they learn.
- An area of **language practice**, where generative AI can be used to practice foreign languages, where learners can converse with AI in their chosen language and improve their communication skills.
- As a writing support, where generative AI can help with essay creation, with suggestions for text structures, with brainstorming themes, and even with grammar and stylistics. When preparing texts, it is advisable to indicate that a particular tool has been used or, depending on the circumstances of its use, to cite the relevant passages. More detailed methodological guidance or recommendations will need to be provided.
- Generative AI can be incorporated in various ways within **activating learning methods** and thus increase engagement of learners – learners are expected to have applications available, etc. with integrated AI to increase student engagement and promote active learning. AI tools can be effectively used in **blended learning**, especially as part of e-learning or online study materials and applications.
- Last but not least, generative AI can be used to **support research**, not only as a source of information (with the aforementioned call for caution), but especially in data processing and analysis. AI tools, for example, can also be a very effective tool for transcribing interviews. In any case, it should be emphasized that generative AI tools cannot fully replace qualified teachers or experts, but they can be an important complement to teaching and support for learners.

In the future, a series of recommendations for the use of artificial intelligence in theses will be developed, focusing on:

- An **overview of existing AI and ML tools** and how they can be used in text processing;
- Recommendations on how to **reference and cite** when using such tools and applications;
- Informative **website application** for the use of AI in teaching and learning;
- **Workshops and training** for teachers.

Student Polls and Surveys

One of the basic elements of the system for ensuring and monitoring the quality of educational activities and directly associated activities is feedback obtained through student surveys.

University-wide Surveys

The portfolio of institutional surveys built up over the years has become relatively stable. The current range of surveys thus covers all stages of study from applicants to graduates, including the term-long course survey. The longest two graduate surveys have been carried out since 1994 and 1996, respectively. The university-wide course survey has been conducted at the university since 2002 in the spring and autumn terms. In 2007, a survey was launched for the first time to find out the motivations and expectations of first-year students, in 2012, students who ended their studies early were surveyed for the first time, and in 2014 the survey scheme was extended to survey students who come to the follow-up Master's

programme from other universities. And in 2016, for the first time, a survey was held with applicants applying to MU.

In connection with the transfer of the Faculty of Pharmacy from the VFU to MU, surveys were conducted in 2020 regarding students and graduates of this faculty, which provided insights into the specific situation resulting from the change of the university during the course of their studies. Since 2021, the faculty has been fully included in all MU university-wide surveys.

The period of 2018-2022 was mainly marked by innovations in the already established investigations, both in terms of the actual content of the investigations and the way they were evaluated. Cooperation with faculties has been significantly strengthened in this respect. Starting in 2018, they were given the opportunity to add a faculty module to the university-wide surveys

with questions according to their specific needs. These questions are then answered only by respondents who are applicants, students or graduates of the faculty.

In order to strengthen the work with the results of faculty surveys, all surveys with sufficient representation of respondents have also been processed into the form of faculty reports since 2018. In addition to the university-wide research report, there are also 10 faculty reports based on the responses of respondents from each faculty, both to university-wide questions (i.e. questions that are identical for respondents from all faculties) and to faculty questions. These measures have significantly contributed to strengthening the work with survey results on the part of the faculties.

In 2021, the Surveys in the MU Information System application underwent a major innovation. It is used for both institutional surveys and university-wide student evaluation of teaching in the so-called course survey. The application now works in a responsive design, providing a much more user-friendly environment for completing the survey on both desktop and mobile devices. According to MU IS statistics, access to the questionnaire via mobile devices is now return rate is attributable to this factor as well.

In line with the University's strategic objectives for internationalisation, all student surveys have also been conducted in English since 2021. All surveys can now reach the entire defined population of respondents, including foreigners. The entire application - Survey in the MU Information System is also available in English, within which the questionnaires are implemented.

Measures related to the situation caused by the pandemic of the covid-19 disease were already reflected by Masaryk University in 2020 by including questions on the perception of distance learning during the pandemic in institutional surveys, including a course survey. Thanks to this, it was possible to ensure direct feedback on distance education from students, graduates and applicants. The results showed that a significant majority rated the efforts and actions of Masaryk University as

positive - according to the respondents, teaching at MU was conducted at an appropriate level even in the online mode.

Since 2021, the surveys have also focused on attitudes towards sustainable development issues. Respondents are asked how important the topic is to them, in what ways the University should contribute to addressing the challenges of sustainable development, and how the respondents themselves feel about the topic. Suggestions for specific projects or initiatives in which the University could be involved are being collected. The results of the survey across different groups of respondents at MU show that for 80-90% of them this is an important topic that the University should address. They mostly support the University's environmentally friendly operation, volunteering and association activities, and spreading awareness of sustainable development issues.

Thanks to surveys, MU has a good overview of its graduates' employment, their career paths and the challenges they face in the transition from academic to professional life. From the Survey - Completion of Studies at MU - Looking Back and Perspective among recent Master's graduates from 2022 shows that 69% of the respondents were working or had a job secured at the time of the survey, half of the graduates continued in their jobs, they had already obtained during their studies, and 87% of those employed declared working in the field they had prepared for during their studies at MU. 89% of graduates rated their employment as promising. The proportion of students who earn extra income while studying has increased from 59% to 70% over the last five years. At the same time, the proportion of graduates who rated the job search process as very or quite difficult has increased slightly, from 16% in 2017 to 21% in 2022. The level of satisfaction of graduates with what the University has given them in their lives has increased over the past years and now reaches 91%.

Survey of Applicants to Study at MU in 2022

How would you characterize Masaryk University? In your opinion, Masaryk University is...



The graduate surveys also raise topics related to the content of studies at MU. A majority of graduate respondents perceive their studies at MU as too theoretically oriented, which is rather desirable for selected disciplines, despite the opinion of graduates, but not elsewhere. Respondents ranked the prestige of the school, the location of the school, the attractive and pleasant environment of the school/faculty and the quality of teachers from a professional point of view among the strongest aspects of studying at MU. On the other hand, the worst-rated aspects include opportunities to do an internship or placement, opportunities to engage in creative activities beyond study and accommodation in dormitories.

Through surveys of applicants and first-year students, Masaryk University is mapping not only its position, but also a number of current topics on which it needs to know the attitudes of these target groups. In summary, they show that MU is perceived as a prestigious school with a wide range of degree programmes and good access to information. Applicants for studies decided to apply to MU most often on the basis of the expected quality of studies, the content of studies and other characteristics of a particular degree programme. First-year students who submitted multiple applications most often made their choice of study based on the content of

the degree programmes themselves and the prestige of the University. Also students, who have come from other universities, choose MU because of the range of degree programmes and prestige.

Between 2017 and 2020, a longitudinal survey of young adults who started their first year of study in autumn 2017 was carried out in collaboration between three units (the Institute of Educational Sciences of the MU Faculty of Philosophy, the Institute of Research on Children, Youth and Family of the MU Faculty of Social Sciences and the Strategy Department of the MU Rectorate) and it followed their journey through their studies for the next three years. The aim was to explore and map the educational trajectories of current Masaryk University students in the broader context of their everyday experience.

The stable spectrum of surveys described above is occasionally supplemented by other surveys from the national or international level or by surveys according to the specific needs of the faculties. For example, in 2022 Masaryk University participated in a total of 20 surveys. In addition to the traditional university-wide surveys already mentioned, these included two surveys of foreign applicants for doctoral degree programme, a survey of Pedagogical Faculty graduates in the combined

form, a survey on CORE courses of the common university foundation (a set of 31 surveys) and external surveys conducted mostly by the Centre for Higher Education Studies (CSVŠ) / Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports: Doktorandi 2021, Eurostudent VIII, Eurograduate 2022, National Survey of Perceived Teacher Readiness and others.

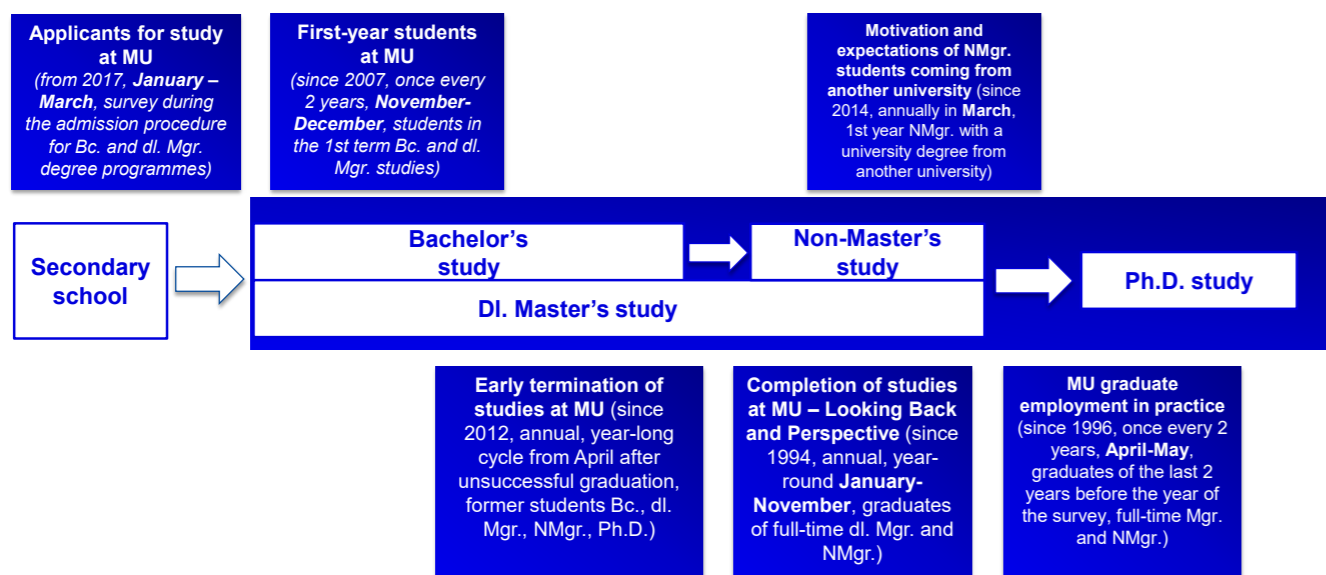
At the end of 2022, it was decided to expand the scheme of institutional surveys in 2023 by two new surveys reflecting the needs of the faculties: the lack of interest of applicants in some degree programmes and the unsatisfactory enrolment rate of successful applicants who passed the MU entrance examinations. The first target group will be high school graduates applying to university but not applying to study at MU, the survey will be conducted between April and May 2023. The second target group will be successful applicants who were accepted to study at MU but ultimately decided to enrol at another university. The survey will be carried out between June and September 2023. The opinions and ideas of the two target groups, in terms of how they think about Masaryk University in comparison with other universities, which they ultimately preferred in the application or enrolment phase, are crucial for MU in solving crucial issues in the study offer, admission procedure, facilities for students, etc.

- Since 2018, the internal communication of the conclusions of student surveys has been significantly strengthened – regular presentations of the conclusions not only at MU management meetings, but also at the Rector’s meetings, at meetings of Vice-Deans for studies, and at meetings of Vice-Deans for external relations. This has contributed significantly to the dissemination of the findings and naturally to the implementation of the findings in the faculties.
- Since 2020, incorporation of questions on perceptions of distance learning in a pandemic into institutional surveys, including course surveys.
- Inclusion of the MU Faculty of Pharmacy in all MU university-wide surveys since 2021, with appropriate technical and methodological support provided to academic staff.
- After two years of development since 2021, the Surveys application works in a responsive design, providing a much more user-friendly environment for completing the survey on both desktop and mobile devices.
- Since 2021, all student surveys have also been conducted in English.
- Since 2021, the university-wide research has also focused on students’ attitudes towards sustainable development issues. The conclusions, especially with specific recommendations for activities for the University, were used, for example, to prepare the concept of a fund to financially support student and employee activities in the field of sustainable development and social responsibility.

Summary of main development activities in 2018-2022:

- Since 2018, most university-wide surveys have defined faculty modules with questions according to specific faculty needs, and the RMU Strategy Department also produces 10 faculty reports based on the responses of respondents from each faculty in addition to the university-wide survey report.

Institutional research at MU in relation to study phases and target groups, including graduates and applicants



Planned actions and measures:

- Establish an obligation for the faculty management to become familiar with the results of institutional surveys and take a position on those conclusions where inappropriate practice on the part of the student is indicated.
- Strengthen the emphasis on work with the results of institutional surveys in the context of quality assurance of degree programmes, reflecting the findings in the Programme Boards.
- Regularly present the results of institutional surveys to the MU Internal Evaluation Board as a necessary context for decision-making on degree programmes and other related topics.
- Anchor the scheme of institutional surveys in the form of an internal standard, with a clear delineation of responsibilities towards the units and responsible persons from the preparation phase through implementation, evaluation and reflection of the findings.

Course Survey

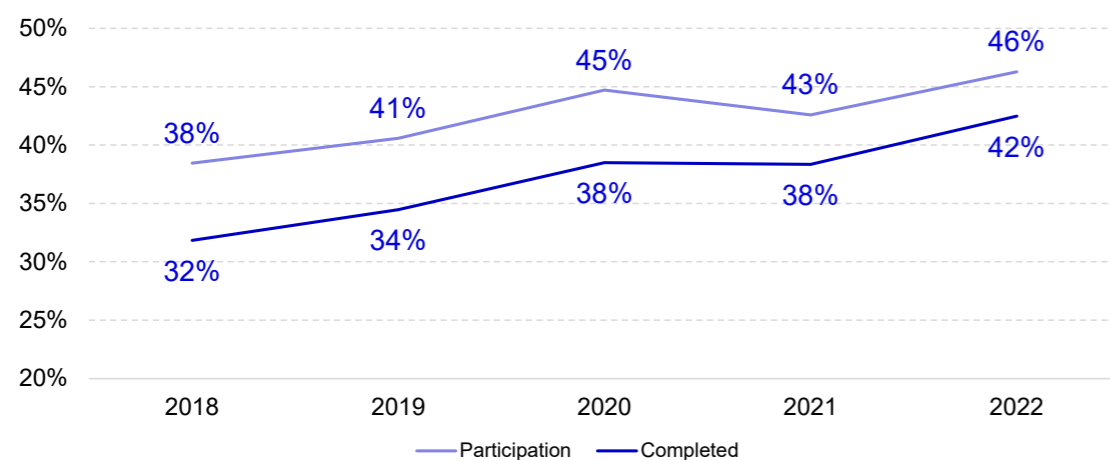
An important university-wide tool in the quality assurance and monitoring system is the student evaluation of the quality of teaching or course survey. The questions focus on the evaluation of the subject and the teacher from the student’s perspective; the faculties have a possibility to include their own specific questions in the course survey, which is currently used by five faculties Faculty of Medicine (LF), Faculty of Law (PrF), Faculty of Social Studies (FSS), Faculty of Informatics (FI), Faculty of Sports Studies (FSpS)). The university-wide survey has been a part of the closing of every term at MU since 2002. Its results are first of all feedback for the teachers themselves, then one of the auxiliary inputs for the evaluation of pedagogical work and last but not least, thanks to the university-wide implementation, they help to detect possible undesirable excesses anywhere in the

University. The methodology and content focus of the course survey has been stable for a long time, providing comparable data back to 2014.

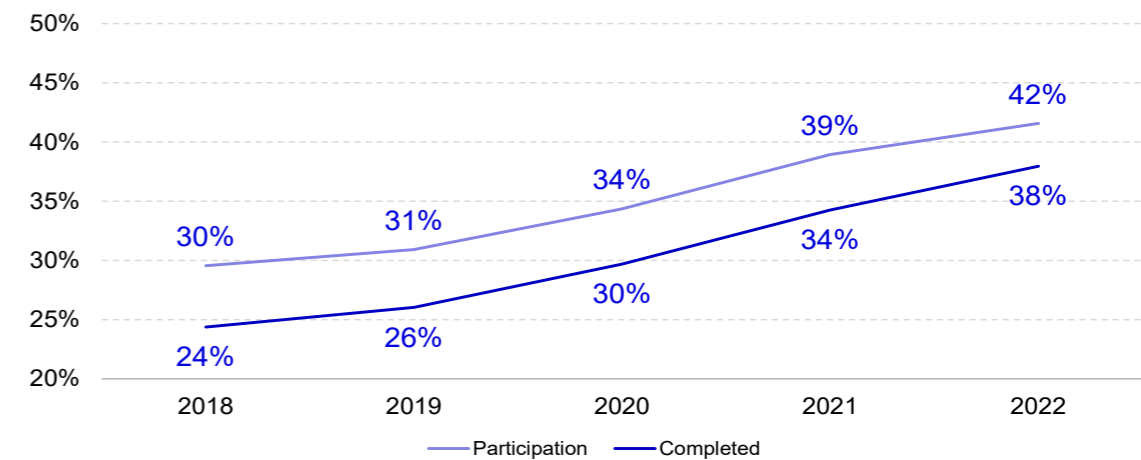
The survey provides relevant results: since 2016, its return rate has continuously increased, reaching a return rate of 46% in the evaluation for the autumn term of 2022.

The results of the survey provide nominal feedback for each teacher on the courses they teach. Programme guarantors, heads of departments and faculty management receive feedback on the teachers and the courses taught. For this purpose, the results of the course survey are linked to the EVAK (Evaluation of Academic

Course Survey Return Rate in Autumn Term 2018-2022



Course Survey Return Rate in Spring Term 2018-2022



Staff) application in the MU Information System, which is a source of supporting data for the evaluation of the teacher by their supervisor.

Furthermore, the results of the course survey are part of the annual evaluation of degree programmes. The evaluation is carried out by the Programme Board, for which the export of the results of the course survey for the courses of the given programme for a given term, including student verbal comments on open

questions is available in the MU Information System. Evaluation takes place at least once a year (e.g. at the Faculty of Social Studies every term). In the autumn, the programme guarantor will invite the Programme Board to evaluate the programme, which addresses, among other things, the results of the course survey. The MU Internal Evaluation Board (IEB) has the minutes of this evaluation available. For example, the IEB evaluated the online teaching at MU using the results of the course survey.

Planned actions and measures:

- Create a managerial extension for different target groups: the current yield of information from the survey is not sufficient, the survey results are available unstructured in the MU IS and in a generated PDF, guarantors/teachers now ask for customized exports. A management extension would offer significantly more user-friendly outputs, e.g. with an embedded link to the core/profile courses of the programme, with a comparison of course or teacher evaluation in a time series, etc.
- Motivate teachers to respond to the results of the survey towards students: the possibility to comment on the results is still used by teachers to a limited extent (most – 5% of teachers – respond at Faculty of Economics and Administration (ESF), at other faculties only 1-2% of teachers comment), consider the teachers' obligation to respond in writing to the results of the course survey. Moreover, this would increase awareness of the work with the results of the survey towards students.
- Strengthen the emphasis on work with the results of course surveys in all processes of quality assurance of degree programmes: the work of the guarantor, Programme Boards and the IEB in the evaluation and approval of degree programmes.
- Methodically take responsibility for the transparent settlement of suggestions at the individual levels of work with the course survey, publish the impact of the survey feedback at the university/faculty level – both formally and informally (informing by the teacher directly during teaching, meeting of the faculty management with students, etc.).

Involvement of Students in the Processes of Quality Assurance and Evaluation of Degree Programmes

Students are involved at the level of degree programmes in the processes of evaluating the quality of educational activities related to the establishment and implementation of specific degree programmes. They are involved both from the position of learners and from the position of graduates of these degree programmes.

When new degree programmes are established and when major changes are made to existing degree programmes, they participate in discussions on their form at the Faculty Academic Senates. According to the internal regulations of the University, they comment on proposals for the establishment or expansion of degree programmes, but also on proposals for extending the authorization to carry out a degree programme. Students have a representative in the Internal Evaluation Board, which discusses and decides on these proposals.

The membership of student representatives in the Programme Boards of Bachelor's, Master's and postgraduate degree programmes is crucial. In this advisory body of the degree programme guarantor, they comment on updates to the development plan or planned changes to the degree programme. They are therefore involved in the continuous evaluation of the degree programme and bring immediate continuous feedback from the target group for which the programme is implemented.

During the regular internal evaluation of Bachelor's, Master's and post-master's degree programmes, which takes place at five-year intervals, a student representative or a graduate of the programme is a member of the panel of evaluators. He/she prepares an evaluation opinion based on the documents provided by the guarantor and proposes measures for further development of the programme. He/she participates in the evaluation meeting where active actors directly enter the discussion on the content and structure of the programme, its staffing and further overall direction.

As part of the regular five-year evaluation of doctoral degree programmes, student representatives attend meetings with members of the evaluation panel. During this meeting, student representatives have the opportunity to express their opinion on the quality of doctoral degree programmes; the evaluators are mainly interested in the involvement of students in scientific research activities or whether a feedback system is set up towards doctoral students. The conclusions of this meeting are then reflected by the evaluators in the evaluation report.

At the course level, students have the opportunity to express their opinions on the courses they have taken and on individual teachers through a course survey. The feedback from the course survey is irreplaceable as direct feedback, and the results are further worked with. They are discussed at regular meetings of the Programme Board and are also reflected in the five-year evaluation of the degree programme. In this context, these results, and in particular the measures implemented in response to them, are taken into account by the Internal Evaluation Board when proposing the renewal of the authorisation to carry out the degree programme.

With the growing emphasis on quality assurance of educational activities, and thus directly on teaching and learning itself, a process of which students are direct consumers, their active involvement in quality evaluation processes is essential. A key factor for the successful involvement of students in feedback processes is a regular information campaign towards students and the creation of a space for exchange of student representatives' experiences. Regular repetition of information events is very important due to the circulation of students, especially in Programme Boards or academic senates.

While at the level of Programme Boards, student representatives participate in at least two regular programme evaluations (the Programme Board meets at least once a year), if they are in the role of programme evaluators, this is a one-off activity. This also implies a different approach to how and about what to inform student representatives in these roles.

At the level of doctoral degree programmes, the involvement of students in continuous internal evaluation is less pronounced. While the Programme Boards were established as an internal activity of the

University and the University could determine their composition; the Doctoral Boards are established by law and do not include student representatives. Therefore, it is more difficult to create conditions for doctoral students' involvement in feedback processes. One solution being considered is the creation of a student panel as an advisory body to the student representative in the IEB with a higher representation of doctoral students. The students are part of a working group addressing current, strategic and conceptual issues of doctoral studies at Masaryk University.

Planned actions and measures:

- **At a general level:** to introduce the possibility of involving learners in the processes of evaluating the quality of educational activities right at the start of their studies (Prvákoviny – Information event for the first year).
- **At a programme board level:** provide students with information on their role, rights and duties in the form of regular information meetings connected with sharing experiences – once a year, the Quality Department will organise a meeting of the IEB representatives and MU management with representatives of students in the programme boards.
- **At a programme evaluation level:** obtain feedback on the evaluation process from degree programme evaluators by means of a questionnaire survey and prepare information materials according to the findings and provide them to students in their role as evaluators.

Teaching in Pandemic Period and Online Education

Since spring 2020, Masaryk University has been forced to respond flexibly to the spread of coronavirus infection and related anti-pandemic measures. In order to protect the health of students, staff and the surrounding area, all contact teaching outside of research-associated activities was cancelled from 10 March 2020. This situation necessitated the rapid transfer of key elements of the teaching to the online environment. In response to the Government's measures, special measures were continuously issued by the Rector, and the basic framework for the provision of educational activities was created by the special rules for studies in the spring term of 2020. The methods of distance learning, the termination of courses, the organisation of state final examinations and the key dates of the academic year were modified. Thanks to the support of its partners, Masaryk University has made thousands of books available for online study to its students through the so-called E-loan.

In order to mitigate the impact of the pandemic, the MU Internal Evaluation Board supported the further use of non-contact forms of teaching and distance learning tools in all types of degree programmes and regardless of the official study mode. With the beginning of the new academic year, Masaryk University introduced a coronavirus traffic light, whose task is to regulate activities at individual MU faculties and units depending on the current level of spread of the covid-19 infection. Also, the special rules for the organisation of teaching in the autumn term of 2020 had already foreseen a situation in which the University was finally forced to abolish contact teaching again on 12 October 2020, except for practical courses in the medical degree programmes.

A special working group was set up to support online learning at MU by bringing together key people who continuously develop contactless learning tools and procedures in various parts of the University and offer assistance in their practical implementation.

In 2021, the Board for Internal Evaluation commissioned an analysis on the replacement of practice and practical teaching, particularly with regard to the replacement of practice in teacher degree programmes. The University has managed to provide internships and practical training, thanks to exemptions for medical, healthcare and pharmaceutical disciplines resulting from a government resolution.

A total of 93 new online courses were created and 151 online courses were substantially upgraded as part of internal projects at the faculties. The level of use of distance learning tools was increased at all MU faculties. Emphasis was placed on mass lectures.

The faculties then increased central technical support for the preparation of online learning materials. Equipment was purchased for distance learning purposes for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, namely laptops, tablets, headphones and microphones for use in online learning.

All measures were reflected by Masaryk University by including questions on the perception of distance learning during the pandemic in institutional surveys, including a course survey. Thanks to this, it was possible to ensure direct feedback on distance education from students and graduates or applicants. The results showed that a significant majority rated the efforts and actions of Masaryk University as positive - according to the respondents, teaching at MU was conducted at an appropriate level even in the online mode.

Even after the end of the pandemic, the topic of distance elements in learning remains an important point of quality assurance and one of the development directions for the future period.

Evaluation of Creative Activity

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Institutional and Internal Evaluation of Science and Research

Masaryk University profiles itself as a research university of growing importance in the European and world scientific space. The successful implementation of major infrastructure projects in recent years represents the basic potential to significantly increase the international visibility and quality of research. MU's international role in this field is evidenced by its involvement in a number of international consortia. Internal evaluation activities are essential processes for stimulating scientific performance. At individual faculties and university institutes, they are conducted

at the level of the unit and at the level of the manager and employee. Within the University, institutional and internal evaluation of science and research is professionally provided by the Centre for Scientometric Support and Evaluation at the Research Department of the MU Rectorate. The activities provided by the centre provide MU with the necessary strategic information for R&D management and at the same time provide indispensable feedback for institutions, teams and individual career development.

the University and its strategy for further development every five years. An international evaluation panel is appointed to evaluate these modules.

In 2020, MU, as well as other universities in the Czech Republic, carried out science evaluation according to the national Methodology 2017+ for the first time in its full implementation, i.e. in all five modules. In view of the pandemic situation, the panel visited MU only virtually. In the evaluation of the first two modules and modules 4 and 5, MU received the best rating. In Module M3, individual faculties and institutes were rated from 3 to 5 (good – excellent), with excellent ratings going to the Faculty of Informatics and CEITEC.

For MU, the national evaluation is primarily a source of information on the performance of the entire university and entire disciplines; M17+ does not operate at lower organisational levels. The results of the national evaluation are then fed into the allocation of institutional support for the long-term conceptual development of the research organisation by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Internal Evaluation

As the national methodology is focused only on the faculty/discipline level, internal evaluation had to be focused on the level of individual units. Since 2018, the Centre for Scientometric Support and Evaluation, in collaboration with the faculties, has been developing an evaluation system that includes already existing annual monitoring (evaluation interviews between the MU management and parts, review bibliometrics) and newly introduces a comprehensive five-year evaluation (Internal Evaluation of Research and DSP), which is based on peer review with external and foreign evaluators.

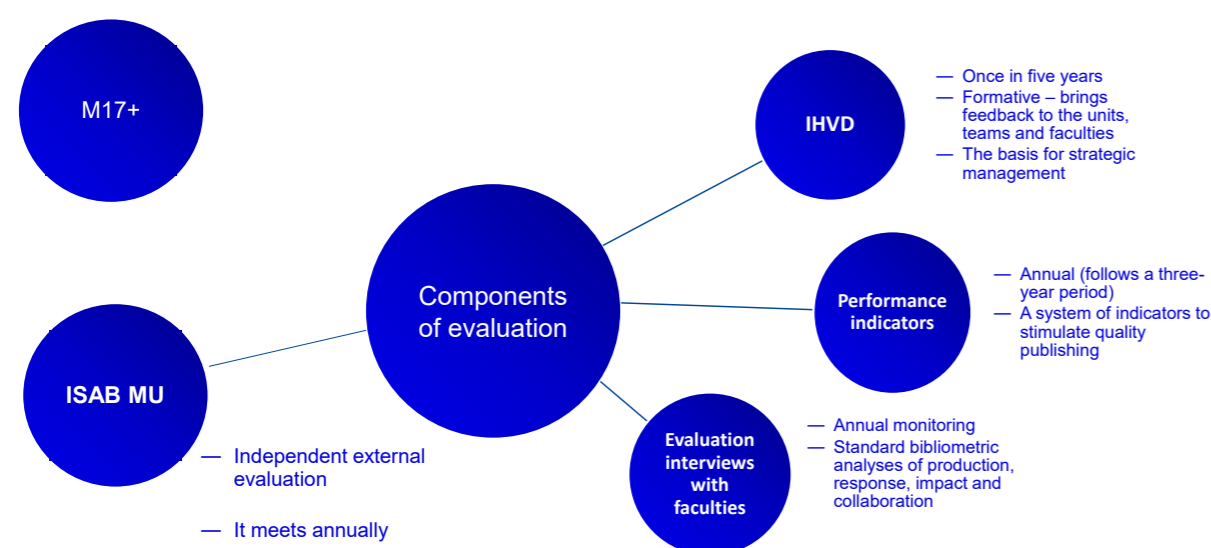
In 2019, a pilot informed peer review was carried out at the units of philological fields of the Faculty of Arts. This process was followed by an evaluation and then the preparation of the university-wide Internal Evaluation of Research and DSP (doctoral degree programme) (IHVD) at MU began. In view of the pandemic situation, the first run of the evaluation according to the full implementation of the national methodology and in the context of coordination with the so-called large evaluation of DSP programmes, the first Internal Evaluation of Research and DSP was carried out in 2022.

The organisational aspect of the internal evaluation was inspired by the Czech Methodology 2017+, the content and overall design by the Dutch SEP and the British REF. IHVD respects the principles of international good practice in research evaluation and bibliometrics (DORA, Leiden Manifesto, Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment, SCOPE framework). It focuses on the criteria of research quality, social impact, doctoral studies and institutional strategy.

The aim of this evaluation is to provide feedback to the parts on the quality of research and doctoral studies and support their research strategies and decision-making. Internal evaluation tools include:

- Bibliometric analysis;
- Self-assessment reports;
- Evaluation interviews between MU management and parts;
- Management data analysis (student involvement in research; student support; motivation tools);
- On-site visit by an expert panel.

Research Evaluation System at MU



Evaluation according to the M17+ Methodology

If we look at the overall evaluation system at MU, we cannot omit the information coming from the national evaluation according to the Methodology 2017+, which is carried out based on the *Methodology for the Evaluation of Research Organisations and Completed Programmes of Special Support for Research, Development and Innovation of the Ministry of Education and Science (M17+)*. The evaluation combines quantitative and qualitative indicators covering the research environment, international and national collaboration, research excellence, research performance, research relevance to society and social impacts. It is structured into five modules, designated M1 to M5. The aim of the evaluation is to provide information

for the Information system of research, development and innovation (VaVal) quality management at the provider level (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports) and universities, to increase the efficiency of spending public funds and to support an increase in the quality and international competitiveness of Czech science. The results influence decisions on the provision of institutional support. The first two modules have been evaluated annually since 2018 and focus on bibliometric analysis of scientific articles and qualitative evaluation of selected results, the processing of which is the responsibility of the Government Office. The remaining three modules evaluate the social impact of research at the level of individual economic centres, the viability of

Internal Research Evaluation and Doctoral Degree Programmes (IHVD)

The IHVD is conducted by all faculties and university institutes of Masaryk University every five years for the purpose of regular internal evaluation of research activities at Masaryk University. Internal evaluation is formally enshrined in the directive – Masaryk University Directive No. 1/2022 *Internal Evaluation of Research*. The evaluation period shall cover the five full years preceding the year in which the evaluation takes place. Thus, in 2022, when the first evaluation took place, the period 2017-2021 was evaluated.

The basic evaluation tool is the self-evaluation reports prepared separately for each unit and doctoral degree programmes. Additional documents are bibliometric analyses of the evaluated units and analytical documents for doctoral degree programmes (numbers of students, supervisors, defences, dissertation topics, etc.), which aim to present the context of doctoral studies at Masaryk University to the evaluators.

The IHVD unit under evaluation is usually a department, institute or unit in the evaluated part, or a cluster of field-related units under evaluation. The evaluated unit is evaluated together with the doctoral programme or programmes it guarantees.

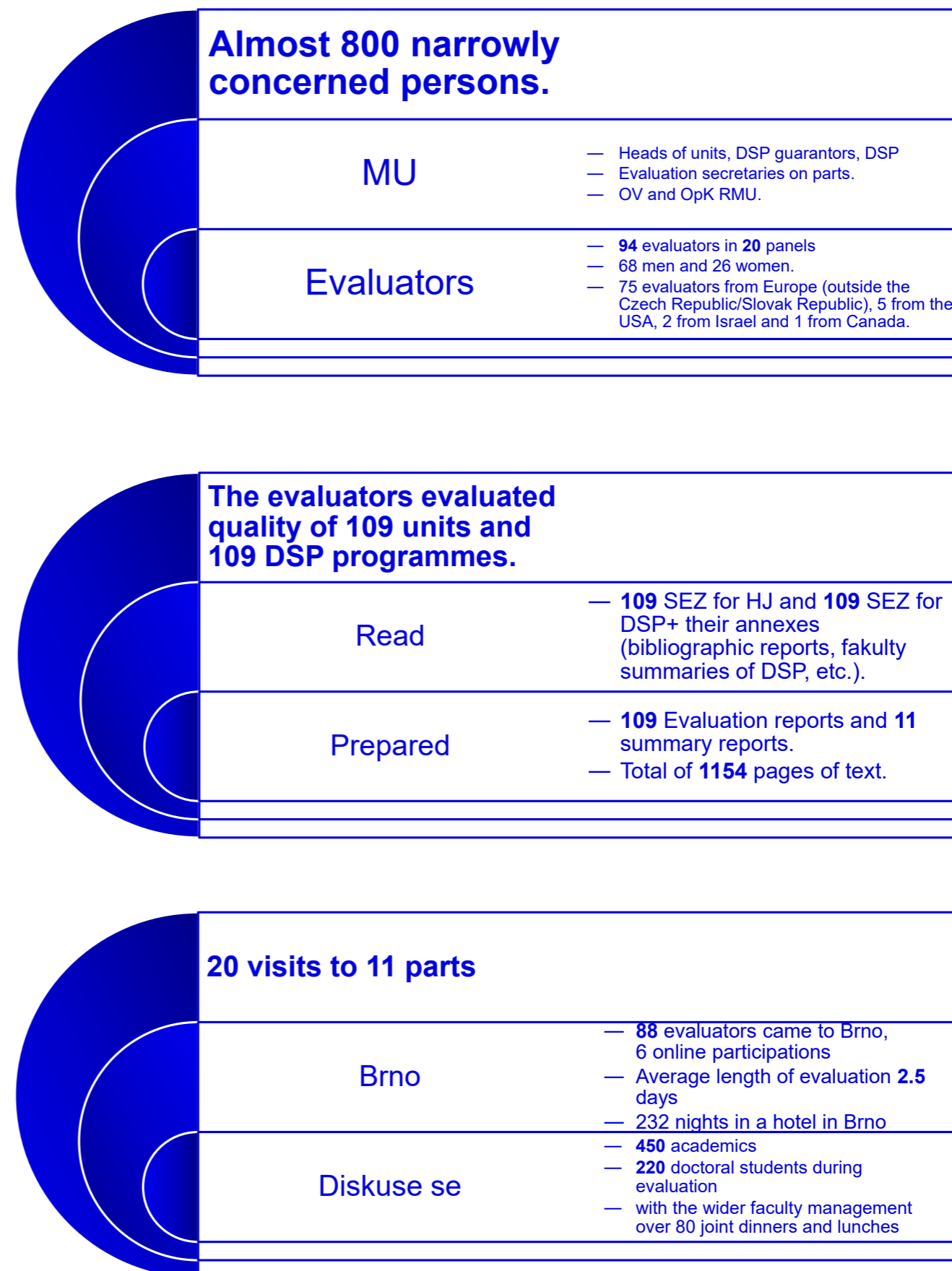
A key part of the internal evaluation was the participation of experts from various countries around the world (USA, Germany, Austria, Great Britain, France, etc.) who came to Brno in person. Evaluators were organized into disciplinary panels or faculty interdisciplinary International Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB). Panels met with faculty management, heads of units and supervisors of doctoral degree programmes for detailed discussion, exchange of experience, sharing of good practice and interesting suggestions. The

evaluation meetings also included a closed discussion between the evaluators and doctoral students without the presence of teachers or faculty representatives.

The output of the IHVD is written research strategies and development plans based on the evaluators' recommendations. Re-evaluation of these strategies will be carried out in the next IHVD run.

By anchoring the IHVD in the internal evaluation processes, MU has taken a significant step in the evaluation of creative activity respecting good practice. The MU management gained an overall overview of the quality of research and doctoral degree programmes (DSP), as well as areas that need to be monitored consistently. The linking of research evaluation with the evaluation of DSP has led to a deepening and improving communication and cooperation between units involved in the evaluation and quality of research and studies. The results of this evaluation will be used to inform DSP accreditation and research development activities. Faculties and institutes received information for R&D management and internal strategy, feedback and a number of recommendations for faculties, units and degree programmes. Some faculties have retained the evaluation panel as their own ISAB, which will meet on a regular basis. Some units underwent a similar evaluation for the first time – they gained valuable experience, the opportunity for self-reflection and comparison with other units.

Internal Evaluation of Research and Doctoral Programmes (IHVD) 2022



3.2

ISAB Activity

It is crucial for institutions with a high international ambitions to continuously seek the opinion of external experts, as only they can independently and impartially evaluate it. For this reason, in 2015, the University established the International Scientific Advisory Board of Masaryk University (ISAB MU). The Board convened for the first time on 17 and 18 October 2016 in Brno, where the university management and representatives of individual faculties met. The members of the Board were Professor Josef Jiříčný from the University of Zurich, Professor Peter Williamson from the University of Cambridge, Professor Thomas A. Henzinger from the Austrian Institute for Science and Technology and Professor Marie-Janine Calic from the University of Munich. The secretary was molecular biologist Mary O'Connell, who has been working at MU since 2014 within the ERA Chair programme.

Currently, the International Scientific Advisory Board of Masaryk University (ISAB MU) is an independent advisory body whose status is defined in Masaryk University Measure No. 7/2017. The Board continues to be composed of four internationally renowned scientists, one of whom is appointed as Chairperson of the Board. Members are among the top in their fields and are appointed and approved to represent the main MU scientific directions. Members of the Board are appointed by the Rector, their term of office is six years and the number of mandates is not limited. The Board meets regularly once a year with the Rector and MU management. Based on its annual meetings, the Board produces a written report that is submitted to the Rector's meeting and the Board of Trustees. Due to the pandemic situation, the meeting was not held in 2020 and in 2021 it was held online. In 2020, there was a personnel change in the part of the Board: Viktor Kunčák, who works at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL), replaced Thomas A. Henzinger.

Composition of the International Scientific Advisory Board of Masaryk University (ISAB MU)

ISAB Members 2018-2019	
Josef Jiříčný (Chairperson)	Professor Emeritus at ETH Zurich
Marie-Janine Calic	Professor at the University of Munich
Thomas Henzinger	President of the Austrian Institute for Science and Technology (IST Austria)
Peter Williamson	Professor at the University of Cambridge
ISAB Members 2021-2022	
Josef Jiříčný (Chairperson)	Professor Emeritus at ETH Zurich
Marie-Janine Calic	Professor at the University of Munich
Viktor Kunčák	Docent at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne
Peter Williamson	Professor at the University of Cambridge

Comments of the Evaluators on IHVD

- “Thank you for making the whole evaluation happen, it was useful, interesting and enjoyable at the same time.”
- “The whole event forced us to think more deeply about the state of the department. We needed to be more precise in articulating our strengths, weaknesses and strategic plans. It was useful to confront colleagues from foreign universities.”
- “I had a very good feeling about the FI evaluation.”
- “Thank you for everything and looking forward to the next MUNI IHVD :-).”
- “Initiative and competent and conscientious approach of the evaluators.”

Planned actions and measures:

- Representatives of the faculties and institutes will present the **five-year strategy for R&D and DSP development** in reflection of IHVD at bilateral meetings with the MU and IEB management.
- Based on the feedback received from all evaluation participants, the **whole process will be revised in several respects**. One of the proposed measures in the future is, for example, to better ensure the familiarity of foreign evaluators with the Czech context and environment.

Evaluation Interviews between MU Management and Parts

As part of the MU management's annual evaluation interviews with faculties and institutes, which have a broad thematic scope, research discussions are also held based on detailed data on educational, creative and associated activities. Evaluation topics in 2018-2022 included strategic priorities of faculties and institutes, reflection of results according to the evaluation of

the Methodology 17+ including the conclusions of the International Evaluation Panel, doctoral degree programmes in the context of study success rate, duration of studies, internationalisation, scholarships or publication requirements, discussion on the results and recommendations from IHVD 2022 and last but not least discussion on future funding parameters.

The evaluation provides the University with critical feedback on the preliminary reports and selected strategic documents submitted to the Board. In addition, it advises on research directions, commercial research activities and cooperation with industry, internationalisation strategy and development of research infrastructure, supervision of the doctoral education system and rules for the internal MU grant agency (GAMU).

Recommendations are communicated with the Vice-Deans of R&D and DSP at a meeting dedicated to ISAB outputs. The University works with the recommendations both at the management level and at the level of individual parts. There are working groups at MU that are tasked with working with the ISAB recommendations within their content area. At the part level, the recommendations are implemented mainly on the basis of an agreement between MU management and part management. Board members repeatedly shared their delight at the progress made in their reports. They appreciate the effort with which the recommendations are analysed and the willingness of the management to implement the necessary changes.

ISAB's Most Important Recommendations for the Evaluation Period 2018-2022

One of ISAB's key recommendations was to improve MUNI's position in international rankings, to invest effort in analysing the ways in which rankings are generated and to actively seek solutions that can be achieved relatively easily.

The question of analysing MU's position in international rankings was addressed by the MU Strategy Department. In 2018, MU was ranked 501st-600th in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), in 2019-2021 it was ranked 601st-700th in the same ranking, and in 2022 MU reached its best position, namely first

500 (401-500 position). MU systematically creates support and motivation for research activities that fulfil the usually observed characteristics of high-quality science. Among other things, it effectively promotes the acquisition of international grants (education, training) and introduces a performance component of the budget that covers publication activities in sources of high prestige and intensity.

Another major recommendation focused on restructuring the distribution of university funds. In response, based on the proposal of the Centre for Scientometric Support and Evaluation at the Research Department of the MU Rectorate, a system of distribution of funds through performance indicators was created. The budgeting rules for individual MU parts underwent a major change in 2020. The basis of the budget for faculties/HS (profit centres) remained a fixed (stabilization) component of the amount of the contribution for the long-term conceptual development of the research organization in 2019. A new element is the so-called performance component, the amount of which is influenced by the amount of the budget increase year on year. The performance component is distributed among the parts according to a system of indicators that reflect the differences between the SSH (Social Sciences and Humanities) and STM (Science, Technology and Medicine) fields. The indicator group system prevents unwanted straightforward and short-term motivations in scientific publishing (expedient strategies, easy publishing, gaming) and should create prerequisites for the institutional strategy of increasing the long-term reputation and response of research at MU.

Several important ISAB recommendations were directed towards doctoral studies (establishment of postgraduate schools, reduction of the number of doctoral students and doctoral degree programmes, improvement of the socio-economic situation of doctoral students), which are reflected in the following subchapter.

3.3

Doctoral Studies

Doctoral studies are perceived as an intensive individual training of young scientists – experts (so-called *early-stage researchers*), significantly contributing to the scientific performance of the University and able to independently generate new knowledge in the academic and applied spheres after graduation. At Masaryk University, doctoral studies are considered an important stage in the life of an aspiring scientist, in which the university plays a principal role. Therefore, in the period under review, the University undertook a number of conceptual measures with the aim of defining the framework of access to doctoral studies at MU and thus improving its efficiency and quality. The impulse was:

- “Masaryk University Strategic Plan 2021-2028”, objective 2.4: Establish higher standards in doctoral studies across fields with an emphasis on the quality of scientific results of doctoral students, the acquisition of international experience during doctoral studies, and adherence to the study schedule;
- The requirement for establishment of a PhD strategy in preparation for the so-called HR Award;
- ISAB recommendations;
- Results of the MU Internal Evaluation of Science and Research (IHVD).

In 2022, Masaryk University offered studies in approximately 110 doctoral degree programmes taught in the Czech language and 75 programmes in foreign languages (with a predominance of English). In 2022, 2609 doctoral students studied at MU, of whom more than 32% were from abroad

Training and Development Activities for Doctoral Students and Supervisors

Based on ISAB recommendations, MU tried to centrally organise various events for doctoral students during the period in question. Within the development of doctoral studies, various educational activities focused on the acquisition and development of key competences are offered on the university-wide platform *MUNI PhD Academia*.

A key activity supporting interdisciplinarity within the University has become the year-long *MUNI Seminar Series*, divided into lectures in the natural sciences, lectures in the humanities and social sciences, and lectures in mathematics, physics and informatics. *Mendel Lectures* became a specialized extension of the *Seminar Series*.

Doctoral students are offered the FRESHERS course every term: *Skills for Research Careers* aimed at developing the research competences needed for the scientific careers of early-stage scientists. Traditionally, a summer school for the development of pedagogical competences is also organized in Telč.



PhD Day events are intended for those interested in doctoral studies and students of the 1st year of doctoral degree programmes. Participants will learn interesting information about doctoral studies, both general and faculty, including presentations of study programmes.

The faculties develop studies in the form of cotutelle, i.e. under the double guidance of a supervisor from MU and a foreign institution. Another option for applying for international cooperation during studies is the European Doctorate, a degree awarded to graduates after meeting the conditions defined by the European University Association. Workshops and training courses are organised for supervisors of PhD students at MU.

Most faculties have scholarship programmes in place to reward publication achievements, support international mobility and foreign professional internships or to support the participation of doctoral students in conferences abroad.

On the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the birth of G. J. Mendel, a project for outstanding MUNI doctoral students Mendel Doctorandus was launched. The prestigious inter-faculty programme provides active PhD students with information and support services on their way to obtaining a European doctorate, broadening their education and deepening their skills for future practice. Faculty of Science (PřF), Faculty of Medicine (LF), Faculty of Pharmacy (FaF), Faculty of Sports Studies (FSpS) collaborate on the programme and more than 60 students from these faculties are involved in it.

Surveys and Research Investigations

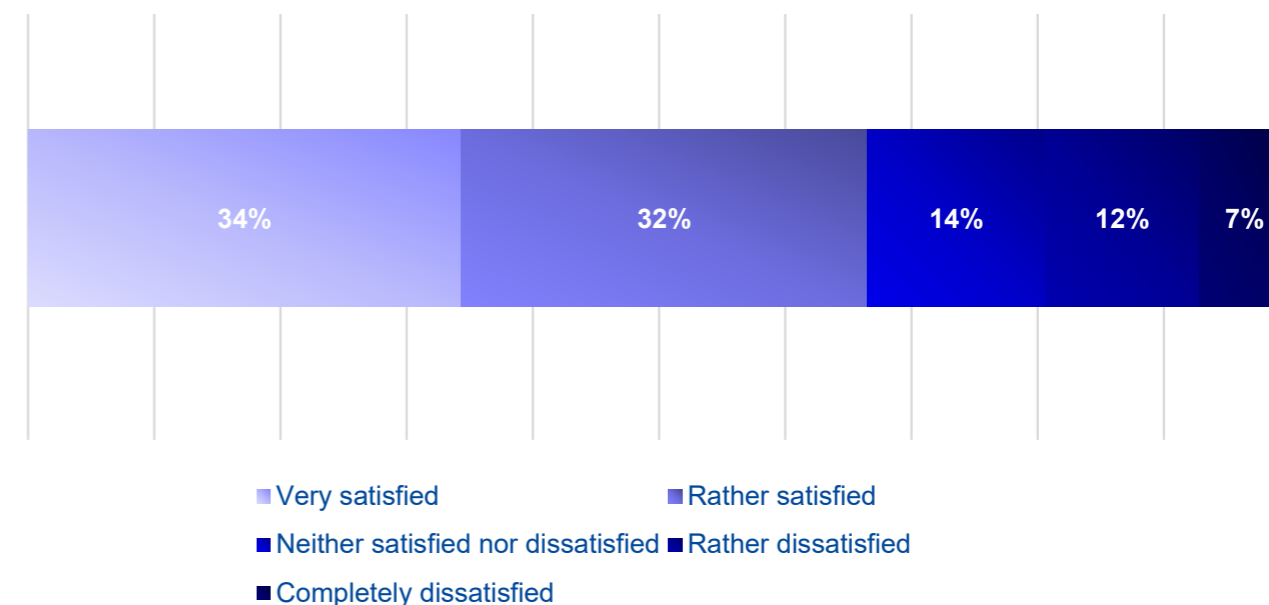
In order to gain a closer understanding of the factors leading to early termination of Ph.D. studies at MU, the RMU Strategy Department prepared an Analysis of the (Failure) Success Rate of Ph.D. Studies at MU in 2021. The analysis focused on full-time and combined studies started in 2008-2013 (i.e. 4090 studies). The aim of the analysis was to find out what factors have demonstrable impact on the successful completion of Ph.D. studies. The effect of each factor on completion was analysed by statistical testing for independence of qualitative

data (using a chi-square test) and demonstrated by descriptive statistics. Based on the analysis, the strong factors that have been shown to have a statistically significant association with successful completion of Ph.D. studies include the amount of scholarships and, in general, the average monthly income received by Ph.D. students during their studies. Furthermore, their study results in both doctoral and previous Master's studies. Doctoral students who start their studies at a younger age and doctoral students who have gone abroad during their studies are generally more successful in their studies.

Towards the end of 2021, the DOKTORANDI 2021 research survey was carried out on students of doctoral degree programmes. The survey was commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and implemented by the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, v v. i. (CSVŠ) with the cooperation of universities. Its main objective was to obtain comprehensive feedback from students of doctoral degree programmes and to contribute to the understanding of the situation of male and female doctoral students studying at universities in the Czech Republic and subsequently to its improvement. The questionnaire focused on the intensity and quality of doctoral studies, the role of supervisors, the financial conditions of students, their integration into the academic environment, the degree of support in scientific and research activities and the results of studies (career goals, etc.) as well as the motivation of doctoral students to study and their career prospects.

Data from the survey were provided by CSVŠ in autumn 2022 and were processed for Masaryk University by the MU Strategy Department.

Satisfaction of MU Doctoral Students with the Management of their Studies (DOKTORANDI 2021 Survey)



Conceptual Changes and Restructuring of Doctoral Studies

The period under review was marked by discussion and gradual introduction of a number of conceptual changes and innovations in the field of doctoral studies. In 2021, the University issued the “Principles and Recommendations for Quality and Effective Doctoral Studies” with the aim of defining the framework of access to doctoral studies at MU, its further direction and development. This document consists of a series of recommendations for individual actors in doctoral studies that can lead to more effective and better quality doctoral studies at Masaryk University. The content of the material is based on the *Principles of Innovative Doctoral Training* and other related international documents. Furthermore, the ideas are reflected in the texts the “European Charter for Researchers” and the “Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”.

The Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Excellent Results in Doctoral Studies was announced for the first time in 2021. The award is intended for graduates who complete their studies within a maximum of 5 years (successful completion within the standard period of study plus one year) and with an outstanding publication results,

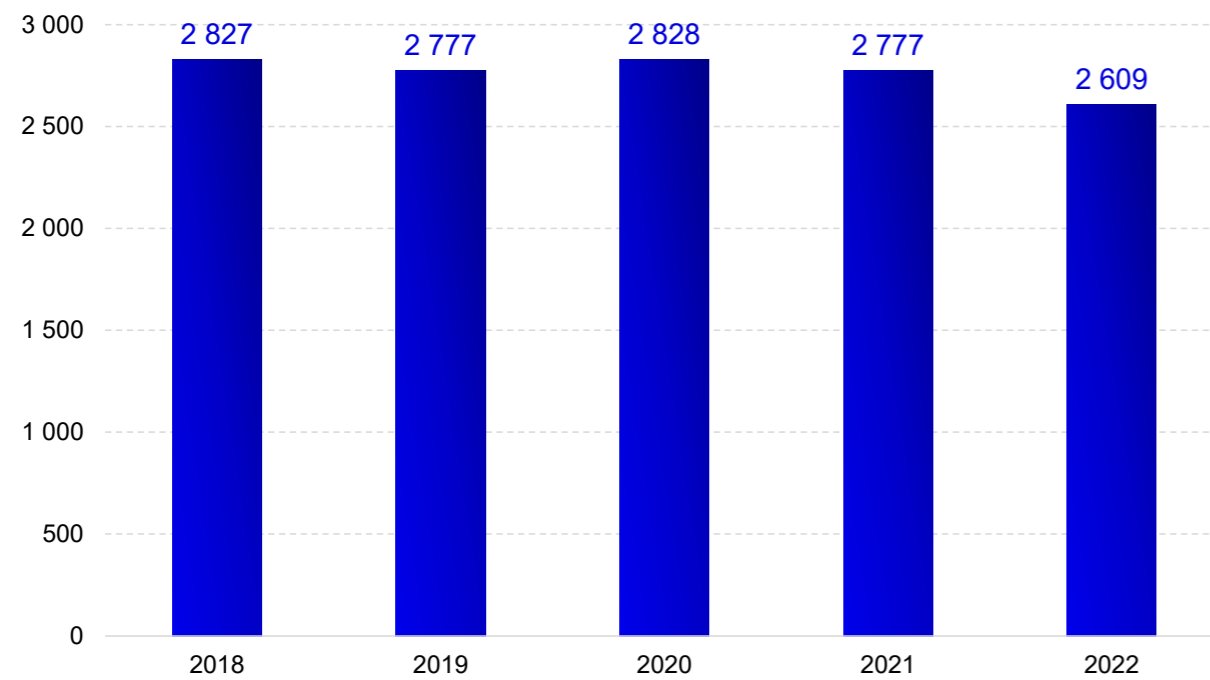
and for their supervisors. In the first two years of the competition, a total of 73 pairs of graduates and supervisors were awarded.

In 2022, the most important impulse for the development of doctoral degree programmes was the implementation of the internal evaluation linked to the evaluation of science (IHVD). The main recommendations proposed by the evaluators for doctoral studies are:

- Promote the interdisciplinarity of doctoral programmes;
- Improve the socio-economic situation of doctoral students;
- Define the standard of the supervisor;
- Promote internationalisation;
- Increase the success rate in full-time study;
- Improve the quality of doctoral theses results.

In this context, the MU Internal Evaluation Board invited MU faculties to prepare a strategy to implement specific measures with an emphasis on reducing the number of doctoral degree programmes using synergy and/or integration at faculty level or inter-faculty level. This implementation strategy will be part of bilateral meetings between MU management and faculty management with the participation of representatives of the MU Internal Evaluation.

Development of the Number of Doctoral Students at MU in 2018 – 2022



Socio-economic Situation of Doctoral Student

In 2018, the doctoral scholarship in the standard period of study was increased from CZK 7,000 to CZK 12,000, and from 1 September 2023, doctoral scholarships will be increased from CZK 12,000 to CZK 15,000 during the standard period of study (MU Measure No.1/2023).

Planned actions and measures:

- Creation of a **Supervisor Standard** (standardisation of requirements for supervisors when appointing them, definition of the scope of responsibilities when supervising doctoral students, provision of methodological support to supervisors and Doctoral Boards etc.).
- In the coming period, MU will continue to **restructure and reduce the number of doctoral degree programmes** in line with the results of the IHVD. The strategies and plans of the individual faculties will be gradually discussed with the IEB.
- Setting up a **coherent concept of foreign trips of doctoral students** with the aim of standardising the procedures for carrying out foreign trips following good practice at prestigious institutions.

4

Evaluation of Associated Activities

Personnel Management	4 . 1
Information Systems	4 . 2
IT Support	4 . 3
Sustainable Development	4 . 4
Ethics and Social Role	4 . 5

4.1

Personnel Management

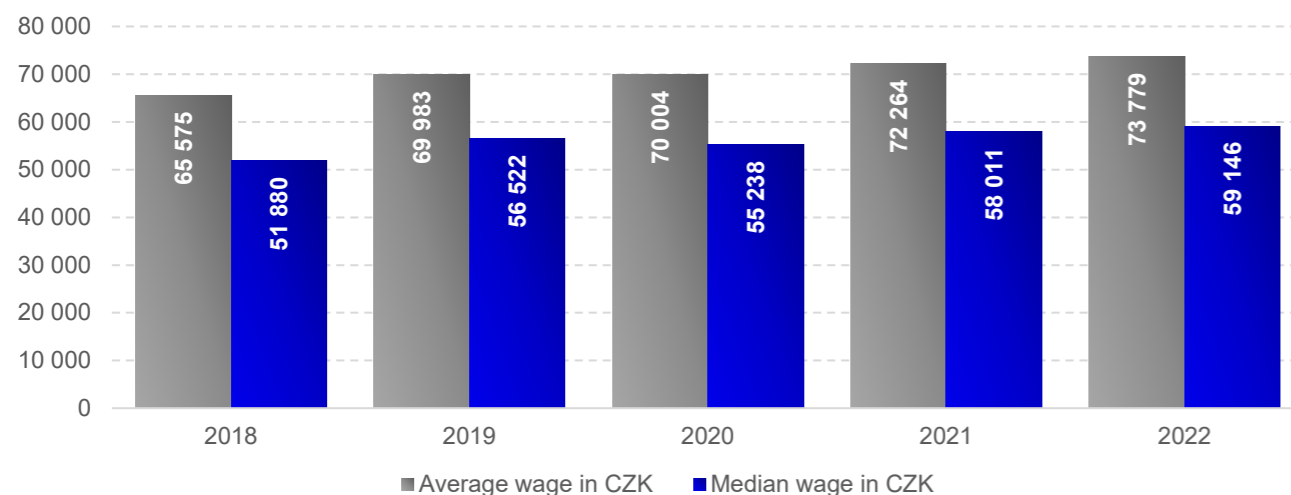
Internal Salary Regulation

In 2018, a new Internal Salary Regulation (ISR) came into force. A substantial part of the ISR was only effective from mid-2018, mainly also in connection with the change in the collective agreement and related adjustments to salary rates. The internal salary regulation foresaw a revision of the classification of employees in the salary grades or their reclassification, so most of the first half of 2018 was devoted to this implementation.

In connection with this, the new MU Job Catalogue, an implementing directive of the new ISR, came into force in the middle of the year. It was the preparation, discussion, and finally the successful publication of this important standard based on the new ISR that was the biggest news in the field of internal legislation. The catalogue characterizes the job positions of MU academic

staff and other employees. It mainly defines the general characteristics of the job description of an academic staff member, the classification of positions of academic staff and other employees into salary grades, including the requirements for education and qualification. The catalogue also contains an outline of the work activities of other non-academic staff, sample job descriptions and an indicative list of typical jobs at each salary grade. Individual faculties have prepared their implementing regulations to set up a system linking personal remuneration to long-term performance assessment, the use of rewards to promote performance and exceptional rewards to recognise exceptional activities. In 2018, 2020 and 2022, salary rates were indexed and the internal salary regulation was adjusted.

Development of Average and Median Salaries of Academic Staff at MU 2018-2022



Planned actions and measures:

- **Revise the internal salary regulations** and the related job catalogue with regard to the labour market situation and MU's competitiveness

Selection Procedure Regulations

The MU Selection Procedure Regulations were changed twice between 2018 and 2022. The first change, effective from 2018, brought innovations in the sense of obligatory advertising senior academic positions also in English on the MU website and also on field-relevant international servers. The possibility of international advertising on THE Unijobs of Times Higher Education was ensured throughout the University. All vacant academic positions are automatically transferred there. HR people, as the bearers of the whole process, were trained in employer branding methods as well as in methods of organizing and conducting recruitment procedures and interviews.

In 2022, the Selection Procedure Regulations were intensively prepared and discussed, and were issued with effect from 1 January 2023 and they meet the conditions of the OTMR Policy. The new regulations include an emphasis on gender fairness during recruitment and selection, including a requirement for gender-balanced composition of selection committees and the collection of gender-differentiated data. Bilingual e-learning was created to train members of selection committees at MU. The various parts have issued implementing rules and regulations for open and transparent recruitment.

Planned actions and measures:

- **Implement the MU Selection Procedure Regulations into practice**, in particular by filling academic and scientific staff positions on the basis of open selection procedures advertised internationally
- **Develop HR marketing** to strengthen the brand of Masaryk University as a prestigious employer
- **Restructure MU career pages**, build candidate databases, lead HR recruitment campaign

Work Regulations

In 2020, new Work Regulations were issued, reflecting not only labour law judicature but also a degree of internationalisation in recruitment of employees from abroad and dealing with concurrent work performance in several countries, whether within the EU or third countries.

Planned actions and measures:

- Implement the **findings of labour law judicature**
- Link the implementation of the MU Code of Conduct and the entire protection of rights in the work regulations within the **enforceability of the consequences of undesirable behaviour**

MU Career Regulations, Postdoctoral Students

The MU management discussed key topics resonating at MU that need to be enshrined in the MU career system, in particular career paths, the issues of the term of office of managers, inbreeding, the prohibition of concurrent positions of heads of departments, the determination of the minimum number of teaching hours for individual positions, the determination of the age for reducing the work load for academic staff, etc. It has become clear that these crucial issues need to be communicated within the broader academic community. At the same time, legislative support from the Czech legal system is needed to anchor the selected rules. A discussion will therefore take place and steps will be taken to amend the Higher Education Act. The new Career Code will be developed and published in 2024. Meanwhile, MU has prepared and

published the methodological sheet – the Careersystem at Masaryk University that provides information and guidance to employees on career development and growth/change, career change motivation elements, counselling and guidance activities, and career development self-assessment tools.

The University has also been dealing with the concept of postdoctoral positions at MU for a long time. In 2022, a university-wide discussion was initiated to develop a PostDoc Policy in accordance with Principle 21 of the Charter and Code. A working group composed of representatives of faculties and other parts of the University was established and the work of this working group resulted in the creation of a methodological sheet that set out the procedures and criteria for the employment of postdoctoral staff (recruitment, conditions, care of these staff, etc.).

Planned actions and measures:

- Prepare **career regulations** in terms of setting rules at MU
- Emphasize **career paths** implemented at individual HS MU
- **Link the career system with competency models** – the European Skills, Competences, Occupations and Qualifications Classification (ESCO = the set of skills and occupations for researchers) as well as ResearchComp, a European reference framework for researchers that shows a common understanding of the competences researchers need for a successful research career
- Continue the university-wide discussion on the creation of the concept of the so-called **functional positions** of docents and professors at MU
- Define criteria and create a system for **identifying talents** among the university staff with the aim of further developing them and preparing them for future leadership or professional positions
- Gradually implement **the concept for the employment of postdoctoral positions**

Personnel Policy Support Programme

Since 2015, Masaryk University has been implementing the Personnel Policy Support Programme, the aim of which is to financially support the recruitment of new, especially foreign excellent academic and other professional staff at Masaryk University. The programme co-finances the first three years of the employee's stay at the University.

In 2018, 15 employees at 6 MU parts were involved in the programme and a total of CZK 4.7 million was spent. In 2019, 19 employees in 6 parts, a total of CZK 6.2 million was spent. In 2020, 28 employees in 8 parts, a total of CZK 5.8 million was spent. In 2021, 25 employees in 10 parts, a total of CZK 7.5 million was spent. In 2022, 24 employees in 11 parts, a total of CZK 6.9 million was spent.

In response to the war conflict in the Ukraine, the staff support programme was expanded to include support for Ukrainian academics and researchers. 41 employees were supported, 14 million were spent. At the Masaryk

University, more than 120 Ukrainian workers, who were forced to leave their homes, not only teachers and scientists, but also representatives of non-teaching and labour profession, found safe harbour and work.

Planned actions and measures:

- Planned actions and measures:
- Continue the programme to support the personnel policy and extend it to the **functional positions** of docents and professors
- Reduce the **administrative burden of reporting** while maintaining the quality of the academics and scientists supported
- Create a programme for **outstanding professors**

HR Award and Gender Equality Plan

An activity with long-term significance and overlap is the HR Award, where the European Commission recognizes through this award (HR Excellence in Research Award) that institutions work in the field of human resources in accordance with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, i.e. that its processes and tools correspond to the best European practice.

Masaryk University embarked on this substantial initiative with the aim of bringing its personnel policy and work with people to a European level. MU applied for the HR Award by individual faculties and university institutes, which means that an analysis of the processes of recruitment and selection of employees and an analysis of the differences between the expected fulfilment of the basic principles and the real state of daily practice were prepared for all parts.

The Faculty of Science and CEITEC MU already received this award at the beginning of 2019 and spent the entire year implementing the first action plan they committed to in connection with the HR Award. A major activity in the area of personnel management in 2019 was the signing up of individual faculties of Masaryk

University to fulfil the principles of The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

The aim of all parts of MU was to win the HR Award, and thus to bring work with people to a comparable European level. To prepare for the submission of applications for the HR Award, working groups and round tables were centrally organised at MU to share good practice and make informed decisions about the participation of other faculties and institutes. Awareness-raising workshops on working with people were also an important activity. Workshop topics included the research environment, intellectual property, working and salary conditions, employee evaluation, professional development and continuing education. At these activities, MU employees learned about the requirements of the Charter and the Code, the legislative coverage of individual topics at MU level and the practice at individual faculties. A staff questionnaire survey was conducted and 60-80% of all staff participated in the faculties, which provides a high validity of the results. The questionnaire survey was complemented by focus group discussions, working group discussions and awareness raising workshops. The HR Award action plans and other necessary documents were subsequently sent to the European Commission evaluators. During 2020, Faculty of Science and CEITEC MU already intensively engaged in the

implementation of action plans and defended the HR Award with the first summary report towards the end of the year.

During 2021, the HR Award was awarded to the Faculty of Arts (FF), Faculty of Medicine (LF), Faculty of Education (PdF), Faculty of Economics and Administration (ESF), FI (Faculty of Informatics), Faculty of Social Studies (FSS), Faculty of Law (PrF), Faculty of Sports Studied (FSpS) and also to the Institute of Computer Science (ICS). The first evaluation after two years since receiving the award was carried out by the Faculty of Science (PřF) and the CEITEC MU Institute. The award is the starting point for the subsequent implementation of all the plans prepared. In 2021, changes were initiated in the following areas in connection with the HR Award: the selection procedure regulations, the code of ethics, the definition of functional positions, the staff development and training strategy, and the adaptation process for and the adaptation process of newly hired staff.

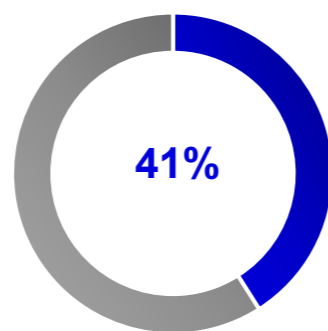
The *Gender Equality Plan (GEP)* was a key university-wide theme for 2021 and was released at the end of 2021. Its release was preceded by extensive internal audits at all faculties, which brought dozens of suggestions. The faculties conducted a gender audit during 2021 as part of the HR Award Action Plan, in which the faculties committed to promoting a gender-fair environment. The audit covered the transformation of organisational culture, reconciliation of work and parenthood, recruitment and selection of staff, gender balance in management positions and measures against sexual harassment and other forms of violence. The findings presented in the final report of the gender audit were supported by content analysis of documents and statistical analysis of data. The audit was carried out internally in cooperation with NKC Gender and Science. The faculties also reflected on the adoption of the Gender Equality Plan 2021-2024, which follows the European Union's objectives in the field of gender equality, and also the Plan for Promoting Gender Equality of the Ministry of Education and Science.

Representation of Women among MU employees in 2022

In 2022, the Faculty of Pharmacy also received the HR Award (HRA), thus completing the process of obtaining the HRA by all faculties (10) and both higher education institutes of Masaryk University.

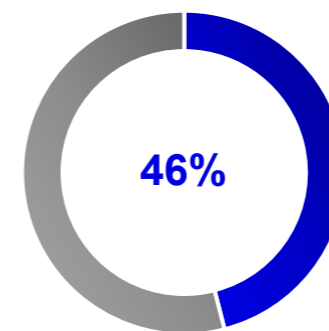
Seven faculties and the ICS implemented the fulfilment of the Action Plans in the initial phase, while the Faculty of Arts and CEITEC implemented the fulfilment of the revised Action Plans and started preparing for the evaluation for the extension of the award. The year 2022 was the first year of implementation of the

Representation of Women among Academic Staff



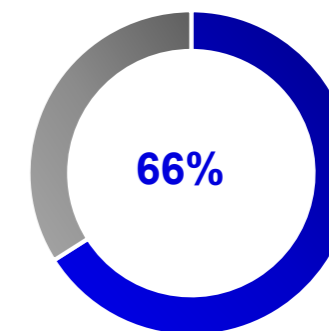
Gender Equality Plan (GEP MU) for the years 2022-2024, which focused on expanding childcare options for young children – a new children's group was set up in the centre of Brno at MU premises – and on introducing maternity/parental leave management and support for reconciliation of work and family, when the MU manual “Maternity Leave, Paternal Postnatal Care and Parental Leave in a Nutshell” was updated. Under the authority of the Vice-Rector for student and graduate affairs, a draft methodology for dealing with sexual harassment at MU was developed and a network of trained contact persons was established to provide counselling to victims, witnesses and accused of sexual harassment. In order to prevent conflicts in this area, training for academic and non-academic staff began to be implemented at MU parts in 2022. MU further ensured equal conditions in the evaluation of projects in science and research, including the expansion of the GAMU Career Restart

Representation of Women among Scientific and Professional Staff



grant scheme to facilitate the return to a scientific career after interruption due to parenthood. Promotional

Representation of Women among Other Staff



events such as Science slam 13: Women belong in science were organized as part of the education about the gender dimension.

Planned actions and measures:

- Smooth **implementation of HR Award processes** into HR management tools and integration of HR Award organisational structures into the organisational structure of HR units
- Preparation and implementation of internal evaluation processes for keeping and renewal of the HR Excellence in Research Award by individual parts of the University in accordance with the requirements of the European Commission
- Implementation of the **Gender Equality Plan** and preparation of a new plan for the period 2025-2028, linking the GEP to the protection of rights and taking over the guarantee of the GEP within the newly established **function of the MU ombudsman**

Employee Evaluation

Employee appraisal is a key process in the HR activities of the University and is an indispensable part of the work with people, both academic and non-academic staff. A system of performance and development goals, as well as opportunities to formally meet and share feedback between the employee and his or her supervisor, developed throughout the evaluation period.

At Masaryk University, a tool called EVAK (Evaluation of Academics) has been developed and used for several years to evaluate academic staff. In 2018-2022, the EVAK

has been used by almost all MU faculties except Faculty of Law and UVT, which have their own evaluation system; CEITEC is considering its introduction.

In 2019, initiatives that contributed to its simplification and greater alignment with the needs of faculties, managers and individual workers were supported. Activities aimed at popularising the evaluation outputs continued, especially in the areas of staff development and training. In addition to the usual professional education and upgrading of qualifications, pilot courses and trainings in the field of soft skills, especially managerial and personal skills, have also been worked on over the years. Based on the positive experience,

the University also focused on the target group of early career academics and early career staff in leadership positions.

In 2021-2022, MU and its faculties/parts conducted a thorough analysis of the evaluation criteria with the aim of modernising and updating the individual evaluation of academic, scientific and non-academic staff, including their harmonisation with other types of evaluation at the University. From the reduced number of the EVAK indicators, it was proposed and agreed to update the preset set of 24 indicators in the EVAK application as a common basis for the assessment of all academic staff. The preset set of 24 indicators will be modified according to the needs of the faculties – the EVAK application allows to remove and add additional indicators at the discretion of the evaluator. The original updated indicators will not be removed and evaluators can continue to add

them at their discretion or create their own indicators. Accordingly, the manuals for the EVAK application were updated in both Czech and English, and a help in Czech and English was created in the MUNI IS to simplify the work with the application for MU employees. Since 2018, the Masaryk University Rectorate has fully implemented a system of evaluation of non-academic employees, including all substantive outputs such as annual work goals, development and education plans, identification of talents and potential successors, and also suggestions to increase the efficiency of the teams. With the support of the Rector's team, this system was gradually extended to other MU units and parts in 2018. During 2019, preparations for electronic support for the evaluation of non-academic staff began, with full implementation into environment of the information systems in 2020. The evaluation of non-academic staff is still improved and extended to all MU parts.

Planned actions and measures:

- **Updating of internal staff evaluation**, e.g. by including new criteria according to the M17+ Methodology or qualitative indicators in the area of pedagogical competences
- **Full computerisation of all MU staff evaluations**

Care for Employees

Care for human resources is one of the most important indicators of the University's evaluation as an employer. In 2018, Masaryk University concluded a new collective agreement and provided the standard range of employee benefits as in previous years. In addition to supporting employee meals in MU's own catering facilities or in the form of meal vouchers, MU spent significant sums on contributions to supplementary pension insurance, preventive care including preventive vaccinations and rewards during work anniversaries. Last but not least, MU strives to provide opportunities to reconcile family and work life, which is another goal of MU's personnel policy. Where the content of the work allows, flexible

working hours, part-time work or the possibility of working away from the permanent place of work, the so-called home office, are also possible.

Non-academic staff are granted annual leave in excess of the statutory limit, i.e. 30 days per calendar year.

Electronic meal cards were introduced at several parts of the University during 2020. Through long-standing partners, benefits for employees were negotiated in the areas of banking services, insurance, discounts with the provider (phones, data), discounts on language courses and more. A new children's group was set up

at the campus faculties in cooperation with Elánek in September 2020, within walking distance of the Bohunice University Campus.

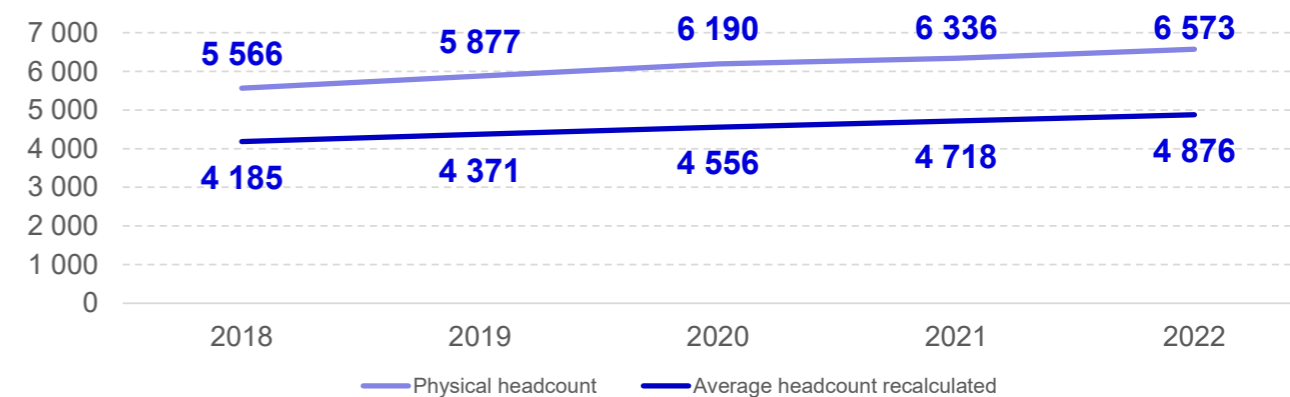
All employees at the University were newly offered the option of drawing a Multisport card since 2021. The meal allowance was provided in the form of a so-called meal allowance lump sum, and MU canteens were still available to employees.

In 2022, all existing benefits continued and a new collective agreement was concluded for the period up to 30 June 2025. Its most significant impact is the indexing of salary rates always on 1 July for a period of 3 years, namely in 2022 by 10% and then 5% in 2023 and 2024.

As of 1 September 2022, another children's group was opened, this time in the centre of Brno in the premises of MU Komenský.

As part of our employee care, we meet personally with new employees at RMU on a monthly basis and support their adaptation to the work environment by sharing and transferring information. We regularly publish HRletter as one of the tools for creating corporate culture, where we inform employees about HR topics and news, legislative news. We evaluate the entire recruitment process, including obtaining feedback as part of the candidate experience.

Development of the Number of MU Employees 2018-2022



Planned actions and measures:

- **Valorisation of salary rates** in relation to inflation and the state of regional education in order to maintain competitiveness
- Regular negotiations with **trade union** representatives and conclusion of collective agreements in favour of MU employees
- **Further expansion of employee benefits**
- **Promoting the reconciliation of personal and working life** by setting up children's groups and encouraging flexible forms of work, i.e. remote work, job-sharing, part-time work, etc.
- Development of **psychological and career counselling** for employees
- Support for **volunteering and charitable activities**
- Developing HR marketing to strengthen the brand of Masaryk University as a prestigious employer
- Setting up an adaptation process for existing academic and non-academic staff entering new positions at the University (supervisor, head of unit, etc.)
- Comprehensive support of employee well-being, motivation and satisfaction

e-HR – Computerization of HR Agendas

The pandemic situation in 2020 required the University to accelerate long-planned changes to a number of long-established processes, systems and procedures in HR area. Especially in the field of organisation and implementation of teaching, provision of science and research, digitisation of agendas and partial simplification of administration. The University implemented modernized processes such as employee adaptation and evaluation of employees with all its outputs. Attention was also paid to the computerization of personnel agendas – eHR at MU.

As part of the computerization, the application – Evaluation of Non-Academic Staff was completed, approval of proposals for changes in employment relations was launched, and an application for the adaptation of new employees was created as a digitization of the job-start sheet. The e-application for recruitment – Jobs.MU was rapidly being developed as a result of the implementation of the OTMR Policy within the HR Award. The sets of indicators for the EVAK academic staff evaluation application were updated.

Planned actions and measures:

- Set up a **computerised adaptation process** for existing academic and non-academic staff entering new positions at the University (supervisor, head of unit, etc.) and for persons returning from parental leave
- **Digitise the entire employment cycle** from the creation, change and termination of the employment relation
- Implement options arising from legal standards, such as electronic signing and delivery of employment documents

4.2

Information Systems

During the period under review, the following processes, activities and measures were implemented in the MU Information System to ensure the quality of educational activities:

Application support for accreditation processes

- Development of the programme catalogue and study plan presentation
- Support for the transformation of fields of study
- Integration of the accreditation approval process into the MU IS Office and Record Management
- Checking the rules in the Guarantor agenda according to the government regulation and MU internal regulations
- Support for students in navigating the requirements for successful graduation through the Study Planner application
- Computerisation of the institutional accreditation process
- Modernization of the E-application agenda in accordance with changes in accredited programmes
- Innovation of a number of tools for e-learning support in accordance with the implementation of the Masaryk University e-learning strategy 2018-2020
- Implementation of technical solutions for inter-university study permeability
- Innovation of the course catalogue
- Practice agenda for comprehensive management of internships and traineeships
- Electronic Evaluation of non-academic staff
- Access to management data on degree programmes and Programme Board records for internal evaluation purposes
- Support for the collection of nominations of student representatives of the Programme Boards
- Publication of degree programme development plans
- Computerisation of university processes and support for distance learning, computerisation of state final examinations
- Provision of means for synchronous and asynchronous distance learning, possibility of recording video recordings of lectures
- Continuous translation of the user interface into English

The transition to the new study structure and the transformation of study fields into programmes was smooth, even with regard to the temporary concurrence of the offer of fields and programmes. Support for the transformation of study fields into degree programmes was in accordance with the requirements of the amendment to the Higher Education Act and MU internal rules. Mass automated transfers of students to newly accredited programmes were carried out according to faculty requirements. The changes in the new programme structure were also quickly and well reflected in extensive changes to the admission procedure agenda and the new e-application form.

The modifications in the area of personnel data and documents were also successful: new records of supervisors of the given programme, records of doctoral boards and committees, new possibilities for working with personnel sheets according to the needs of faculty coordinators, easier introduction of external staff, all fully linked with accreditation documents. Exports for the National Accreditation Bureau (NAB), automated data transfers and data reports – all of this is prepared in a suitable form as a basis for evaluation meetings within the framework of MU's internal evaluation. The data are presented in a uniform and clear manner.

The management system for controlling the accreditation process was designed to enable clear monitoring of the status of management of individual degree programmes in such a way as to prepare the processes for the mandatory submission of outputs to specific MU bodies, such as faculty senates, etc. The Programme Management Data application is intended primarily for guarantors and persons responsible for newly accredited degree programmes. During the reporting period, the use of the application was carefully evaluated by those responsible and several changes were made to make the data more readable and easier to evaluate thanks to new interactive graphs and statistical outputs. Based on suggestions, more information on internships, statistics on the evaluation of enrolled courses showing the difficulty of their completion,

and data specific to doctoral degree programmes (DSP), including the preparation of data documents for (foreign) DSP evaluators were gradually added.

The control of the rules in the area of accreditation of degree programmes in the Garant agenda was created properly according to the Government Regulation on Standards for Accreditation in Higher Education (No. 274/2016 Coll.) and is used to detect errors in the preparation and changes to data in degree programmes, study plans and related areas, e.g. teachers of courses in a given programme. The control is carried out based on a number of implemented conditions relating, for example, to the number of programmes guaranteed in the context of other connections.

In order to ensure computerization and support the simplification of the entire process, an application for the evaluation of non-academic employees was designed and prepared in accordance with MU Directive No. 5/2017 Employee Evaluation. This application complemented other applications already developed electronically to support the evaluation of Masaryk University employees.

The year 2020 was affected by the covid-19 epidemic, and the situation delayed the implementation of some improvements in applications designed to support accreditation processes and employee evaluation. Full attention was focused on the computerization of a number of university processes and the support for distance learning in order to ensure quality educational activities for students even under the challenging conditions due to the crisis situation. In a short period, significant shifts in the computerisation of study agendas were made with high commitment, including the computerisation of state final examinations, distance enrolment of first-year students and the possibility of mass acceptance of final theses. A number of electronic confirmations related to anti-epidemic measures were created and in the challenging situation, an important task was also underway, namely the complete transfer and integration of the Faculty of Pharmacy from the Veterinary University Brno to Masaryk University. The new faculty was integrated smoothly and within

the planned deadlines, training staff and students for individual MU Information System agendas were carried out within the framework of epidemiological measures mainly in a distance form and through prepared instructional videos and individual distance consultations.

This year also saw a large number of training sessions based on the need for teachers to quickly orient themselves in e-learning tools, thanks to which most of the teaching could be transferred to the online environment.

Subsequently, in 2021, a new infrastructure was deployed for the live operation of video call processing, especially to ensure online teaching directly in the MUIS without the use of external tools. There was an internal connection with the MS Teams application used for video conferencing meetings in courses and for seminar groups. In the area of video and audio technology, a new HTML5 video player has been deployed to launch video directly in the browser page, which also enables advanced encryption to prevent content downloads. The new Mutual Evaluation application has expanded the portfolio of e-learning tools and e-learning support applications.

Within the framework of the computerisation of study agendas, new services for study support at MU were gradually introduced in the monitored period. A pilot version of the Study Planner application has been created and since its release has helped students navigate the requirements for successful graduation. Another application is the entire agenda Practice with a focus on the management of teaching practices and internships. Applicants have the opportunity to submit an e-application in a modern environment of small touch screen devices. Official processes have been simplified thanks to sealing and qualified signatures, and the entire process of dealing with matters has been considerably shortened. Examples include the simplified issuance of the study certificate, which has now become available with a qualified e-seal and QR code on a click, or the possibility of issuing an e-diploma.

Information System in Numbers

4 000+ FILES

in folders where programme documents are archived, e.g. minutes of Programme Board meetings

4+ GB

data entered in the total volume

±8 500 DOCUMENTS

related to programmes in the office

200+ PEOPLE

work monthly with the Management Data Programme application (guarantors, their representatives, members of Programme Boards, officials)

10 000+ ACCESSES

accesses made together per month

Planned actions and measures:

- The school-wide **course survey** – a tool used at Masaryk University to evaluate and improve the quality of teaching – will undergo further development in the near future. The use of school-wide course survey has shown that there is a need to aggregate data across courses and larger units such as degree programme, programme, guarantee unit etc. to enable more efficient and effective use of data. These aggregations and modifications to the user interface of the application working with the survey results are planned for the next period.
- In the area of accreditation of degree programmes, the plan is to **computerise the preparation of applications for substantial changes to a degree programme** (following the model of an extension application), which are approved by the MU Internal Evaluation Board.
- Another site that can have a major impact on the quality of education at the university is the **Study Risk Prevention** application, developed and deployed in collaboration with the MU Counselling Centre, which enables programme counsellors to identify student difficulties and communicate with them more effectively. This area should be given attention in the coming period.
- The **development of the EVAK agenda** should continue according to suggestions from individual faculties.

IT Support

INET/Magion Development Life Cycle

The main product of the Division of Information Systems of the Institute of Computer Science (ICS) is the development of the economic and personnel system INET, which is a superstructure over the Magion product. It is connected to it via website services and data views. INET has a three-layer architecture with a database layer based on Oracle DB, business logic written primarily in Java and a presentation layer. The majority of employees access the INET system directly, while a small number of primarily economic and personnel employees have direct access to Magion.

The life cycle of developing change requests in the INET system starts at the beginning of the year with the collection of documents within the demand management. The collection of suggestions takes place across the whole MU through the secretaries of the faculties and other HS. These are reviewed, sorted and submitted for prioritization according to the needs of the faculties in cooperation with the RMU methodologists and the ICS team. This activity is coordinated by the team of the Bursar's Office together with the individual methodologies of the MU Rectorate. The INET development team then prices them according to the complexity and difficulty of development, which

is a crucial input for the decision, which requirements will be implemented in which quarters. The most complex evaluations are those that need to be solved in cooperation with the FI IS team and that affect different modules of the INET system – and thus require extensive resources of the whole team.

After evaluating and timing the delivery of requirements, working groups are created for the largest areas within HR and economics (examples include contracts, the JOBS group, etc.). The groups work with the development team on more detailed specification of requirements and monitoring the progress of deliveries. Development of requirements then proceeds agilely in two-week to four-week cycles. We switched to this method in the second half of 2022. The purpose is to better manage the assignment of tasks to developers, to have a better overview of the requirements under development, and to solve capacity or other problems more quickly within the development cycle. We have switched to JIRA tool, which is becoming a standard part of the solution for managing not only IT services and the flow of requirements within ICS.

Another part of the user support is the iHelp team, which helps users solve their questions and problems with the INET system in any area and collects even very small suggestions for improvements.

Planned actions and measures:

- In the second half of 2021, a tender for the **replacement of the existing ERP (Magion)** was launched. The objective is to move to a next-generation economic and personnel system solution that will have an open API to integrate with surrounding systems and provide services and functionality to users that will lead to greater convenience and help MU become a paperless institution. Support for mobile devices, automation of user processes and the introduction of user reporting are examples of new functionality. The aim is to streamline and consolidate current economic processes and personnel agendas and together with the INET system to create a solution that will strengthen MU's position as a leader in the development of economic and personnel systems.
- The **transition to the JIRA tool and the consolidation of the Service Desk** (first level of support) with the IT Services Division of ICS is planned.

Central Request Handling, 24 x 7 Monitoring Centre

A top university requires top and affordable IT services. The smooth operation of information systems for MU students and employees is monitored 24/7 by the university-wide IT ServiceDesk. They deal with queries and requests from students and staff to make everything work for their (co-)work and studies. One of the team's responsibilities is to monitor the systems using monitoring centre tools to check the overall state of the University's computer network and systems. If a problem occurs, ServiceDesk starts the process

of resolving it and ensures that the service outage or limitation is resolved as soon as possible. We measure all these activities, regularly evaluate the services provided and continuously improve their quality. In 2022, the team focused on the technological renewal of tools for surveillance systems and strengthening the possibilities of proactive responses to events, such as monitoring of Magion and INET system databases, monitoring the availability of university websites, etc. The implementation of the interactive voice response system of the university call centre was completed, which automated responses to approximately 75% of telephone enquiries.

Planned actions and measures:

- Focus on **automating incident handling, digitizing telephony and unifying first-level support for multiple agendas.**

MU Open Science Strategy and Associated Activities

As of 1 November 2022, Masaryk University has a long-term strategy and vision for the development of Open Science principles at the University. The MU Open Science Strategy 2022-2028 is a document with an impact on the entire MU and its implementation will be reflected both in changes to MU internal regulations and in the setting up of new processes related to the provision of scientific support and IT services. Thanks to the ICS long-term vision in this area since 2010 and in connection with the above-mentioned strategic vision, MU has succeeded in obtaining the so-called EOSC-CZ Individual System Project (IPs), where MU becomes de facto a national coordinator of the key scientific -data area in the Czech Republic, which will not only strengthen MU's role within the academic environment in the Czech Republic, but will also bring cutting-edge digital support for the MU's research environment. In 2022, active preparations for the expansion of MU's strategic plan in this area to include Citizen Science and Open Source in the academic environment, which are considered new trends, were also launched. MU strategy allows it to adapt to new changes and remain a leader in this area in the Czech Republic. Since the beginning

of 2023, the implementation of the Horizon Europe CRAFT-OA project has been underway, where the ICS, in cooperation with MUNIPress, will develop methods and technical tools to support the so-called Open Access diamond path within an international consortium, which will once again help MU academic staff, e.g. with the establishment of new university professional journals.

In the data area, a university instance of Data Stewardship Wizard (DSW) was introduced as a core service in 2022 to assist project support and researchers in the preparation and implementation of project applications across grant schemes (Horizon Europe, Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TAČR), newly The Czech Science Foundation (GAČR), Johannes Amos Comenius Programme (OP JAK) and others).

Planned actions and measures:

— Focus on **supporting the fight against predatory practices in academic publishing** through cooperation with the University Campus Library and the RMU Research Department, which will strengthen the quality of MU scientific output in the long term

Libraries and Electronic Information Resources

Library and information services for the needs of study, teaching, education and research at MU are provided by a distributed library network consisting of the central libraries of individual faculties and other libraries (Telč University Centre Library, Teiresias Centre Library, partial and special libraries, (www.muni.cz/go/knihovny)). This network replicates the physical dislocation of the University and is coordinated and methodically managed by the Library and

Information Centre at the MU Institute of Computer Science, which also provides the library network with unified technological support. The scope and quality of services at the level of individual libraries are determined by the respective HS through library boards and operating budgets. One of the many feedbacks for library activities is provided by the regular annual survey among MU graduates, which traditionally shows a high level of satisfaction of respondents with the level of library services (around 99%); see individual surveys at muni.cz/go/absolventi-anketa.

In the past five years, the trend of increasing use of online information resources has accelerated, which MU libraries have supported both by expanding their offer of top electronic information resources and by introducing

new services. Such as electronic book borrowing (so-called e-borrowing), which, especially in times of covid closures and restrictions, received high praise from University students.

Masaryk University is one of the most important members of the national centre for electronic information resources – CzechElib (www.czechelib.cz), in the creation and establishment of which the MU libraries contributed significantly. Through this centre, Masaryk University has been providing most of the licensed electronic information resources (EIR) for all fields of study at the University since 2018. In order to select the necessary EIR and ensure their sustainable long-term financing, MU has created a system based on regular collection of requests from faculties, their prioritisation and division into multidisciplinary information resources financed centrally by the University and specialised information resources financed by faculties. In 2018-2022, 65 large-scale collections of EIR were secured in this way, with a total financial volume of around CZK 60 million per year (about half of this amount was covered by the CzechElib subsidy). In 2021, MU developed and in October of the same year, the MU management approved a strategy for securing and financing of EIR for the next period 2023-2027, which ranks MU among the most advanced universities in the world in terms of information security for education, science and research and in terms of technologies for their accessibility (discovery.muni.cz service).

Planned actions and measures:

— One of the important objectives for the period 2023-2027 is to ensure the transition to an **open publishing model**, which means, among other things, the transition of funding for scientific information resources from the classical subscription-based model (**subscription read-only**) to the publishing payment model in the Open Access mode (**read & publish**). The first step towards this transition is the launch of transformation agreements with selected publishers of scientific literature within the CzechElib Centre in 2023.

The covid-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 and the associated drastic restrictions on the standard functioning of the University highlighted the need for new forms of accessibility to information for learning. In 2020, MU libraries developed and launched an innovative e-borrowing system for controlled online access to 15,000 volumes of the most requested study literature from MU libraries' collections. In 2021, 9,760 individual students used it for a total of 145,661 electronic borrowings. Even after the release of the anti-covid restrictions, the rate of use of this service did not decrease, but rather increased slightly. In 2022, it was already 9,898 students and 156,004 e-borrowings.

The Masaryk University libraries, like many other university libraries in the Czech Republic, are facing the need for technological change of their automated library system. The existing Aleph system has been in operation at MU for more than twenty years and no longer provides all the required functionality, especially integrated unified management and access to information resources not only in printed but also in electronic form, whether it is licensed EIR or digitised own information resources. Therefore, in 2022, within the framework of the system projects of the OP JAK, MU libraries in close cooperation with the National Technical Library and other university and state research libraries prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Education and Science a proposal for the CARDS (Czech Academic and Research Discovery Services) project, the aim of which is not only the joint technological renewal of library systems, but especially the creation of a consortium of research libraries providing common services for the needs of the operation of the participating libraries, as well as new and more efficient services for the research community throughout the Czech Republic. The project was successfully evaluated at the beginning of 2023, and if it can be successfully implemented in the planned 2023-2028 time frame, it will contribute significantly to the improvement of the services of MU libraries and other participating organisations

Cybersecurity at Masaryk University

The cybersecurity of MU users and infrastructure is ensured by the CSIRT-MU cybersecurity team, which in 2016 was the first team in the Czech Republic to be certified to the highest level by the European organisation Trusted Introducer. The CSIRT-MU team provides the University with a number of services that have a direct and indirect impact on ensuring the security of its users. At the technical level, it is primarily about coordinating the resolution of security incidents, ensuring network monitoring and proactive testing of the university infrastructure against potential threats. In this area, the team continuously automates its processes and deploys innovative solutions that reduce the demand on human and technical resources. This makes it possible to keep the number of security incidents requiring manual resolution of around 0.1% of the total number of recorded incidents (out of a total of around 200,000 in 2022). It also frees up resources for the team to develop and improve other services. These fall, for example, in the area of ensuring compliance with newly introduced legal regulations, which have a significant impact on the whole University. In the area of proactive cybersecurity activities, team members focus on user awareness, cybersecurity training and education. In all these areas, the team does not rely solely on institutional funding, but continuously seeks external resources, especially in the form of research and development projects from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education, Technology Agency of the Czech Republic and the EU (a total of 25 projects since 2018). External funding accounts for more than 75% of the team's total budget and enables it to provide the necessary knowledge and technological capacity needed to secure a complex environment as Masaryk University represents. It also enables the team to build and expand national and international contacts.

The CSIRT-MU team has set a long-term strategy for personnel, technical and research development, which will be followed in the coming years and will aim to continue to improve the services provided.

Planned actions and measures:

— In connection with the increase in institutional support, more emphasis will be placed on the **development and transfer of technological solutions from research projects to operational practice and proactive service components**. However, it is still expected that research and development projects will form a significant component of the budget and therefore emphasis will be placed on finding synergies between project activities and the needs of the team in relation to the University.

4 . 4

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development or sustainability in short, has long been an integral part of Masaryk University's life. It is a complex theme that permeates all three University roles. In its educational role, the University acquaints students with global challenges and the latest trends and leads them to be responsible to themselves, the environment and society. Within the framework of science and research, Masaryk University deals with dozens of European and national research projects with a direct impact on the quality of life of people not only in the South Moravian region. In terms of the third role, i.e. social responsibility and internal culture, respect, mutual respect, solidarity and partnership in all actions and behaviour have long been self-evident within Masaryk University. Within this chapter, given the structure of the report, the related internal environment of a sustainable and responsibly managed institution is described and evaluated, which in the period under review created a functional and inspiring background for excellent education and research and also enabled the fulfilment of the third role of Masaryk University.

Masaryk University, in accordance with its mission to contribute through its scientific activities, student education and social action to a quality and healthy life for all generations and to a free, cohesive and safe society, will continue to develop its potential in the field of sustainability. In doing so, it fulfils its responsibility and role as a co-creator of public opinion, a solver of local and all-society issues and a public service provider open to all. It will also work towards one of the visions for 2028, which is the University as an inspiring community that fully respects and fulfils the principles of social responsibility and contributes to solving the goals of sustainable development through its principles and daily actions, and guides its students and staff accordingly. In the coming period, the University will also measure and actively reduce its carbon and overall environmental footprint.

Sustainable Construction

In the period under review, the renewal and development of the material and technical base of Masaryk University continued in accordance with the Masaryk University Long-term Plan 2016-2020 and the Masaryk University Strategic Plan for 2021-2028 (hereinafter referred to as the Masaryk University Strategic Plan 2021-2028). This mainly involved the implementation of construction and other investment activities for the development of infrastructure facilities for teaching and research in accordance with the relevant Investment Activity Plans approved by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Investments were prepared and implemented both for the needs of the development of individual faculties and for the development of related facilities. The sources of funding were mainly ESIF, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports programme funding and Masaryk University own resources.

During the period under review, the following sustainability principles were applied to construction activities in addition to legal requirements:

- From the project documentation onwards, the requirements for noise and dust reduction were taken into account, a plan for waste material disposal, reuse of topsoil, possible decontamination of the land was prepared, all of which was associated with high requirements for the qualification of the general contractor;
- MU used its own central system of construction and technological passporting;
- When implementing thermal insulation of façades and fillings, the values of the passive standard were designed for the relevant new buildings;
- Emphasis was placed on the implementation of green roofs and further expansion of greenery – an example is the University campus (UKB);
- The use of nets with climbing plants in front of the façade was used to prevent thermal bridges in buildings suitable for this;

- Heat exchangers in piles were implemented in selected buildings, which provided a heat source for the winter mode and were subsidized with heat for cooling the building in the summer mode;
- In terms of water management, the UKB campus managed to pilot the modification of the existing retention basin, build new basins and create conditions for further expansion of greenery, all in connection with the monitoring of rainwater.

Among the most important constructions fundamentally developing the study and scientific environment of MU, which were implemented or started in the period under review, it is necessary to mention especially the reconstruction and completion of the historical premises of the Faculty of Arts on Arne Novák street and the implementation of the University Simulation Centres (mainly the low-energy building of the Faculty of Law, Faculty of Economics and Administration, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education, Teiresias) financed by ESIF. Part of the implementation of the University simulation centres was also their equipment, financed mainly from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports programme.

In the area of UKB, it is necessary to mention the RECETOX RI project, including the construction of an underground bank of environmental and biological samples, according to FIDIC contractual conditions, as well as the project for the replacement of heating and cooling sources in selected pavilions of UKB, which significantly improved the efficiency of the campus and reduced the ecological footprint of the University.

For the controlled and comprehensive development of the Masaryk University facilities, a conceptual study of the completion and extension of the Bohunice University Campus was prepared in the period under review. In accordance with it and in accordance with the MU Strategic Plan 2021-2028, project work on the MUNI BioPharma Hub flagship project has been initiated. It involves the location of the Faculty of Pharmacy in the University's own premises, the construction of a preclinical centre and a molecular medicine area with a focus on innovation for a healthy and safe society. Project work has also started on the project - Completion of a Multi-purpose Open Athletics Centre and Hall for Indoor Sports for the Faculty of Sports Studies in passive standard and on the project for the completion of the Faculty of Informatics premises. For further information, please use the dedicated university website muni.cz/go/zelena-vystavba.

Planned actions and measures:

- In line with the main strategic objective "to sustainably and responsibly manage the renewal, development and construction of the University infrastructure and the acquisition of related technologies and equipment to ensure adequate functional facilities for excellent research and quality teaching as well as a pleasant environment for students and staff", Masaryk University will in the field of sustainable construction:
 - Strive for the use of **certified practices in line with environmental responsibility** in the implementation of new buildings, renovations and repairs of buildings.
 - Increase the **proportion of green areas** in the University premises, aiming at their active use and improving the availability of so-called clean transport.
 - Plan the installation of **solar panels** as a source for heating domestic water and energy saving as well as photovoltaic panels for selected buildings under construction.
 - Strive to make the construction of new university buildings more efficient by applying the **Concept for the Implementation of the BIM** (Building Information Modelling) Method in the Czech Republic.
 - To complete the necessary **barrier-free access** to university buildings, including relevant internal modifications.
 - Among the important currently implemented or planned constructions, which aim to have the lowest possible environmental footprint, it is worth mentioning the general completion of research and educational capacities at UKB and in particular the MUNI BioPharma project, which should be used by more than 7,000 undergraduate students of the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Science and at least 1,000 academic and non-academic employees of these departments. The building will use a number of environmentally friendly features such as solar cells, waste server heat recovery, rainwater use, etc.

Responsible Purchasing

In cooperation with the project of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic, the system of responsible purchasing at Masaryk University was gradually improved during the period under review, while reducing the administrative burden. In this regard, dynamic purchasing systems have been and continue to be used for the purchase of common goods, including the purchase of sustainable promotional items.

Contracts consistently required fair working conditions for contractor employees and timely payments to subcontractors. Furthermore, standard tender conditions and contract templates were developed to take into account social, environmental and innovative aspects of procurement, and the Public Procurement Guidelines were updated in cooperation with the individual profit centres. The Masaryk University Responsible Public Purchasing Strategy 2023-2028 was prepared for approval at the end of the period under review. For further information, you can use the dedicated university website muni.cz/go/udrzitelne-nakupy.

Planned actions and measures:

- Implement the approved **Responsible Public Purchasing Strategy 2023-2028**, taking into account broader economic, environmental and social aspects, including the application of quality criteria. The priorities of the strategy are communication and cooperation, reducing the administrative burden of purchasing, promoting decent and fair conditions in the supply chain, preference or support for environmentally friendly solutions and quality-oriented purchasing.

Energy and Waste Management

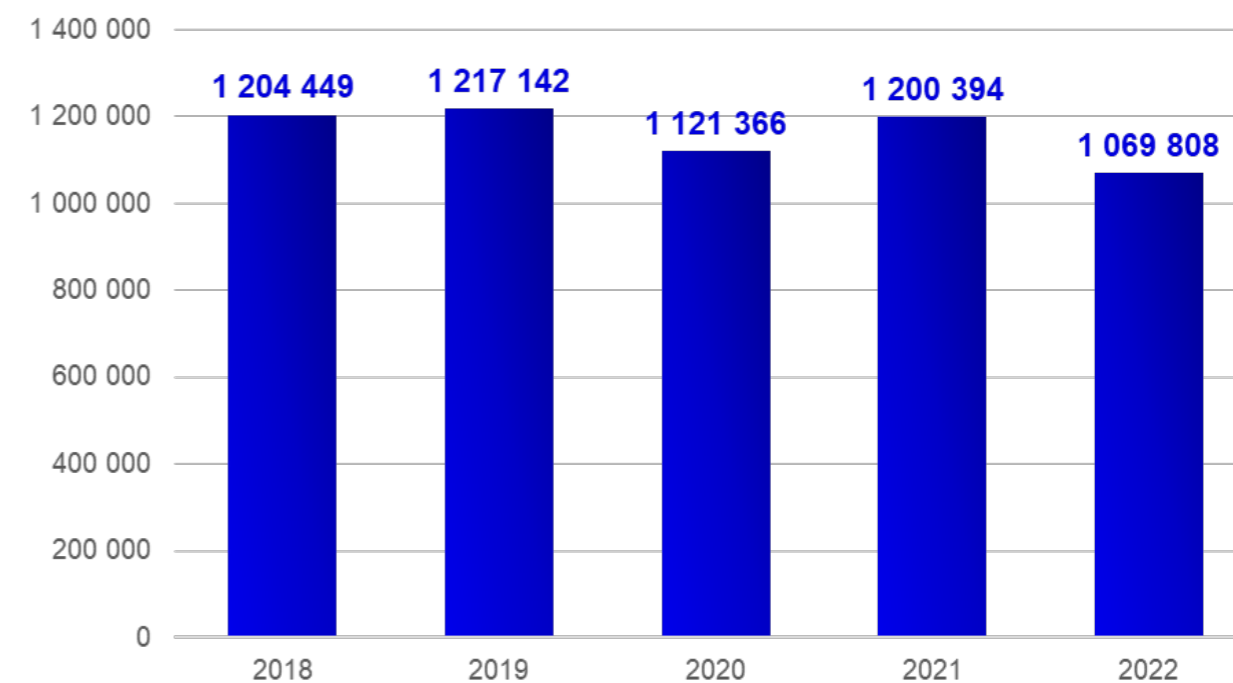
In the period under review, Masaryk University intensified the development and application of tools and procedures to improve the efficiency of building operations and technologies, as well as the comfort of their users. There have also been significant improvements in waste management and increased support for the use of clean energy. Key measures and outputs implemented include:

- Advanced building and technology data management in the form of digital passport documentation (construction, technology and external areas), which was made available with the support of the ICS via website and mobile applications, database services, but also as drawing documents or tailor-made documents, e.g. for the needs of public procurement.
- Expanding the number of sites with sub-metered consumption as a basis for more efficient energy management and subsequent evaluation of the energy efficiency of individual buildings.
- Use of an expanding Building Management System (BMS) to control and monitor building technologies with an updated methodology of the measurement and regulation system.
- In the area of Computer-Aided Facility Management (CAFM), new modules of the Archibus system were purchased – Property Portfolio Management and Space Management, which will be used mainly for planning the costs of building operation, reporting and managerial views of the overall property portfolio of Masaryk University.
- Operation of air-conditioning units and cooling, using recuperation units for heat recovery, implementation of measurement of the amount of CO₂ in classrooms for more effective air conditioning regulation.
- Replacement of lighting with LED across university buildings.
- Preparatory steps for the expansion of PV power plants to other MU-owned facilities, including the examination of the possibility of transferring the

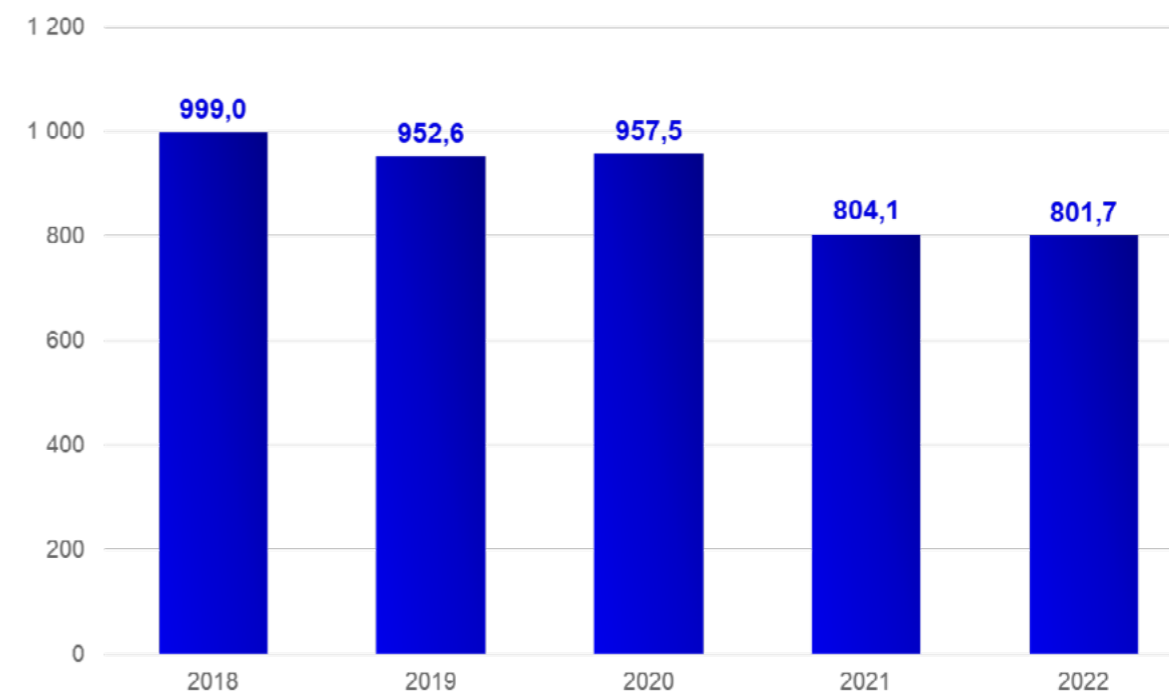
surplus electricity generated from a specific PV power plant to another MU customer site in real time.

- A situation in which more than half of MU buildings (by floor area) can be described as SMART, using systems to control and monitor the operation of technology.
- The University also took an environmentally responsible approach to purchasing electricity for 2021, with its entire supply coming from certified renewable sources.
- Creating the Ten Principles for Responsible Energy Management and launching the #munisaves campaign. For further information you can use the dedicated university website sustain.muni.cz/aktualne/munisaves.
- In cooperation with the Institute for Sustainability and Circularity of MU Faculty of Economics and Administration, a comprehensive analysis of MU waste management was created, which was the basis for the development of the MU strategy focused on this area.
- The Masaryk University Strategy for Sustainable Waste Management and Waste Prevention 2023-2028 was prepared for approval at the end of the period under review, working with the concept of “zero waste”.
- For further information you can use the dedicated university website muni.cz/go/odpady-a-recyklace.

Natural Gas Consumption m³/Year per MU 2018-2022



Weight of Waste at MU in Tonnes 2018-2022



Planned actions and measures:

In accordance with the main strategic objective “to deal with energy sources, water and waste in accordance with the principles of sustainable development and to strengthen the informed management of the university’s operations enabling the efficient use of built spaces and the management of property”, in the field of energy management and waste management Masaryk University will:

- Implement the approved **Masaryk University Strategy for Sustainable Waste Management and Waste Prevention 2023-2028**.
- Prepare and then implement **energy and water management strategies**.
- Increase the proportion of **SMART buildings**, monitored and controlled by IT systems, within the University using BMS and CAFM systems.
- Establish a system **for training staff and students** in the efficient and environmentally responsible operation of the University.
- It will use data from existing systems and implement BIM standards in new buildings to optimise building operations and technology.
- It will remain consistent with the objectives to reduce the energy intensity of operations (e.g. lighting, heating and cooling...) in relevant respects.

Meals

The operation of the canteens at Masaryk University underwent significant changes in the period under review, initiated by pressure to further streamline their operation and also significantly affected by the COVID pandemic. A uniform menu was introduced in all canteens with an emphasis on the quality of ingredients, nutritional value and sustainability of cooking (local and seasonality of ingredients, use of the f-region platform). In addition to meat and low-calorie meals, students could also choose gluten-free, vegetarian, soups, sushi, lunch salads and more. The presentation of a wide range of meals was available in the canteens on LCD monitors in Czech and English.

In 2021, the reconstruction of the canteen at the Faculty of Law was completed and the canteen at the Faculty of Education was newly opened. Thanks to proper planning, Accommodation and Catering Services (SKM) were able to increase sales of meals with maximum efficiency and sustainability of cooking during the period under review. The ordering system allowed customers to choose their preferred meal, saving raw materials in terms of centralised cooking and reducing waste. Mobile phone meals ordering and cashless payment options have been introduced. For further information, you can use the dedicated university website muni.cz/go/udrzitelnost-strava.

Planned actions and measures:

- In accordance with the sub-objectives of the MU Strategic Plan 2021-2028, the scope and quality of services provided by the MU Accommodation and Catering Services in the area of accommodation and catering will be further optimised to achieve the expected standard, including the aspect of **minimising the carbon footprint**, and also to **implement the investment strategy of the MU Accommodation and Catering Services** with an emphasis on sustainable aspects of investments.

Cooperation with Other Universities and Other Relevant Entities within the University

Masaryk University Measure No. 3/2021 established the MU Sustainable Development Council (MU SDC). MU SDC is the Rector’s advisory, initiating and coordinating body in matters of social responsibility and sustainable development of Masaryk University. Its tasks include discussing future MU Annual Reports on sustainable development, the University’s sub-strategies in the area of sustainable development and social responsibility, including possible communication of these strategies outside the MU environment, and the medium- and long-term priorities for MU development in the area of sustainable development and social responsibility. Members of the MU SDC are members of the MU management, representatives of individual faculties and student representatives. Four meetings were held during the period under review. For further information, you can use the dedicated university website muni.cz/go/rada-udrzitelnosti.

At the end of 2022, the pilot year of the internal student project competition – ComMUNity fund was also launched in accordance with the MU Strategic Plan 2021-2028. The aim of the internal competition is to transparently support the implementation of sustainable and socially responsible projects that fulfil and promote the social role of Masaryk University, are internally and externally transferable and support cooperation between students and employees. A total of 19 projects were registered and competed for CZK 2 million. For further information, you can use the dedicated university website muni.cz/go/KOFO.

In 2022, MU coordinated the cooperation of 24 Czech universities in the first of the follow-up projects UNILEAD (University leaders in SDGs) supported by the Centralised Development Programme of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, whose common subject is activities for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the creation of a voluntary standard for public universities in the field of sustainability. The aim of the first project was to strengthen the role of universities as “effective, accountable and inclusive” public organisations by ensuring more effective collaboration in the transfer of good practice in the implementation of the sustainable development goals within the operational aspects of universities (the so-called “Resources for Change”). The output of the project is, among others, a set of recommendations applicable by university management and their subsequent transfer into practice by the necessary involvement of internal and external key persons. For further information, you can use the dedicated university website muni.cz/go/unilead.

In 2020, a dedicated website in both Czech and English versions sustain.muni.cz, was created to bring together information on sustainable development at Masaryk University.

In 2020, MU became a member of the Association of Corporate Social Responsibility (A CSR) and of the CSR Stakeholder Platform under the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic. Together with other entities from the region, Masaryk University committed in February 2020 to reduce CO₂ production in Brno by at least 40% by 2030 by signing a Memorandum on long-term cooperation on the commitment of the Statutory City of Brno to climate change adaptation. By this act, it has promised to incorporate the obligations arising from the Memorandum into its normal operations and activities. For further information, please use the dedicated university website sustain.muni.cz/o-nas/regionalni-partnerstvi.

Planned actions and measures:

- Masaryk University will continue to develop the involvement of the university community in the sustainable running of the institution through the implementation of sustainability sub-strategies, support for student engagement through the ComMUNItY Fund, improved awareness through updated bilingual websites sustain.muni.cz and regular columns on the subject of sustainability in newsletters and the magazine M Stránky.
- **Cooperation between Czech public universities through UNILEAD projects will continue** with the aim of achieving a voluntary sustainable standard for public universities. Masaryk University will also continue to develop international cooperation in the field of sustainable development through the Utrecht University Network and cooperation with other foreign universities (e.g. the University of Haifa in Israel).
- MU will continue to implement the **Memorandum of Long-Term Cooperation** on the commitment of the Statutory City of Brno to climate change adaptation in effort to reduce CO2 production in Brno by at least 40% by 2030.

Sustainability in International Rankings

In autumn 2020, Masaryk University for the first time joined two international university rankings mapping the implementation of sustainable development principles. The first is the UI Green Metric World University Ranking, which compares mainly the operational aspects of sustainable development. MU has also participated in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2021, which focuses on university activities across OSN individual sustainable development goals. MU continuously improved in both of these rankings throughout its participation.

In 2022, MU participated in two other rankings evaluating sustainability, namely the QS WUR SDG Ratings (a silver medal in the

“Environmental Impact” and a bronze medal in the “Social Impact” category) and in the QS Sustainability Rankings (198th in the Environmental Impact category, 369th in the Social Impact category). For further information, use the dedicated university website muni.cz/go/sustain-zebrický.

Planned actions and measures:

- -Masaryk University will continue to strive to **improve its position in international university comparisons** by participating in the **UI Green Metric World University Rankings, Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, QS WUR SDG Ratings and QS Sustainability Rankings.**

4.5

Ethics and Social Role

Code of Ethics

Masaryk University created its first code of ethics as a reflection of the government document – Ethical Framework for Research (2005), which recommended that universities and research institutions develop their own codes of ethics to ensure compliance with the main ethical standards and principles of scientific integrity. For this reason, the current MU Code of Ethics is entitled “Code of Ethics for MU Academic and Professional Staff” and is issued as a Rector’s Directive.

From the above context, a major disadvantage of the Code of Ethics is obvious – it is not binding for the entire university community, i.e. students and academic and non-academic staff of Masaryk University. Moreover, this situation also contradicts the standards for granting institutional accreditation according to the National Accreditation Bureau, which clearly require a code of ethics binding for students and employees of a given university.

Therefore, the optimal solution for the given situation was to develop a new MU Code of Ethics that will meet the following parameters:

- The new Code of Ethics will apply to the entire university community, i.e. students, academic and non-academic staff of Masaryk University;
- The new Code of Ethics will be declarative in nature, thus it will contain the basic moral values to which Masaryk University as an institution subscribes and to which the entire university community is committed;
- The new Code of Ethics will not be a legal regulation as such, but subsequent legal regulations (Disciplinary Regulations for Students, Work Regulations for Employees) may or will refer to it).

This new concept of the MU Code of Ethics is fully in line with the MU Strategic Plan 2021-2028, in which respect for the principles of academic ethics is named among the basic values forming the basis of MU’s internal culture. Thus, at the end of 2022, after many internal discussions across MU, a modernized Code of Ethics was prepared and approved by the MU management, and it will be further discussed in 2023.

Planned actions and measures:

- Implement the Masaryk University **Code of Ethics** into practice.
- Respond to the evolution of the social situation in the field of **social security.**

Counselling

The functioning of the MU Counselling Centre was ensured within the MUNI 4.0, KA Academic Failure project from April 2017 to September 2022. The project was followed up in October 2022 under the Programme for the Promotion of Strategic Management in Higher Education (PSMHE). According to the MUNI 4.0 project specification the intention of the Counselling Centre was: "...a completely new counselling service that will focus on reducing the rate of academic failure and will provide services not only to students with problems in their studies, but also to applicants who may be confused by the wide range of options and mistakenly choose a degree programme that they subsequently leave...".

The main objectives of the centre were set as follows:

- Lend a helping hand to applicants and students from the moment they choose a field of study to successful graduation.
- Convey essential information directly and indirectly related to the study and to guide the student through key study topics in a timely and accessible manner.
- Help students set themselves up for successful study strategy.
- Provide assistance to students who find themselves in a difficult life situation.
- Initiate measures "inside" the University that can help eliminate some of the causes of academic failure.

On the contrary, the aim of the Counselling Centre is not to purposely reduce the rate of academic failure at MU to a specific number. The reduction in academic failure is an expected consequence of the operation of a comprehensive university-wide counselling system.

The wide range of activities undertaken by the Counselling Centre in the period 2018-2022 in relation to promoting academic success for applicants, students and academics has laid in many ways a solid foundation for a comprehensive approach to the topic of academic failure/success across MU and led to the creation of a stable counselling network. Counselling aimed at

study applicants followed two development lines in the given period, namely the promotion of the topic of "correct" (informed, well-considered) choice of degree programme and the promotion of counselling services for MU students towards applicants as a support for applicants' preference of MU over other universities. An example would be the creation of a practical guide for choosing a science field (muni.cz/go/jak-vybrat-obor) or a degree programme directly on the website (for applicants and students). It includes recommendations on how to make a choice, what to look for and where to find information. The guide was further worked with - it was actively promoted towards candidates, emphasising the crucial importance of the selection process and explaining the importance of making the right choice.

The Counselling Centre initiated the establishment of a network of programme consultants in Bachelor, Master and Post-Master programmes, i.e. persons providing professional counselling at programme level. The network consists of about 130 people. Consultants are available to applicants - especially during the admissions process, they are an essential link in helping applicants choose a degree programme. Students can also contact the consultants if they need to solve a question of a content nature (solving an obstacle in the passing through studies, change of specialization, etc.). In cooperation with the guarantors of the programmes (or persons authorized by them on the programme part) and copywriters, new descriptions of Bachelor's, Master's and subsequent Master's programmes were prepared in a unified form so that the emphasis was placed on providing real information about the contents of studies, requirements for students, possible job opportunities, etc., and so that this information would be understandable to applicants and thus provide them with a better basis for making the right choice.

Planned actions and measures:

- Establish **cooperation with career counsellors in secondary schools** and work with faculties to ensure that information is also presented on Open day, etc.

The Counselling Centre provides psychological counselling for the target group of students. The initial psychological team consisted of three psychologists, but was gradually expanded in response to growing demand. At the end of 2022, it numbered 16 people.

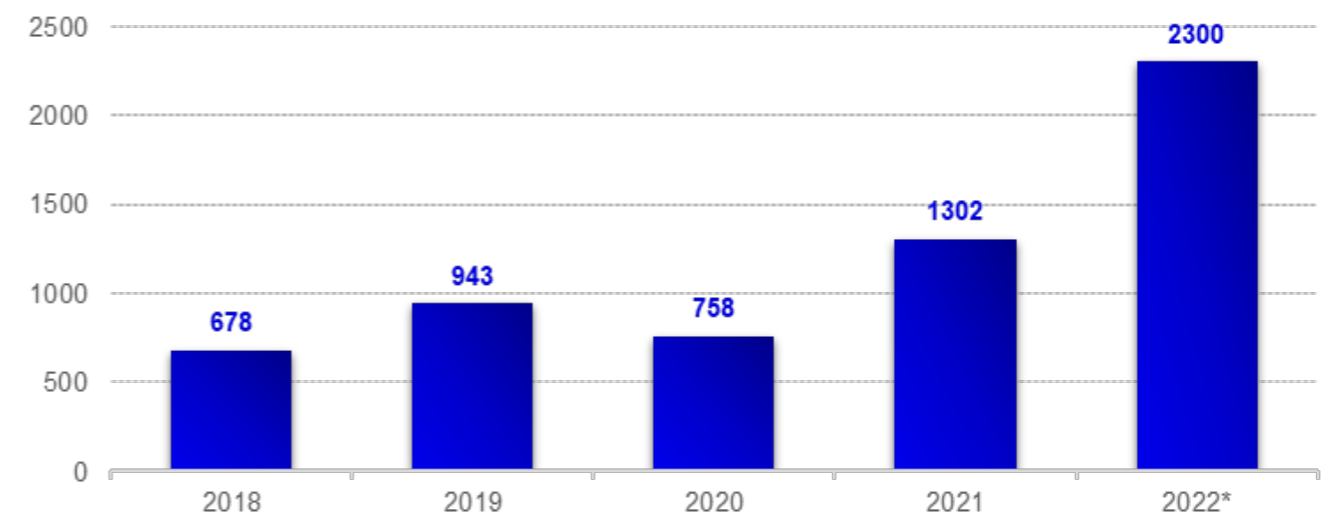
Initially, the consultations took place in the psychologists' private rooms and in a shared room at the Teiresias Centre. At the beginning of 2022, we managed to secure our own consultation room in the building in Komenský square, which again contributed to increasing the efficiency of the service. Consultations are provided in Czech and English, and from spring 2022 also in Ukrainian. Students can choose between face-to-face and online forms of service provision. The service

is presented in detail on the website (in Czech, English and from summer 2022 also in Ukrainian), where psychologist medallions are also placed.

Students will also find useful links to assistance opportunities outside MU. In 2022, the topics What to do in a crisis situation and Coping with loss have been redesigned in response to different situations.

Between 2018 and 2022, over 5,000 consultations were provided to MU students. Due to the gradually increasing demand, a booking system has been prepared, thanks to which the person interested in the consultation has an overview of all available dates and can choose a specific psychologist or therapist besides a suitable date. Due to the growing interest in the service, the creation of the reservation system was an important step to increase the efficiency of the service.

Number of Psychological Consultations 2018-2022



Planned actions and measures:

- Maintaining a **stable team of psychologists** even if the limit of five consultations is removed;
- Making the **booking system** available for reservations in Ukrainian;
- Cooperation with the **SELF CARE HUB** project at Faculty of Medicine;
- Development of an e-course focused on **mental health promotion**;
- Focusing on the **implementation of “general” activities** (e.g. e-courses, podcasts on various topics, thematic support groups led by a psychologist, group seminars focused on skill development, etc.)
- Emphasize the topic of students' mental health in quality assurance processes as an important aspect of a quality learning environment.

The website www.muni.cz/studenti, managed by the Counselling Centre, acts as a clear information platform, containing a number of texts, tutorials and videos, summarising essential information on core study topics as well as other relevant topics. The topics are presented in a clear question and answer format, interlinked and ordered according to relevance in the course of study.

Faculty counsellors – representatives of the Counselling Centre at individual faculties – are also an important institution. They either provide counselling directly or direct students to the right place at the University or outside it to get their problem resolved as quickly as possible. Faculty counsellors became available in spring 2018. The position operates at 8 faculties (Faculty of Informatics and Faculty of Science are the exceptions). Students and applicants can contact the counsellor via the university email, the Counselling Centre box, the Counselling Centre form or in person during counselling hours.

In 2021, the Counselling Centre was tasked with addressing and preventing sexual harassment at MU. The Counselling Centre, in cooperation with other units,

has prepared a new concept for dealing with cases of sexual harassment at MU. The concept was based on the recommendations of the organisation

Konsent and was also inspired by examples from abroad. The output was a solution methodology, which is posted on the website. The following were created on this topic:

- Model examples and cases from other schools;
- Diagram of the handling of sexual harassment cases;
- Methodological brochure for MU contact persons from Konsent.

In 2022, the Counselling Centre, in cooperation with CERPEK, prepared four two-day training sessions for contact persons and six Respect to the (Academic) Ground training sessions for staff. The training for the contact persons was a basic preparation for the performance of this position, it included sensitization regarding the issues and training in communication with future potential clients. Training for staff provided basic insight and sensitization. The Counselling Centre also organised two Respect to the (Academic) Ground training sessions for students. Based on the demand, an information seminar was held at the Faculty of Arts for senior staff in cooperation with the Legal Department to familiarize employees with the anchoring of rights and options for dealing with inappropriate behaviour within MU.