

Research_at_UMP_"Grigore_T._Popa"

UMF sees itself as a major provider of health sciences education and research in Romania, according to the SER. The SER confirms the strategic goal to improve UMF's visibility and market presence both as a medical sciences education provider and a key player in international research. It also aims to increase non-state budget revenue by tapping into research funding available from both public and private agencies on national and European levels.

The team found this strong research orientation evident in its discussions with staff and its visits to university facilities. Students are participating in research activities at all levels and this was clearly visible. Considerable investments have been made into research facilities and, equipment and technology enrichments are impressive.

Whilst external verification has confirmed UMF's position as a teaching and advanced research university at national level, it was less clear, beyond visibility and market presence, the measures and metrics by which it would achieve its goal to be a key player in international research. The team found the university approach towards setting research priorities to lack clarity and focus. The SER advised that 'UMF emphasises those areas of research and education in health sciences that have the greatest potential to significantly and rapidly improve the health of the population' and also 'Moreover, UMF promotes specifically those areas where the members of the academic community have accumulated documented expertise and benefit from an already existing adequate research infrastructure'. This shows that within the present system, a higher degree of decentralisation and individual autonomy is envisaged in the field of research, which, although strategically coordinated at the top level, needs to provide better autonomy for individual research groups in terms of resource management. The team found that an outcome of this was that overall the research focus is very broad; as a consequence, some research groups find it difficult to meet critical mass and impact.

These are key factors in building reputation, attracting world class staff and research funding. Conversely the possibility that researchers who work as individuals or in small groups and show potential can be attractive targets of employment for other universities.

The university has identified that another resource available for the UMF is represented by intellectual property rights (IPR) generated by its research activities and that presently this resource is still inefficiently used and efforts must be directed towards development of UMF's IP policies. This is a situation that should be addressed as if the university has world-class research output, the IPR associated with that is considerable.

Overall, research output of UMF internationally is becoming more visible (EU funds, journal publications in English); however, these are spread across diverse fields and the team recommends that UMF should focus its excellence on priorities in research fields. Following this it should strengthen visibility of research by being more present in international research groups as this would contribute to further opening UMF to the international scientific community (including mobility programmes, language policy, collaborative research, conference attendance, staff recruitment).