Универзитет „Св. Кирил и Методиј" во Скопје

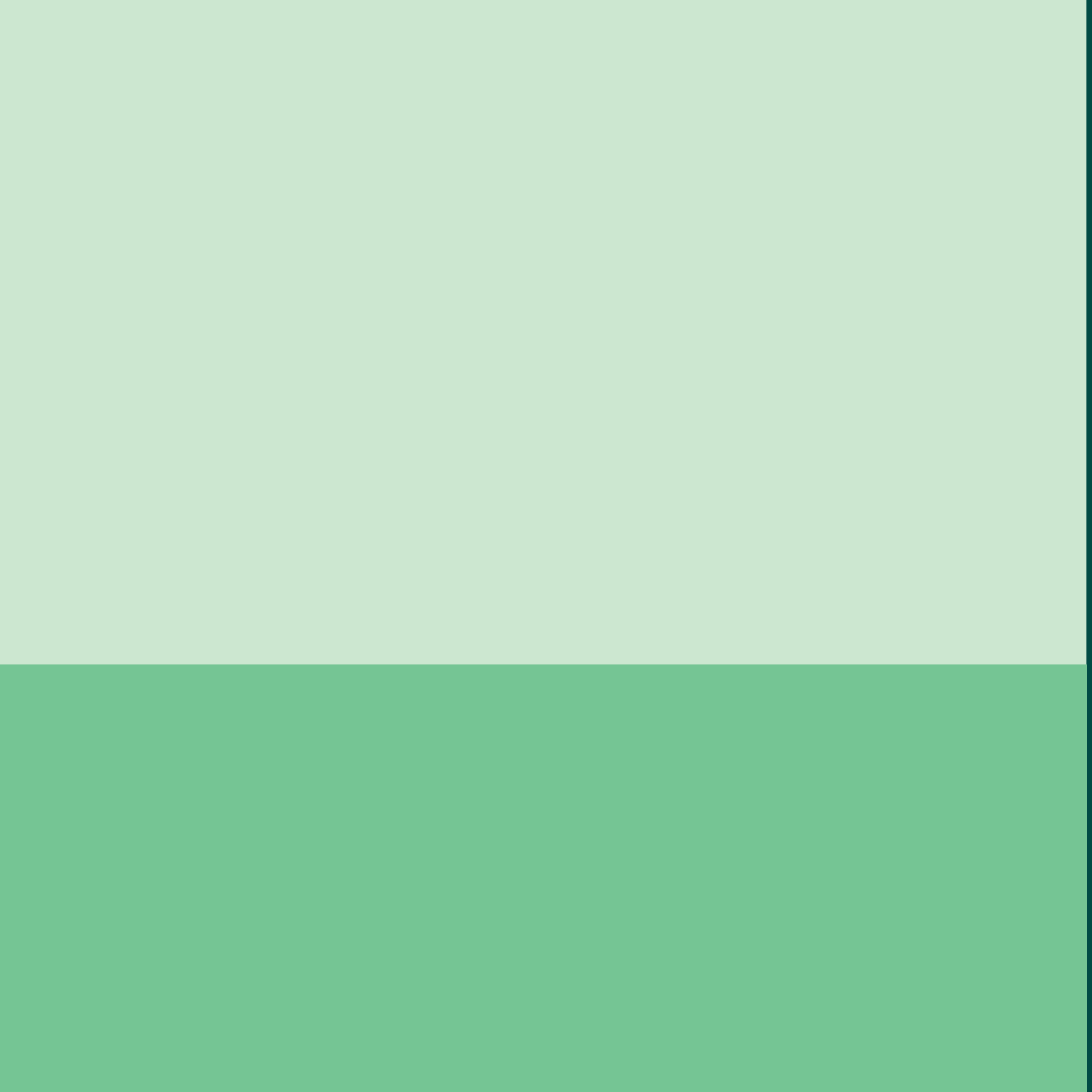# UKIM SHAPING THE FUTURE: EXCELLENCE BUILT ON QUALITY

Driven by our strategic vision for excellence in higher education and guided by the needs of contemporary society, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje has been working intensively for nearly two years to establish a quality assurance framework, aligned with national standards and the standards of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

Starting with the principle that quality is not the responsibility of an individual but a shared responsibility of all, this two-year period of active work has resulted in significant achievements: the establishment of the University's Quality Centre and Quality Council, the formation of quality committees within the faculties, and the implementation of the University's Quality Assurance Strategy, the introduction of annual action plans for each unit, as well as the providing more than 35 training sessions for UKIM's academic staff.

Particular attention was devoted to gender equality, sustainable development through green initiatives and digitalization of processes – areas where UKIM has achieved remarkable progress. Working together with students and the business community, the University has implemented SMART indicators for quality assessment and, for the first time, carried out a comprehensive 360° survey encompassing all stakeholders in the educational process.

As the oldest, largest, and foremost higher education institution in our country, for decades, the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje has been a leader in driving transformation and development, a catalyst for innovation and a cornerstone in the advancement of the Macedonian economy and culture. The process of adapting to the evolving challenges of the digital society enables UKIM to promptly identify its strengths and weaknesses and to implement the necessary reforms – all in the interest of students, the teaching staff and society as a whole.

In the pages that follow, through text, data and images, we demonstrate how we collectively build and enhance the quality of UKIM. We highlight the exemplary practices of our academic units, of which we are particularly proud, present the insights gained through our engagement with the business community, and articulate our vision and the steps we will take to drive the advancement of higher education. As Rector and a Professor of the University, I reaffirm my strong support and personal commitment to the ongoing transformation and the continuous strengthening of our quality assurance system.

***We learn with passion. We create with quality!***
**Prof. Biljana Angelova, Ph.D.**
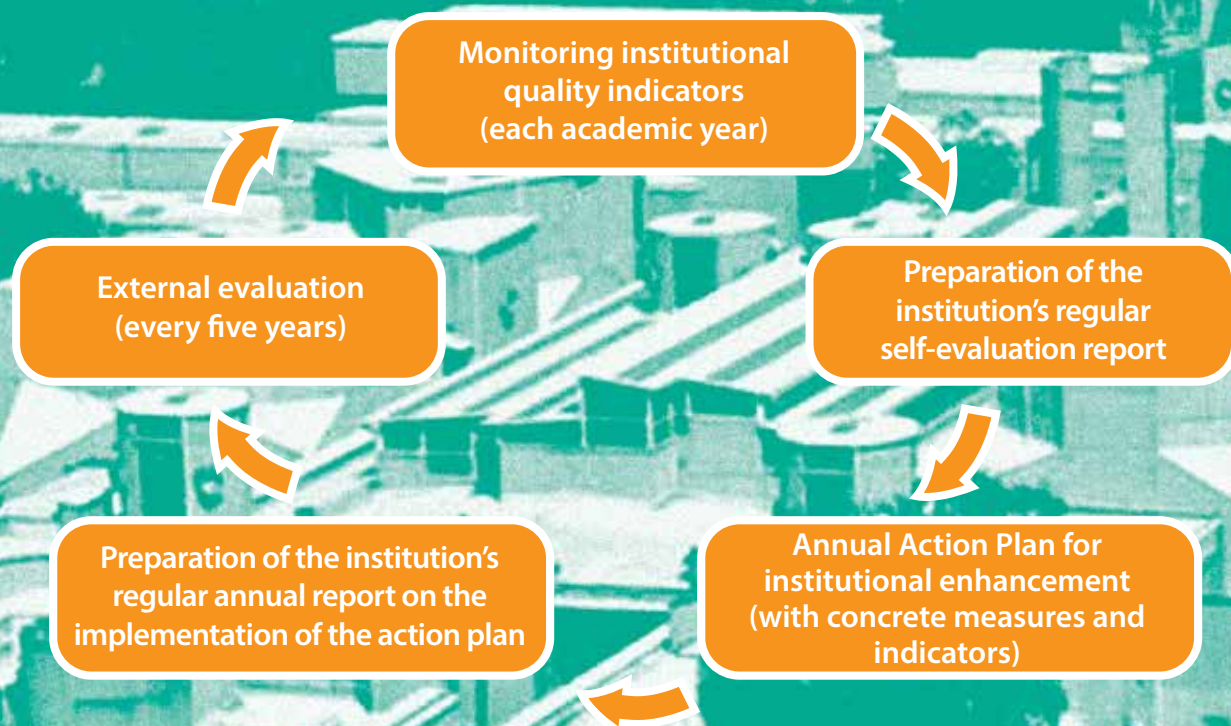**Rector of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje**

**SMALL STEPS. MEASURABLE IMPACT.**

Driven by the belief that quality higher education is essential to the foundation and progress of a democratic society, a successful economy and a developed country, UKIM launched a new quality assurance concept in March 2024.

In addition to the standards of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the national standards, the new system brings significant enhancements: newly established quality bodies at the University level, an innovative tool for annual action plans with mandatory reporting, and a comprehensive 360-degree survey that ensures every stakeholder's voice is heard. The introduction of the Annual Action Plan has empowered each academic unit to strategically plan and adapt its quality enhancement activities to its unique context, while clearly defining measurable indicators fully aligned with ENQA standards. Together with the academic staff, the new system actively involves students and the business community, and has been implemented since the 2024/2025 academic year.

Monitoring institutional quality indicators (each academic year)

Preparation of the institution's regular self-evaluation report

Annual Action Plan for institutional enhancement (with concrete measures and indicators)

Preparation of the institution's regular annual report on the implementation of the action plan

External evaluation (every five years)

A NEW CHAPTER IN QUALITY

The first and essential step in developing the University's quality assurance system was the establishment of the legal framework. In the spring of 2024, the University adopted the Quality Assurance Rulebook and introduced a new Guideline for self-evaluation.

Given the University's long-term and strategic commitment to quality enhancement, a dedicated Quality Assurance Strategy of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje (2024–2028) was also adopted, outlining specific measures, indicators, and target values. The Strategy is dedicated to achieving the following objectives:

- ✓ establishing, developing, and ensuring the efficient functioning of the quality system;
- ✓ enhancing the University's human resources for quality assurance;
- ✓ promoting collaboration and innovation in support of quality;
- ✓ reinforcing the University's social commitment, accessibility, and visibility in matters of quality.

A Quality Assurance Handbook (71 pages) was also developed, covering all prescribed procedures, indicators, templates, as well as best practices for internal and external evaluation. The Guide is available in both printed and digital form.



SCAN ME

BUILDING CAPACITIES TOGETHER!

Building capacities is a key pillar in shaping a strong and effective quality assurance system. To empower our academic community, UKIM implemented a comprehensive programme of trainings for Vice-Deans for Education, members of self-evaluation committees, and Quality Councils across the University. Dedicated guidance and mentoring supported the preparation of self-evaluation reports and annual action plans. In the period from 2024 to 2025, UKIM successfully delivered 38 trainings and mentoring sessions.

*A total of 38 training and mentoring sessions were delivered during 2024–2025.*

SYNERGY AND COLLABORATION

**Do not forget — UKIM's quality assurance system involves 355 academic staff members! Therefore, UKIM pays particular attention to ensuring that the quality assurance process is carried out in a positive and supportive environment. This includes regular communication between the Quality Assurance Center and all university academic units, providing guidance, consultations and mentoring support, as well as routine on-site visits.**

**In the period 2024–2025, the Quality Assurance Center, together with its governing bodies, conducted 56 visits across the university academic units. Throughout this process, collaboration has been established among the units themselves, enabling the exchange of best practices and lessons learned.**

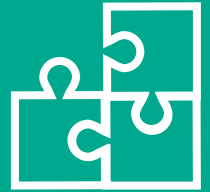*355 UKIM academic staff members engaged in the quality assurance system.*

# S M A R

**Specific**     **Measurable**     **Achievable**     **Relevant**

**SMART ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

# T

## Time-bound

**A key tool for ensuring quality at UKIM is the Annual Action Plan (AAP). This plan, which includes concrete measures aimed at tackling weaknesses and enhancing the quality of operations, is prepared by each academic unit of UKIM prior to the start of the academic year.**

**The Annual Action Plan includes a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats), an overview of the national and European standards and indicators that are fully, partially, or not yet met, as well as proposed measures for addressing weaknesses with corresponding indicators, etc.**

**The proposed measures are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound), meaning that they are clearly defined, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound. The academic units submit an annual report on the implementation of the AAP.**

**The Annual Action Plan represents an authentic quality assurance tool developed at UKIM.**

*UKIM monitors 56 quality indicators each academic year.*

ПРАКТИЧНА НАСТАВА
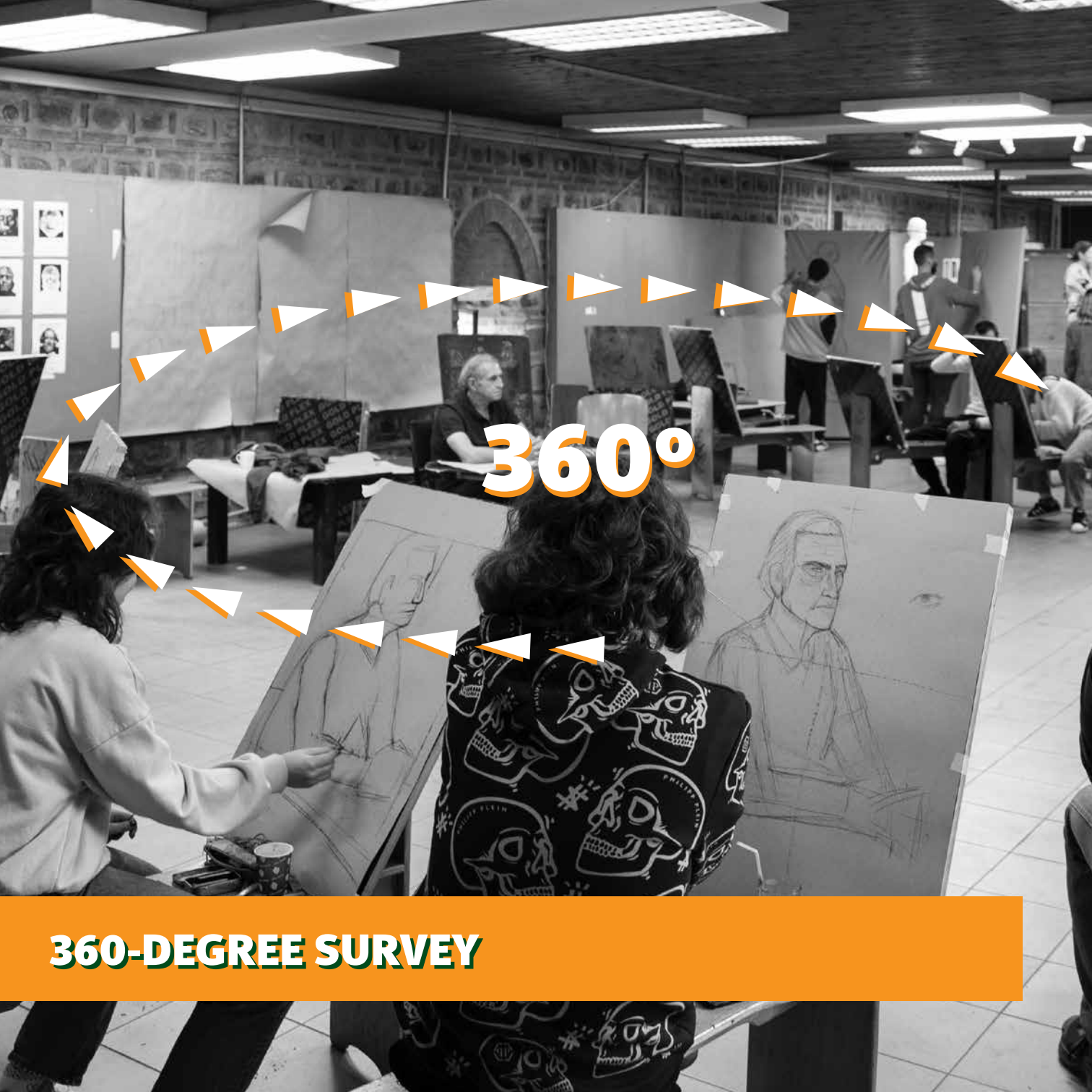
ЗЕЛЕНИ
ТЕХНОЛОГИИ

ОБУКИ

WEB OF SIENCE

ВЕШТИНИ

SCOPUS

NEW INDICATORS

UKIM is fully aware of the current trends in higher education, particularly in the context of international university rankings. As the oldest and preeminent Macedonian university, we have always sought to address challenges directly and to demonstrate that we can achieve more. For these reasons, as of the academic year 2025/2026, we are introducing mandatory quality indicators, supported by a formula and target values, which take into account the size, experience, and current trends of the respective academic units. The new indicators include:

- Number of students completing practical training

- Number of published papers in journals indexed in Web of Science and Scopus

– Number of training sessions for academic staff aimed at developing proactive and innovative teaching methods, as well as enhancing their pedagogical and technical skills (including artificial intelligence, green technologies or skills, sustainability, etc.)

- Number of ongoing international projects

- Participation of academic staff in international conferences/mobility abroad.

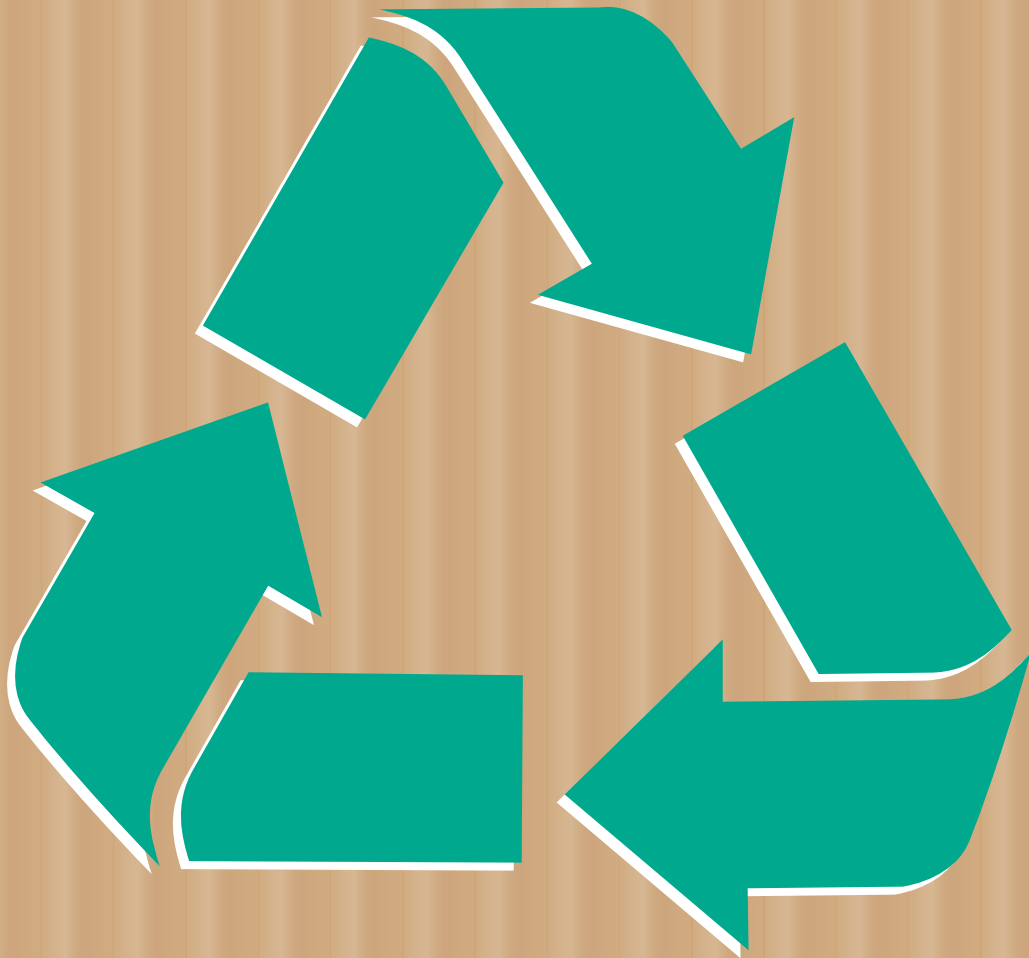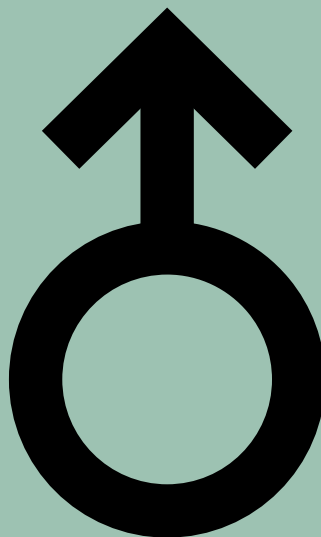360º

**360-DEGREE SURVEY**

As part of the new quality assurance system, UKIM has established a new centralized and digital survey system. In addition to surveying students on each course in their study program, they also complete a survey on the broader conditions of their study experience. In the 2024/2025 academic year, UKIM conducted - for the first time - a survey among of academic staff and professional-administrative staff. All surveys are administered through a dedicated software developed by UKIM, and the results are used to enhance the quality of teaching and to inform future development policies. The surveys are mandatory for all stakeholders within the system, and are conducted at the end of each semester and at the end of the academic year.
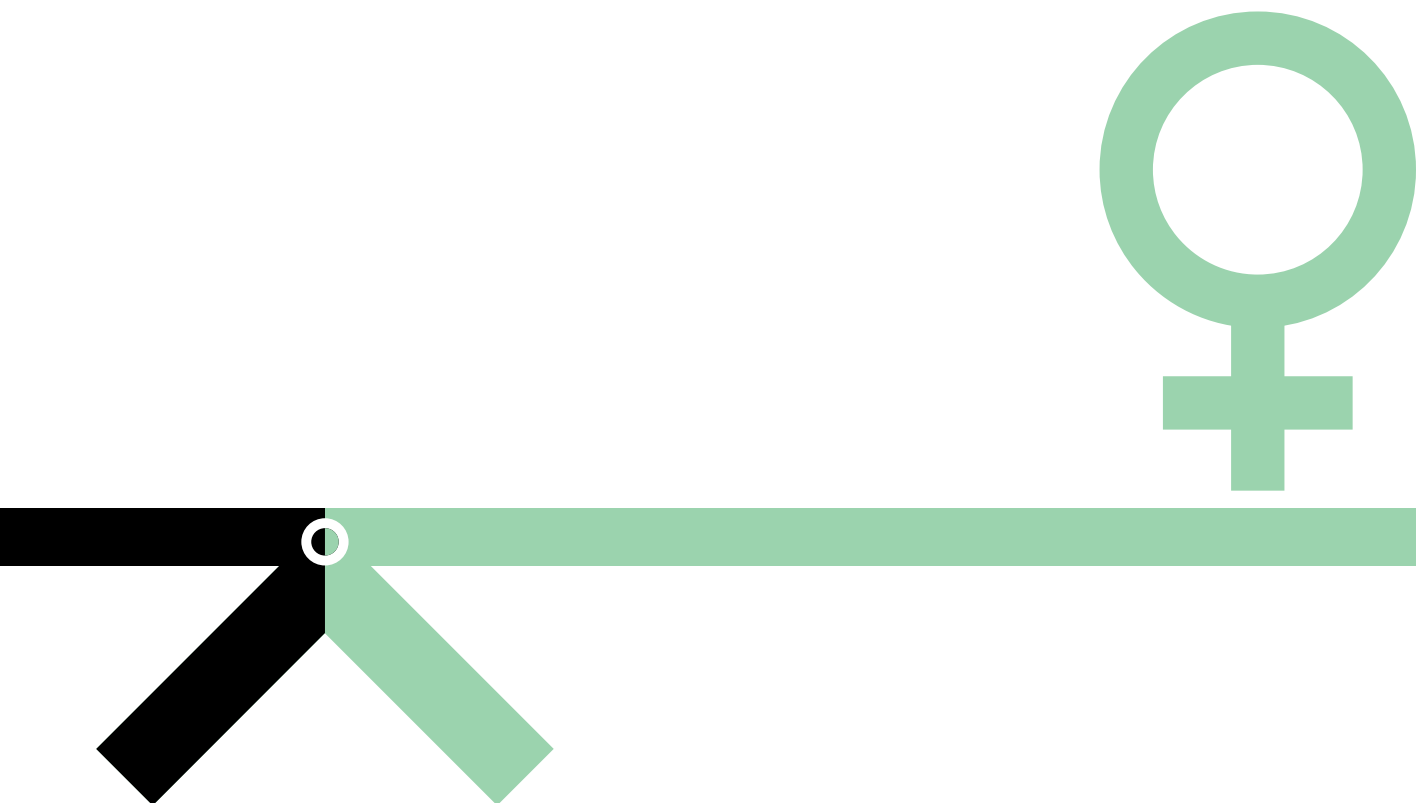
**GREEN PROCESS**

In line with UKIM's commitment to green policies, sustainable development, and reducing its carbon footprint, starting from the 2024/2025 academic year, the quality assurance process has been conducted entirely in digital form. All reports, plans, decisions, and accompanying documentation are submitted exclusively in electronic format, without the use of paper. In this way, during the 2024/2025 academic year, 56 reams of paper were conserved.

GENDER EQUALITY AND FAIR REPRESENTATION

**Respect for gender equality and fair gender representation constitutes one of the guiding principles of the University's operations. Accordingly, particular attention was paid to ensuring gender balance when constituting the quality assurance bodies. As a result, 65% of the members of the Quality Councils and Self-Evaluation Committees are women.**

*65% of the members of the Quality Councils and the Self-Evaluation Committees are women.*

**BEST PRACTICES**

**Students from our university gaining practical training in the business sector!**

In line with the University's strategic commitment to building networks and expanding cooperation with industry, as well as to providing practical training in workplace settings, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, and the Swiss funded Increasing Market Employability Programme (IME). Through this memorandum, the partners formalized their joint commitment to improving practical training for students by integrating real work experiences into higher education and by involving the private sector in the design of study programmes, in accordance with the actual knowledge, skills, and competences required by the labour market.

This academic year, **137 students** from the Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy, the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food, and the "Hans Em" Faculty of Forest Sciences, Landscape Architecture and Environmental Engineering, successfully completed **practical training under the mentorship of experts from the academic community and industry partners.** Through this initiative, the University invests in the development of highly qualified professionals with clearly defined skills and competences, fully prepared to meet the challenges of the contemporary labour market.

**Creating Better Opportunities for Our Students Through Industry Partnerships!**

More opportunities for practical training for the students of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering: **the Manufacturing Engineering Laboratory** has been upgraded with new, state-of-the-art industrial equipment donated by the company **LTH Learnica – Ohrid,** creating conditions for improving practical teaching, developing engineering competencies, and better preparation of students for contemporary industrial challenges.

At the **Faculty of Economics,** the new modern and creative **ProLab** laboratory has been opened, realized through an investment by **ProCredit Bank.** The laboratory will provide improved conditions for learning, teamwork, and the development of students' practical skills,  as well as support for developing and implementing their own ideas into actual projects.

At the **Faculty of Civil Engineering,** a donation from **Titan Cementarnica Usje,** created new opportunities in the Laboratory for Concrete and Structures — specifically, the ability to measure $CO_2$ emissions during concrete production. This significantly improves the  practical training for students and advances the research activities of master's and doctoral candidates. Additionally, with the support of the **Public Enterprise for State Roads,** an ultrasonic device has been procured for non-destructive testing of the quality of in-situ concrete, substantially increasing the laboratory's equipment and enabling the application of modern techniques in teaching and research.

The **Faculty of Dentistry,** through **partnerships with the Red Cross, the Union of Pensioners' Associations, and the Municipality of Sopishte,** has enabled the practical
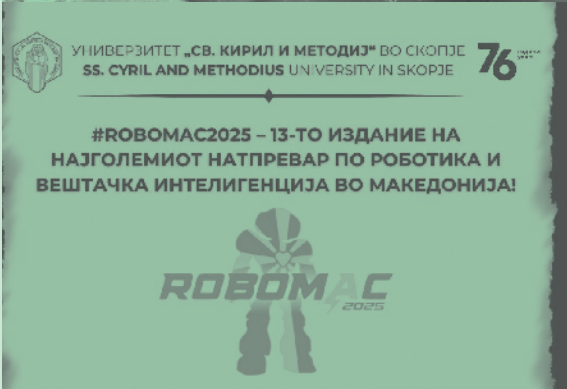
training of **dental medicine students to be carried out with real patients.** This contributes to improving the quality of education, gaining real work experience, and enhancing students' practical competences, as well as strengthening the Faculty's social responsibility.

**Our laboratories, study programmes, and faculty create conditions for excellence in education and inspiring hands-on practice!**

**RoboMac 2025** was held at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje – the leading student competition in robotics, automation, electronics, and artificial intelligence in North Macedonia. At the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies (FEEIT), more than 60 students from North Macedonia and the region, divided into five competition disciplines, developed robotic systems capable of recognizing visual and audio commands, designed intelligent agents for dynamic scenarios, combined machine vision with robotics for automated sorting, and competed in programming autonomous racing vehicles. Moreover, the students had the opportunity to attend lectures by distinguished experts. RoboMac serves as a prime example of how our laboratories, academic programmes, and teaching staff foster excellence in education, inspiring hands-on practice, and effective collaboration between academia and industry.
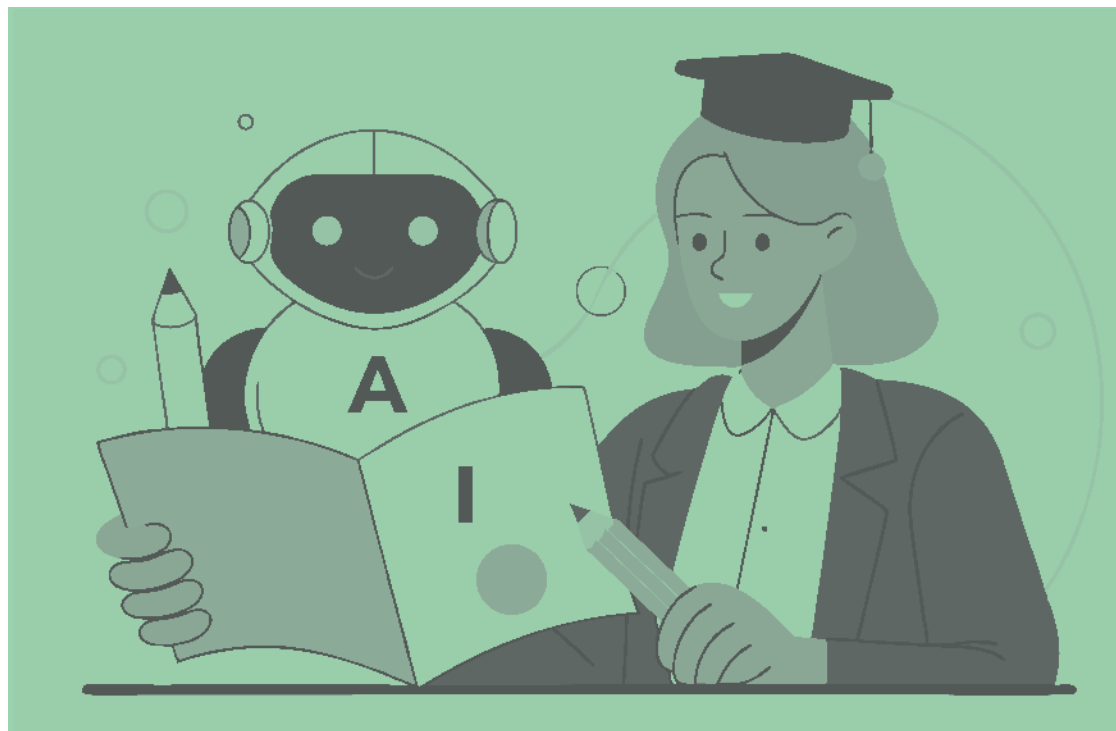
**Training Programmes for Academic Staff to Foster Proactive and Innovative Teaching Methods**

Within the framework of the professional development of teaching staff and the continuous improvement of teaching

25

quality, a training was organized at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje: **Beyond the lecture: Practical approaches to student-centered teaching.** Prof. Dr. Florentina Halimi from the Gulf University for Science and Technology (Kuwait) shared experiences and good practices from leading universities around the world, presenting three contemporary teaching methods that place the student at the core of the learning process: Active Learning, Flipped Classroom и Research-Based Teaching. The training marks an important step in developing teaching staff capable of applying innovative methodologies that actively engage students and foster the development of their critical thinking and research skills.

In order to promote the professional development and enhance the pedagogical and technical competences of teaching staff, a training session was held in 2025 at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food on the topic of: **Teaching Strategies and Techniques.** The training was delivered by the Faculty of Philosophy. In addition, the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering organized a training session for academic staff and students entitled **"From data to knowledge: Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and science."** The aim of the training was to introduce participants to the ways in which AI-based tools can enrich and support the learning and research process, without compromising academic integrity or ethical principles.

ПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЈА НА АПЛИКАЦИЈАТА
**NOTICING**
АЛАТКА - ДОБИТНИК НА МЕЃУНАРОДНАТА
НАГРАДА НА БРИТАНСКИОТ СОВЕТ ELTONS

УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ „СВ. КИРИЛ И МЕТОДИЈ" ВО СКОПЈЕ
SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS UNIVERSITY IN SKOPJE  **76**

**INFORMATION FOR ENROLLMENT OF FOREIGN STUDENTS**

## Noticing App – Innovation in Education

On 25 February 2025, at the Rectorate of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, the **Noticing** application was presented to the academic community. The application is the recipient of the prestigious **ELTons** Award of the British Council for innovative use of artificial intelligence in education. **Noticing** supports teachers' reflection, planning, and inquiry by simulating a conversation with a mentor, without offering ready-made solutions. The application has been used for a second consecutive academic year in **the training of future teachers at the "Blaze Koneski" Faculty of Philology, as well as in profiling  school mentors.**

## New Unified Form for Life-long Learning Programme

During a workshop held with the teaching staff, the newly developed unified form for the life-long learning programmes, prepared by the Teaching Commission, was presented. The form standardizes existing programmes and enables the creation of new ones in accordance with the legal framework, providing a clear structure, defined duration, common elements, and types of certificates issued to participants. The form harmonizes existing programmes and enables the creation of new ones in accordance with the legal framework, providing a clear structure, defined duration, common elements, and types of certificates issued to participants.

This represents an important step toward enhancing the accessibility and quality of lifelong learning at the University.

## Internationalization and Support for International Students

In enhancing its internationalization efforts, UKIM has undertaken significant activities aimed at attracting international students. A Foreign Student Office was established, which has been dedicated to informing and supporting incoming candidates. This academic year, UKIM received applications from **400 international students,** which is **200 more than in the previous year,** which clearly reflects the University's rising international appeal.

## Workshop on Developing Joint Study Programmes at UKIM

At Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, a workshop dedicated to the development of joint study programmes **(joint/double degree)** was held, as a strategic element of the University's internationalization. The workshop examined the advantages and importance of joint programmes in enhancing academic mobility, visibility, and collaboration with international partners. Successful practices were shared by the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies (FEEIT) and the Institute of Sociological, Political and Juridical Research (ISPPI), which already implement joint programmes with universities in Europe and the region.



The challenges associated with accreditation were also addressed, with the aim of developing recommendations for the more efficient introduction and implementation of these programmes in the future.

The event represents an important step toward advancing UKIM's academic cooperation with the European and regional higher education area.

As part of its **international academic cooperation, the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering (FINKI)** has introduced a **double-degree Master's study programme — Security, Cryptography and Coding** — as part of the **European Erasmus Mundus initiative CyberMACS (Master**

**of Science in Applied Cybersecurity),** in partnership with **Kadir Has** University in Istanbul, Republic of Türkiye, and **SRH University Heidelberg** in Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany. The programme offers up-to-date knowledge and practical skills in the fields of cybersecurity, cryptography, and data protection.

**UKIM Introduces New and Updated Study Programmes!**

Reflecting the trends and needs of industry, as well as the interests of students, UKIM has introduced **new study programmes: five at the first cycle and seven at the second cycle of studies.**

To accommodate international students enrolling in first-cycle study programmes, UKIM has also introduced two short one-year study programmes for learning the Macedonian and English languages.

In fostering interdisciplinarity, a notable example is the new first-cycle study programme **Digital Agriculture** at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food, developed in cooperation with the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering (FINKI), the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies (FEEIT), and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering.

This programme represents a contemporary educational model that integrates agricultural sciences with digital technologies, energy systems, and mechanical engineering, enabling students to acquire knowledge and skills across multiple scientific disciplines.

**UKIM Reaffirms Its European and Global Outlook Though Internationally Accredited Study Programmes!**

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje continues to enhance its quality and international recognition through the international accreditation of its study programmes.

**FEEIT** is the first higher education institution in the country to obtain international accreditation for all seven of its first-cycle study programmes. The accreditation was carried out by **ASIIN,** a renowned German accreditation agency for study programmes in engineering, informatics, natural sciences, and mathematics, which is authorised by ENAEE (the European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education) to award the European EUR-ACE Certificate for quality in engineering education.

The **Faculty of Economics** has initiated the process of obtaining the prestigious **AACSB accreditation (**Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business), which ensures high-quality study programmes and research, greater career opportunities at the global level, and increased recognition and employer confidence in the value of the degree. With this accreditation, the Faculty of Economics will join the ranks of the world's top 1,000 business schools.

### UKIM Keeps Pace with Global Standards!

The **Faculty of Veterinary Medicine** has successfully accredited its laboratories in accordance with the **ISO 17025 standard,** this ensuring compliance with European standards in veterinary public health and food safety.

This accreditation represents an important step toward enhancing the quality, reliability, and international competitiveness of UKIM's laboratory services.

**First ECVM-accredited Training centre in the Western Balkans**

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at UKIM has been accredited as an official training centre of the **European College of Veterinary Microbiology (ECVM) — the first and only centre of its kind in the Western Balkans.** This accreditation follows the attainment of the status of European Specialist in Veterinary Microbiology **(ECVM Diplomate),** which represents a distinguished recognition of professional expertise and academic excellence.

This centre will provide: specialised training in veterinary microbiology recognised across Europe; access for candidates from North Macedonia, the region, and beyond, the advancement of regional cooperation among academic institutions; and the development of research projects relevant to the region.

This achievement is a strong confirmation that **UKIM meets and exceeds European academic and professional standards.** The establishment of such a regional training centre represents a strategic advantage for the University, the country, and the entire region — creating a platform for high-quality higher education, scientific advancement, and international networking.

**Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje Is Committed to the Future of Its Students!**

The **Career Centre at UKIM** links students with the real sector through a series of significant activities aimed at advancing career development and increasing student employability:

✓        The **Career Centre at UKIM** links students with the real sector through a series of significant activities aimed at advancing career development and increasing student employability:

✓        Over **2,000 participants** at the Internship and Employment Fair and the Career Development Day

✓ Over **50 partner** companies for internships and employment

✓ **GCDF-certification** of five university professors serving as career counsellors, with training provided by UKIM and USAID

✓ The **Erasmus+ project EU2SE** – European Upskilling of Students for Sustainable Entrepreneurship, which engaged 40 students and academic staff from the partner universities of the AcrossEU Alliance and from the host institution, UKIM, aimed at developing students' skills in sustainable entrepreneurship



**TED TALK AND PITCH PARTY WITH TROY STOVALL**

Troy A. LeMaile-Stovall is the CEO of TEDCO-Maryland and an accomplished and award-winning CEO with significant experience in leading and implementing strategic plans via strong coaching and a focus on metrics.
He leads the organization's mission to support economic empowerment through the cultivation of a diverse and inclusive entrepreneurial innovation ecosystem.

**FACULTY OF ECONOMICS - SKOPJE**

15.11.2024

17:00 - 19:00

Sign up at the link in bio
@ussukim @acskopje

Lecturer:
**Troy Stovall**

✓ **"Green Chromatography" Project with Alkaloid AD Skopje** – Practical Experience for Students

✓ **Over 1,000 high school graduates at the "UKIM Open Day"**

✓ **Career counselling sessions, TED Talk + Pitch Party, and thematic workshops** for the development of professional skills

✓ **Summer camp** for career development, involving 50 students and career counsellors.

**Advancing Teaching Excellence Through Scientific Projects!**

**UKIM is a partner in the Erasmus+ project BIOMAT,** which aims to advance teaching competencies in the design of biomaterials derived from wood waste from the pulp and paper industry — a sustainable, innovative, and globally applicable solution.The project is a joint initiative of the Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy, KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Sweden, and Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Poland. Within the framework of the project, an e-book titled „From biomass to functional materials: advances in lignin isolation, characterisation and applications" was published, and the members of the BIOMAT project were awarded a silver medal in Green Economy at InnoWings 2025, the International Fair for Innovation and Technology in Lublin.

The project not only links scientific research and teaching, but also lays the foundation for a sustainable future through green technologies and globally relevant expertise.



УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ „СВ. КИРИЛ И МЕТОДИЈ" ВО СКОПЈЕ
SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS UNIVERSITY IN SKOPJE

СРЕДБА СО РЕКТОРКАТА НА УКИМ,
ПРОФ. Д-Р БИЉАНА АНГЕЛОВА И УЧЕСНИЦИТЕ ОД ЕРАЗМУС
ПРОЕКТОТ: БИОМАТ – ПОДОБРУВАЊЕ НА НАСТАВНИТЕ
КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ ВО ДИЗАЈНОТ НА БИОМАТЕРИЈАЛИ ОД
НОВАТА ГЕНЕРАЦИЈА ОД ДРВЕН ОТПАД





SaveLife

УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ „СВ. КИРИЛ И МЕТОДИЈ" ВО СКОПЈЕ
SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS UNIVERSITY IN SKOPJE

СТУДЕНТИ ОД ФЕИТ ЈА ОСВОИЈА
ГЛАВНАТА НАГРАДА НА ICAMES 2025





THE FORMULA STUDENT TEAM OF UKIM STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE FORMULA STUDENT ALPE ADRIA COMPETITION AT THE BUGATTI RIMAC TRACK IN CROATIA



**UKIM is a partner in the Erasmus+ project SaveLife,** which is **transforming training methods in basic and advanced life support through the development of digital resources and innovative educational tools.** Our teams from the Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering worked on developing interactive videos, e-books, and digital simulation tools that will enhance the knowledge and skills of medical staff, students, paramedics, and physicians in effectively responding to cardiovascular emergencies.

The project brought together eight partner institutions from six countries, united by a common mission: providing free and open access to training, saving lives, and improving healthcare system.

In the past year alone, the academic staff of the **Faculty of Medicine** has participated in **more than 50 international research projects,** further confirming its expertise and readiness to engage in interdisciplinary initiatives such as SaveLife.

### UKIM Sstudents Research, Innovate and Excel!

In May of this year, students from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies (FEEIT) won first place at the international competition **ICAMES 2025** (International Cultural and Academic Meeting of Engineering Students) with their innovative project, "AI-Driven Smart Rehabilitation for Lateral Ligament Knee Injuries." The project distinguished itself through its practical applicability, the integration of technology with health-care solutions, and its innovative approach to rehabilitation following lateral ligament knee injuries, using sensors and

artificial intelligence to provide a personalised, home-based rehabilitation experience. The system enables real-time monitoring and remote support from medical professionals through a mobile application and a web platform.

This year, the team of students from the **Faculty of Mechanical Engineering** ranked among the **top five** on the initial list of qualification knowledge tests for the prestigious Formula Student competition, **competing against 52 universities with conventional race cars and 162 universities with electric vehicles.**

**The students of the "Iustinianus Primus" Faculty of Law,** with full **financial support from UKIM,** participated in the prestigious **Philip C. Jessup International Moot Court Competition in the field of international commercial dispute resolution,** and ranked among the top **10% of students in a field of more than 700 universities worldwide** — a result that testifies to the high level of legal education and practical preparedness.

These accomplishments clearly confirm that UKIM produces highly qualified and ambitious professionals who are prepared for global challenges, innovation, and technological advancements.

УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ „СВ. КИРИЛ И МЕТОДИЈ" ВО СКОПЈЕ

„СО ГОРДОСТ ЈА ПИШУВАМЕ ДИГИТАЛНАТА ИСТОРИЈА НА УКИМ"

ПРОФ. Д-Р БИЉАНА АНГЕЛОВА
РЕКТОРКА НА УКИМ

УКИМ ЈА ЛАНСИРАШЕ НОВАТА ДИГИТАЛНА ПЛАТФОРМА БАЗИРАНА НА ВЕШТАЧКА ИНТЕЛИГЕНЦИЈА ЗА ТРАНСКРИПЦИЈА НА ГОВОР НА МАКЕДОНСКИ ЈАЗИК – „БУКИ"

буки 2.0

ТРАНСКРИПТОР НА МАКЕДОНСКИ ЈАЗИК
БУКИ

## A Great Success for Macedonian Architecture and UKIM!

The RNM **pavilion** at the 2025 **Venice Architecture Biennale** has been recognized as one of the **10 most outstanding pavilions among 66 participating countries,** according to the prestigious portal **Artribune!** The **Strada Brutalissima** project initiates a significant dialogue on architectural heritage, social solidarity, and the vision of a humane society. „This pavilion is more than a narrative of concrete and form – it represents a journey through time, memory, and shared aspirations."
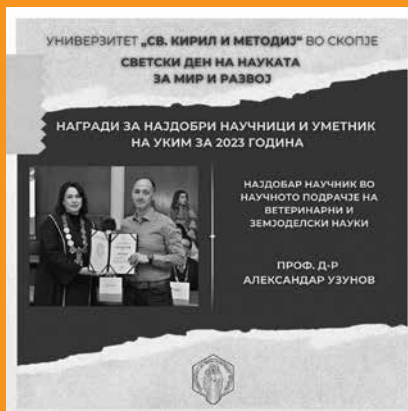
We take pride in our colleagues, students, and all those involved in bringing this important project to life, which honorably represents RNM on the world's cultural map!

## Proudly Shaping the Digital History of UKIM!

The University continues to embrace contemporary technological trends. From the academic year 2025/2026 onwards, **all student services are fully digitalized,** facilitating quicker, more efficient, and more transparent communication between students, faculty, and administrative offices.

The most notable innovation is the implementation of the e-index, which replaces the traditional paper-based index. This change provides students with constant access to their grades and academic status, streamlines and automates administrative procedures, reduces paper consumption, and contributes to a more sustainable university. Students can obtain certificates, attestations, and other documents electronically, secured with a digital certificate.

UKIM reaffirms its dedication to providing modern, accessible, and efficient higher education, committed to serving students and shaping the future.

## CAIR

Through its Center for Advanced Interdisciplinary Research (CAIR), the university has developed and launched a new AI-powered digital platform for Macedonian speech transcription, "Buki", facilitating the advanced use of the official language in the creation of digital texts.

## UKIM Actively Promotes and Supports Scientific Research!

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje actively promotes science as a fundamental driver of academic excellence and societal development. During the academic year 2024/2025, the Science and Research Fund facilitated the implementation of numerous important activities:

• **eight professors** were awarded a **Plaque for their outstanding contribution** to scientific research activities and the promotion of the University;

• **six professors** received the **Award for Best Scientist/Artist** for their outstanding achievements over the past year;

• **twenty scientific papers,** published in journals indexed in **Web of Science** and **Scopus,** were supported;

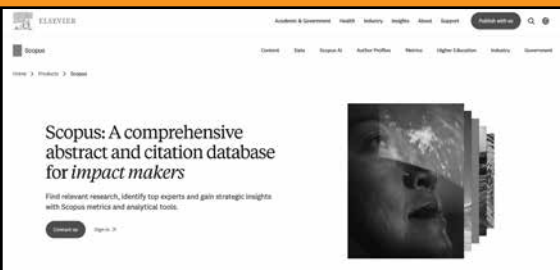• scientific research **projects across all 28 academic units of UKIM** were funded.

UKIM continues to dedicate itself to supporting researchers whose work advances scientific knowledge and enhances the University's international profile, simultaneously inspiring the wider research community.

## Publication as a Catalyst for Scientific Advancement at UKIM

The publication of research findings by UKIM scholars is a fundamental driver of scientific progress and forms the basis for strengthening the University's international visibility and academic standing.

The most recent data for 2024 confirm a continuing positive trend in scientific publishing. There has been a modest increase in the number of papers authored by UKIM researchers indexed in **Web of Science** journals, with **312 papers** recorded in **2024,** up from 288 in 2023.

Therefore, supporting and promoting the publication of scientific results remains a **key component of UKIM's mission** - to create, enhance, and share research outcomes within the global academic community.
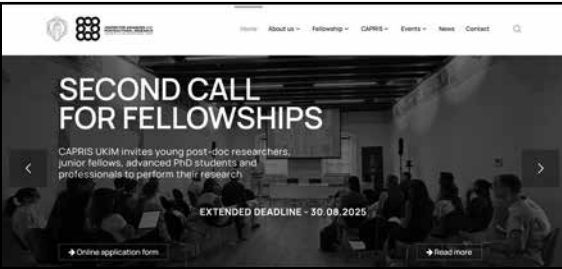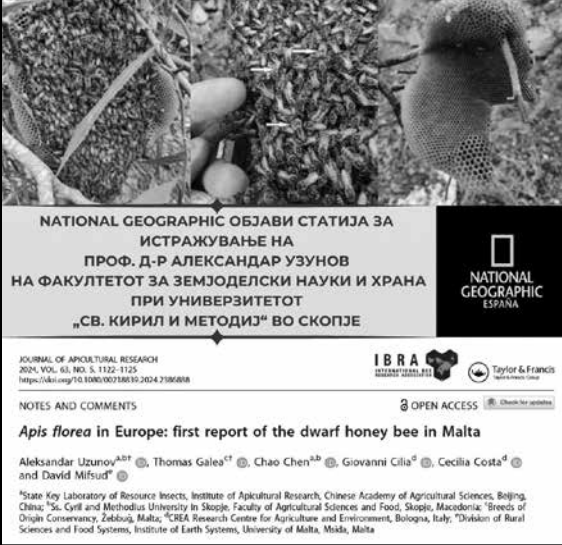
**National Geographic España highlighted,** on its cover, a significant scientific publication entitled **Apis florea in Europe: First report of the dwarf honey bee in Malta,** which appeared in the prestigious **Journal of Apicultural Research.** The lead author of the study, a professor at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food, together with his international research team, documented for the first time in Europe the presence of a colony of the Asian dwarf honey bee (Apis florea).

This significant discovery serves as a testament to the scientific excellence, professional dedication, and research competence of the University's academic staff. This achievement further underscores the importance of active participation in international research projects and the publication of results with global impact.



## UKIM – Pioneering Systematic Support for Postdoctoral Research

Through the Center for Advanced and Postdoctoral Research at UKIM **(CAPRIS UKIM),** founded in 2024, the University has introduced a systematic support system for postdoctoral researchers from the region and across Europe - **the first initiative of its kind in the country.** Through two open calls, scholarships were granted for research visits to scholars from Italy, the Netherlands, Croatia, Serbia, and other countries.

Additionally, CAPRIS actively organizes and co-organizes international scientific events that promote interdisciplinary collaboration and innovative research approaches, including: "Moise" in Croatia, in partnership with CAS SEE at the University of Rijeka; the international scientific seminar 'Architecture and Wine,' in collaboration with the Agricultural Institute at UKIM and the University of Belgrade; and serving as co-organizer of the international scientific conference **City Street 6.**

Through its mission, **CAPRIS provides conditions and support for young researchers** in creating innovative scientific solutions to open societal challenges and serves as a key factor in supporting and **bringing young researchers back to the country,** contributing to the sustainable development of society.

### UKIM Open Science Center – A Model for Institutional Transformation

The University founded the Open Science Center, the first institutional entity of its kind in RNM. This pioneering initiative fosters transparency, collaboration, and innovation across the University's scientific and artistic research activities.

The Center offers services in six areas: training, education, learning resources, an open science laboratory, policies, and support. The laboratory hosts the country's largest open research e-infrastructure, comprising:

- an open cloud infrastructure featuring 640 CPU cores and more than 15 TB of RAM;
- an advanced computing system with 8 GPUs and 640 GB of video memory;
- a centralized storage infrastructure with a capacity exceeding 2 PB.

Serving as a national focal point, the Center plays a key role in implementing European open science policies and ensuring alignment with regional and European standards for responsible research.

**UKIM's International Projects: Catalysts for Research, Innovation, and Knowledge!**

The University actively engages in a wide range of international projects funded by European programs and other donors, directly fostering the development of research capacities, promoting innovation, and advancing internationalization.

Through its **Project Office, established in 2024, UKIM** provides professional support for **applying to and participating in European programs** such as *Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, Digital Europe, IPA,* and others. The office has facilitated the approval of five new projects and, as of September 2025, has commenced the publication of a monthly **Project Bulletin.** Highlighted Good Practices in 2025:

• **INNOFEIT EDITH** was established as **the first officially recognized European Digital Innovation Hub in the country,** providing support to micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises and public institutions in their digital transformation effort;

• **UKIM** continues as the **coordinator** of the European Enterprise Network in North Macedonia **(Enterprise Europe Network North Macedonia 2025 - 2028);**

• as part of **Wide AcrossEU, 52 UKIM researchers underwent training** on Horizon Europe programs, which included study visits to Sweden and Finland;

• the **TECHSIGHT** project, funded by the EIT Higher Education Initiative, **positions UKIM within European initiatives for the development of deep tech technologies;**

• **FINKI, through initiatives such as EuroCC4SEE, Skills4EOSC, MKSafeNet, and CyberMACS,** conducts activities in digital literacy, artificial intelligence, open data, and cybersecurity, providing training for researchers, teaching staff, and thousands of students.

УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ „СВ. КИРИЛ И МЕТОДИЈ" ВО СКОПЈЕ

ФИНКИ ГО ОТВОРА ЦЕНТАРОТ ЗА ВЕШТАЧКА ИНТЕЛИГЕНЦИЈА- ВЕЗИЛКА!

Vezilka

## UKIM Launches the AI Factory Antenna – A New Center for Artificial Intelligence

The Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering has been awarded the **Vezilka – AI Factory Antenna project,** financed by HORIZON Europe and co-funded by the national government.

The project is designed to create an advanced Artificial Intelligence center, intended to facilitate:

• providing support for startups and technological innovations driven by AI;

• promoting the use of artificial intelligence across industry and the public sector;

• training, research, and development of projects with high practical value.

The Vezilka project serves as a strategic initiative aimed at developing the national AI ecosystem and enhancing collaboration between academia, industry, and public institutions. With this project, **UKIM further reinforces its standing as a leading regional university in digital transformation, technological innovation, and the implementation of artificial intelligence.**

## International Projects Supported by EU Programmes

Aligned with its strategic priorities and dedication to internationalization and research advancement, UKIM's academic community has seen a notable rise in efforts to apply for projects under European Union programs.
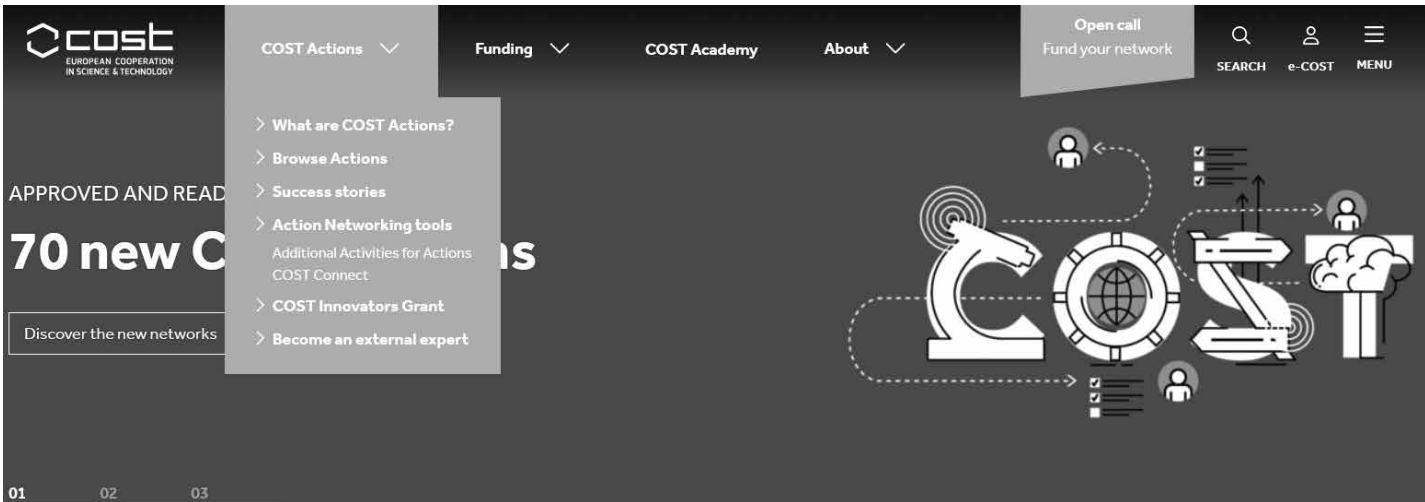
**In 2023,** a total of **62 project applications** were submitted, and **in 2024,** this number rose to **142,** marking an **increase of 129%.**

The number of **approved projects** rose from **23 in 2023** to **45 during the period 2024/2025,** reflecting a **195% increase,** despite more stringent evaluation criteria and intense competition at the European level.

### COST Action Projects

In **2024,** UKIM became involved in **33 new COST Action projects,** with its representatives participating in the respective management committees. As of the end of 2024, UKIM is involved in **168 COST Action projects** in total, underscoring the University's active engagement within European research networks and thematic communities.

**The successful execution of these projects demonstrates that UKIM is a key partner in the European research and educational landscape and serves as a catalyst for positive societal transformation.**

**UKIM makes history with European patent for groundbreaking innovation**

European patent **EP4316535B1, covering a wound-healing composition derived from snail mucus,** stands as a prime example of interdisciplinary collaboration within UKIM. This project, uniting professors from the **Faculty of Pharmacy** and the **Faculty of Mechanical Engineering** along with a visiting professor from **FH Joanneum University of Applied Sciences,** has been in development for over seven years.

Alongside the European patent, the team has secured a **national patent (No. 912496)** for the technology used to produce powder from snail mucus.

Notably, this patent is **one of only seven granted by the European Patent Office (EPO)** to North Macedonia over the past ten years, **developed by a UKIM university team.**


**UKIM Declaration on the Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence**

In December 2024, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje enacted the Declaration on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools, establishing a framework for the ethical and responsible incorporation of AI within the academic setting.

The Declaration rests on three core principles:

- ✓ responsibility, transparency and ethical conduct
- ✓ data protection and information security
- ✓ critical thinking and fact-checking.

These principles are in accordance with the European AI Strategy in Science (2025), which envisions:

- RAISE - Virtual European Institute;
- advancing the development of ethical and safe AI systems.

With this initiative, UKIM affirms its commitment to pioneering the responsible, ethical, and innovative use of AI in higher education and research.

**Towards Sustainable Development**

**The University and the United Nations have signed a Joint Declaration of Intent** to strengthen collaboration in support of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and to advance the vision outlined in the National Development Strategy. This collaboration will take place through multiple avenues, including promoting national expertise and research, identifying best practices and accelerators, monitoring and analyzing data, conducting public awareness campaigns, facilitating expert debates on sustainability, fostering academic partnerships, and engaging students through internships, volunteering, and mentorship programs.



**UKIM Is Strengthening Its Alumni Network!**

This year, the University is actively **developing a unified alumni network** to connect graduates across all generations, fostering a bridge between the past, present, and future of higher education in RNM. Each of the University's 28 academic units maintains its own alumni database, and many - including the Faculty of Economics, Iustinianus Primus Faculty of Law, St. Kliment Ohridski Faculty of Pedagogy, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and FEEIT - already provide active alumni webpages that enable registration and networking.

The UKIM alumni network is designed to encourage ongoing collaboration between alumni and current students, promote mentorship, knowledge sharing, and professional networking, and enable connections with industry, academic, and research institutions both nationally and internationally.

**Advancing Mobility and International Cooperation at UKIM**

UKIM continues to enhance its international profile by expanding bilateral and European cooperation. In the 2024/2025 academic year, **23 new bilateral memorandum and cooperation agreements** were concluded with universities, international organizations, and companies, enabling joint teaching and research, academic exchanges, and professional connections. This represents growth compared to the 2023/2024 academic year, during which 18 such agreements were signed.

Through the European Commission platform – the EWP Dashboard, **UKIM signed 202 Erasmus+Inter-Institutional Agreements in 2025,** regulating the mobility of students and academic staff with European partner universities. This represents a significant increase compared to 174 agreements in the previous academic year.

Within these agreements, the number of student mobilities is also increasing: during the summer semester of 2024/2025, 50 mobilities were realized - 30 at the first cycle, 14 at the second cycle, and 6 at the third cycle. For the academic year 2025/2026, 6 students received mobility for the winter semester, and for the first time, **blended mobilities were introduced** (online + physical presence) for 26 students.

**UKIM is a Member of the AcrossEU University Alliance**

**UKIM is an active member of AcrossEU**, a European university alliance comprising eight universities: the University of Caen Normandy, France; the University of Valladolid, Spain; the University of Pardubice, Czech Republic; the University of Fribourg, Switzerland; the University of Lapland and the Lapland University of Applied Sciences, Finland and UKIM, the Republic of North Macedonia. **AcrossEU has received the SEAL of EXCELLENCE from the European Commission and, since October 2025, has been included in the European University Alliances.** Through this collaboration, UKIM actively participates in international projects focusing on the development of international capacities, intercultural communication, innovation, and entrepreneurship, including:

•	IKAS *(Intercultural Skills for Administrative Staff in HEIs)* - aimed at strengthening the intercultural competencies of administrative staff;

•	EU2SE *(European Upskilling of Students for Sustainable Entrepreneurship)* – focused on fostering sustainable entrepreneurship skills in students;

•	WIDE AcrossEU – Empowering Research and Innovation Across Borders (Horizon Europe – WIDERA) - focused on enhancing UKIM's research and innovation capacities and supporting its effective participation in European programmes and funding opportunities.

The Alliance continuously develops joint initiatives and applies to calls under the Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe programmes, contributing to deeper academic and research integration of its member institutions at the European level.

**Increased Investments to Improve Study and Research Conditions at UKIM**

The University continuously invests in improving the quality of higher education through capital investments in its infrastructure. **In 2025,** capital investments in the renovation and equipping of the academic units **increased by 60% compared** to 2024, thereby directly contributing to a substantial enhancement of the conditions for the delivery of instruction and the advancement of scientific research activities.

These investments are part of the University's strategic commitment to providing an advanced and stimulating academic environment for students, faculty, and researchers.

**UKIM is firmly committed to shaping a better future through sustained investment in knowledge, research, and innovation!**