



# **DEAN'S PROGRAMME**

**FACULTY OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB**

For the academic years 2021/2022 and 2022/2023

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## **I. Basic principles, general framework of Faculty activities and key commitments**

### **Basic principles underlining Faculty activities**

In its following term of office, the Management will base its activities and the activities of the Faculty on the institution's rich tradition, as well as on the principles of university autonomy, academic unity, collaboration, collegiality, excellence, participation, inclusion, communication, honesty, solidarity, tolerance, and social responsibility. The Faculty Management will nurture these principles in relationships within the Faculty, particularly those with students, as well as in relations within the University of Zagreb and with society as a whole, in accordance with its social responsibility and the requirements of its role in society.

The Management will strive to involve the Faculty as much as possible in contemporary higher education trends, as well as trends in the research and professional sphere, both in the EU and beyond. We wish the Faculty to play a substantial role in educational and research practices in Europe.

We view students as colleagues with whom we collaborate as we build an educational, research, and professional institution that belongs to us all. The time they spend studying at the institution is just the start of our collaboration. We wish to make the Faculty a focal point which brings people together to work for the benefit of the community as a whole.

The Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb is the oldest and largest law faculty in the country, and as such it must redouble its efforts to further develop its central role in modernising higher education. It must also continue to educate and facilitate the collaboration of experts, as well as ensure quality and excellence in research and the professional endeavours of those working in the fields of law, social work and social policy, public administration and public finance. This will be achieved by ongoing communication, exchange of ideas and knowledge, and robust cooperation with law faculties and other related faculties in the country and abroad.

Given these values and principles, the programme of dean and the new Management comprises a number of goals and measures for their implementation. These goals will ensure that the Faculty has a long-term focus on quality in its internal, intra-university, national, and international activities. They will also ensure the synergy of the institution, a cohesive organisational culture, and the growth of students, teaching staff, various associates, and other employees, not just as individuals but as part of a community. The slogan of the programme – “For a Faculty of Excellence and New Opportunities” – emphasizes the importance of an integrative, innovative, excellent, open, socially responsible, and knowledge-oriented community of students, teaching staff, researchers, and other members of all the professions that the Faculty of Law brings together.

## General framework of Faculty activities

During the last term of office (2019–2021), the Faculty faced one of the biggest crises in its history. This was the result of the combined impact of three external events over which it had no control:

- the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw the introduction of strict epidemiological measures and lockdowns, first in the period following March 16, 2020 and subsequently in the winter of 2020/2021, as well as the resultant transition to online teaching. Teaching and examinations transitioned to the online environment, as did most Faculty activities. Students, teaching staff, and other employees communicated predominantly online.
- a strong earthquake which hit Zagreb on March 22, 2020 and caused significant damage to Faculty buildings and other assets, rendering work on Faculty premises impossible for a period of time
- a devastating earthquake which struck the town of Petrinja on December 29, 2020 and was also felt on the Faculty premises. This had an adverse impact on students, research and teaching staff, and other employees, affecting how teaching was carried out and the condition of Faculty buildings.

The buildings used by the Faculty suffered extensive damage in the earthquake which hit Zagreb and its environs on March 22, 2020. Various equipment, library stock, and other Faculty material assets were also damaged. The faculty invested a significant amount of its own money in the restoration of the damaged buildings; however, another devastating earthquake with the epicenter in the vicinity of the nearby town of Petrinja followed in late 2020 and caused further damage. This mostly refers to the building at Trg Republike Hrvatske 14 used by the Rectorate of the University of Zagreb and the Faculty of Law. This building was severely damaged in March and was additionally impacted by the December earthquake before restoration had even begun.

The Faculty transitioned to teaching and conducting examinations online in the middle of March 2020. The situation had not changed by the time this programme was drawn up, despite attempts to conduct face-to-face classes with small groups of students in the autumn of 2021. These attempts were thwarted by as the epidemiological situation took a turn for the worse due to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. If there is no change to the epidemiological situation, i.e. to the numbers of those vaccinated against the SARS CoV-2 virus and its new variants (both amongst the general population and university students) classes and examinations will continue to be conducted entirely or mostly online during the summer semester of the academic year 2020/2021.

Despite these adverse circumstances, the Faculty continued its operations, which includes the following: classes for all study programmes were conducted regularly regardless of the level of studies, modular classes were introduced for third-year law students in the academic year 2020/2021, examinations and all other activities were conducted regularly, a new doctoral study programme in legal sciences was prepared, and research, professional, and publishing activity continued, as did international cooperation.

It was largely due to the human factor that these adverse circumstances were successfully overcome. In early 2021, the Faculty numbered 170 employees with scientific-teaching, teaching, associate, and research titles, as well as around 60 other employees. Out of the 170, there is a balance of younger and more experienced instructors, which reflects the substantial scientific-research, teaching, professional, and managerial potential of the Faculty.

Since the the earthquake and the onset of the pandemic, the Faculty has shown solidarity at all levels. Much attention has been devoted to the well-being of students and research and teaching staff and other employees, as well as solidarity in a broader sense. Students have also joined many humanitarian activities and have been helpful and supportive of others in a number of ways.

In earlier terms of office, the Faculty saw the implementation of a number of measures which aimed at the organisational, management, and financial consolidation of the institution and at strengthening its business operations. The purpose of these measures was to ensure that the institution would continue to operate smoothly in new and significantly more challenging conditions. There have previously been proposals on how to achieve a long-term solution to the problem of the lack of space, i.e. adequate premises. The need to invest the institution's own funds in the restoration of buildings, equipment, and other necessities damaged in the earthquakes and the need to adapt to the requirements of online teaching have both placed considerable financial strain on the Faculty. These adverse circumstances have been accompanied by overall financial restrictions, a long-term general increase in costs, and a continuous decline in the number of enrolments, while at the same time the Croatian higher education system has seen a growing number of study programmes on offer.

The Faculty operates legally and responsibly within the legal order of the Republic of Croatia, the Statute and other bylaws of the University of Zagreb, as well as the institution's own Statute and other bylaws, and continues to do an excellent job of fulfilling its role in society as the oldest and largest law faculty in Croatia.

The Faculty is becoming increasingly involved in university collaboration and management processes and joint projects within the University of Zagreb. Amongst other examples, the leading role of the Faculty of Law in the comprehensive, inclusive, and complex project of shaping the European University of Post-Industrial Cities (UNIC) is of particular long-term importance. This project has allowed the University of Zagreb and its constituent units to become an undisputed part of the European Education Area.

Numerous other opportunities are opening up in the European Education Area. The speed of development is accelerating, while development needs are growing more diverse. The EU is determined to invest significant effort and financial resources to speed up the development of science and higher education. What previously seemed unlikely to be achieved in a short space of time, such as the transition to working online, circumstances have made not just possible but inevitable. Although they also give rise to many problems, such circumstances ultimately require decisive and rapid changes and open up new opportunities for development.

### **Key commitments**

In accordance with the Statute of the Faculty of Law, I intend to put forward a certain category of teaching staff to serve as Management: they will hold scientific-teaching titles, possess a distinguished professional record, a high level of academic integrity, and exceptional personal qualities. To the extent that this is possible, I will attempt to achieve fair representation of the various segments of the Faculty, as well as equality regarding gender and other aspects. This will strengthen the Management and engender a community feeling amongst the workforce after a series of external crises.

Sound academic and public management methods will be used to manage the Faculty. These will include encouraging all students and employees to participate in decision-making insofar as this is permitted by the law and various University and Faculty regulations and documents, implementing sound financial management, and compiling reliable records of a number of Faculty activities which will allow their results to be repeatedly and objectively evaluated. The Faculty Management will conduct a thorough analysis of the extent to which the organisational structure of the administrative and support services at the Faculty responds to the requirements which stem from legal and other regulations, University and Faculty regulations and documents, and strategic commitments. This will ensure a rational and efficient organisational structure which also takes into account Faculty autonomy.

The Management intends to take decisive steps to utilise the human resource potential of the Faculty and seize new opportunities as soon as possible. The Management will also strive to take ongoing development activities further and will base its goals, steps for further development, and activities on the results the Faculty has already achieved.

In this regard, the Faculty Management will work hard on all the positive ongoing activities, processes and projects, as well as initiate a number of new ones. This is necessary in order to adapt as soon as possible to new circumstances in the sphere of higher education, research, and professional activity insofar as they provide a context for law faculties and universities in Croatia and the EU. This will also allow the mission and vision of the Faculty of Law to be achieved, honouring its venerable tradition in the process.

The Management will prioritise the preparation of a new Development Strategy aligned with the period of strategic planning for the Republic of Croatia up to 2030. This will prepare the Faculty to make better use of publicly available national and EU funds to help meet its needs, particularly those arising from external circumstances (the pandemic and earthquakes), as well as its regular activities.

The preparation of the Strategy will include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the Faculty, as well as an analysis of the environment within which it operates and possible changes (SWOT and PESTLE analyses). All members of the workforce and other relevant actors will have the opportunity to contribute. This will allow for the setting of realistic and appropriate strategic goals, which are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).

The Faculty Management will develop three scenarios: an optimistic one, a realistic one, and a pessimistic one. This will allow for the better planning of activities, better management, and the realisation of strategic goals by means of appropriate measures and activities. Scenario planning is made much more difficult by circumstances which are uncertain and hard to predict, such as the duration of an adverse epidemiological situation brought about by the SARS CoV-2 virus and its new variants, as well as possible further complications regarding health, vaccination rate, immunity development, and other circumstances which are hard to predict. In reality, events may develop in ways which the Faculty is unable to influence, so the three scenarios provide evidence that the Faculty has prepared a response to three different possible outcomes.

The Management will follow and analyse legislative initiatives and play an active role in implementing changes to legislation, particularly changes to the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act, the Croatian Qualifications Framework Act, the Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education Act, the Croatian Science Foundation Act, as well as the general legal framework regulating higher education, research and professional activity, financial operations, employment matters, and other issues of relevance to the Faculty. The Management will pursue an active role in all legislative changes in collaboration with University bodies, other constituent units of the University of Zagreb, and other law faculties in Croatia.

The Management will also play an active role in bringing about the re-accreditation of the Faculty of Law, which was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the two devastating earthquakes and is planned for the winter semester of the academic year 2021/2022. The Management is planning to start the doctoral programme in legal studies adopted in the previous term of office; to enhance accredited study programmes, including a doctoral programme in social work and social policy and a joint doctoral study programme in human rights, society and multilevel governance; and to develop new postgraduate specialist and other study programmes, based on the gaps that have been identified. Particular consideration will be given to the development of lifelong learning programmes. The

Management will ensure that the Faculty plays an active role in suggesting job profiles to be included in the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

The Faculty Management will encourage the upgrading of all study programmes offered by the Faculty, as well as the upgrading of teaching methods and techniques, and will continue to improve IT and other necessary conditions for socially responsible learning. It will also continue to foster the mobility of students, teaching staff, various associates, and other employees, primarily library and student services staff. This will include online, blended, and offline mobility. The Management will examine the need for online and blended teaching to be offered as part of certain study programmes and will devise a plan for the preparation of online instruction in accordance with the general commitments of the University and the decisions of Faculty bodies. Particular consideration will be given to legal and other regulations applicable to this area, as well as University and Faculty documents.

The Management will devote particular consideration to students, studying, student status, and standard of living, in order to make studying at the Faculty of Law better and more efficient for all students and to ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of differences in status or other circumstances. The Management will remain open to all student initiatives and proposals and will engage in all forms of evaluation of Faculty activities decided in agreement with student representatives, as determined by law and University and Faculty regulations. As the issue of premises is resolved and administrative and support services move to suitable rooms, the Management will strive to ensure a stimulating educational and research climate, a sense of belonging, and opportunities for students to work and socialise. They will be encouraged to consider their role in society, which is necessary for the feeling of belonging to a particular profession, for the creation and propagation of shared professional values, and for instilling professional pride.

The Management intends to analyse the situation, and accordingly prepare and implement systematic regulatory, institutional, and educational-supportive measures to empower students and all employees to fully apply ethical principles and standards in accordance with best academic practice in Croatia and abroad, building on the work the Faculty has already done in this area. Particular consideration will be given to the need to upgrade the regulatory framework, institutional engagement, professional and organisational support, as well as the informing of students and employees of their rights and ethical regulations, values, principles, and standards. All that is necessary will be achieved or at least set in motion as soon as possible. Because this needs to be done swiftly and the monitoring must be transparent, an action plan will be prepared to ensure a comprehensive approach to academic integrity. The Management intends to openly condemn unethical behaviour and communicate the need for all academic staff to show zero tolerance for all forms of unethical behaviour at the Faculty.

The right conditions will be ensured for the personal and career development of teachers, various associates, young researchers, and other Faculty staff. This will contribute to the Faculty preserving, strengthening, and developing its teaching, research, professional, organisational, project-oriented, and administrative resources, as well as the internal



cohesion necessary to achieve the mission, vision, and development goals of the Faculty in the following term of office. The career development of teaching staff will be systematically analysed, followed, and encouraged, with a particular focus on avoiding any inequality or discrimination. Adequate rewards will be introduced for the successful performance of teaching staff, associates, and other employees. The Management will strive to create a cohesive, stimulating, and proactive organisational culture based on the academic values observed at the best universities worldwide.

In particular, the Management will ensure that scientific research carried out at the Faculty takes on a stronger strategic focus, as part of the general strategic commitments of the University and in collaboration with its other constituent units and external actors. This strategic focus will be guided by the interests of developments in legal science and other sciences studied at the Faculty. The Management wishes to orient research projects towards issues of relevance to the community, so that the generation and accumulation of knowledge is socially relevant and useful. The Management will focus in particular on bringing about increased international scientific collaboration, without which scientific development is practically impossible, and will make a particular effort to take part in EU-funded projects. The Management will support open science initiatives and intends to provide ongoing professional and administrative support for scientific projects, innovations, and knowledge transfer.

The Management will continue to foster the diverse professional activity of the Faculty and encourage collaboration in various professions in which there is particular interest and available personnel. The Management intends to take advantage of the expertise of its employees, primarily with regard to the legal profession, but also social work and social policy, public administration and public finance, and other professions. A plan will be drawn up and measures prepared to utilise the knowledge acquired through participation in various scientific and other projects in order to foster innovation in those professions which the Faculty is helping to develop and to transfer this knowledge to the community.

Lifelong learning programmes which are already in place will receive continued support and this type of activity will be encouraged to grow as new programmes are developed. This will help the Faculty earn additional income, which is of particular importance in the current situation, and it also contributes to the quality of scientific and teaching work and the transfer of knowledge and technology in the light of the current trend of higher education institutions embracing a more flexible European approach to micro-credentials.

The Management will use sound public communication and PR strategies to ensure that the Faculty of Law fulfils the social role in accordance with its rich tradition and importance; the diversity of study programmes on offer; its research, professional, publishing and other activity; its reputation; and finally, societal expectations. Presenting the advantages of studying at the Faculty and its qualities in science, research, professional activity, ethics and other areas will draw many high-achieving students to the Faculty and motivate them to be more engaged and perform better in their studies.

The new Management will prepare a comprehensive analysis of revenues and expenses and will determine long-term strategic business consolidation measures within the framework of its Development Strategy. The Management will procure equipment and other resources required for employees to do their jobs. Particular consideration will be given to finding a sustainable solution to the issue of the premises which the Faculty requires. The Management will prepare an analysis of realistic long-term requirements, taking into account the upgrading and diversification of study programmes and other educational resources, student and teacher needs, the need for suitable premises to house library books and a space where they may be read, the need to house administrative and support services, as well as other relevant circumstances. This will be done at the beginning of the new term of office.

The aim is to come to an agreement over the use of the building at Gundulićeva 10, taking into account the interests of the Faculty, particularly given the current situation in which it is not possible to use the premises at Trg Republike Hrvatske 14. A holistic solution will be sought to the issue of Faculty premises. The Management will look into the possibility of sourcing funding for this purpose from the state budget or European structural and investment funds.

Until this is achieved, the Management will prepare a temporary accommodation plan, relying on its own restored buildings and the rooms available in the building at Gundulićeva 10. The plan will envisage the possible use of rooms available at other University, national, public, or city institutions which are located near the Faculty and can be used for free or for a small fee. The plan will take into account the requirements of face-to-face teaching, the running of the library, and all other Faculty services in uncertain pandemic conditions. Meanwhile, the restoration of the building at Trg Republike Hrvatske 14 will be closely followed.

All the activities described in this section will ensure the affirmation of the leading role which the Faculty of Law plays in the Croatian higher education and science sphere, as well as its significant role in the EU. The planned activities will also contribute to robust professional collaboration, which will ensure that the Faculty fulfils its social responsibility in Croatia and beyond.

## **II. Teaching, students and quality management**

The Management believes students and their studies; i.e. teaching with all that this comprises, to be key to all Faculty activities and processes. We will give particular consideration to the educational segment of the Faculty mission in order to ensure excellent education for the benefit and the satisfaction of students, the organisations and employers who employ them, as well as the wider community. We view the Faculty as an institution that must allow students to develop their potential to the fullest during their studies, but also as they continue to grow professionally by engaging in lifelong learning and staying in contact with the Faculty in a professional capacity. The Faculty will continue to provide the best possible conditions for students, including excellence in teaching, the upgrading of study programmes, and lawful and proper management of the quality of studies, regardless of student status, personal traits, and other circumstances that may impact on the conditions in which they are studying. Particular consideration will be given to students with special needs or those in disadvantaged or at-risk situations. Measures will be taken to ensure academic honesty and integrity in all circumstances, meanwhile precluding discriminatory and unacceptable behavior on part of the teaching staff, associates, and other employees.

### **Teaching**

#### **1. Enhancing study programmes and lifelong learning programmes**

The study programmes at the Faculty allow students to acquire competencies which enable them to participate successfully in the labour market. Taking into account the needs of the economy, the judiciary, the public sector, and society as a whole, the Management will support the introduction of new study programmes (for instance, postgraduate specialist study programmes) to be offered in Croatian. The option of introducing study programmes in English will also be explored. Any new study programmes (doctoral, specialist, graduate, or various joint programmes) will provide students with the knowledge and skills valued in the labour market; i.e., they will provide additional value in terms of societal development, strengthen the role and significance of the Faculty in tertiary education, and raise the international profile of the Faculty.

The introduction of further lifelong learning programmes will be encouraged. These will be aimed at persons employed in the judiciary, judicial bodies, and the legal profession; in public administration, public services, public finance, and the financial sector as a whole; in the economy or the business sector; in civil society and other sectors whose professional development needs are related to the study programmes and professions represented at the

Faculty. The Management will encourage the introduction of new programmes which may be offered in an online format and thus made available to a wide range of potential students. A comprehensive framework will be drawn up to address the preparation, application, approval, organisation, implementation, funding, and evaluation of lifelong learning programmes.

The Management will also foster the organisation of professional conferences, seminars, workshops, and similar forms of informal education.

## **2. Developing teaching competences and a stronger bond between teaching and scientific research**

Teaching is the backbone of the Faculty and this necessitates ongoing teacher training and education. The past two academic years have shown us the importance of adopting and developing innovative online teaching methods and educational technologies. In addition, there is now a greater focus on socially responsible learning, as well as on connecting theory with practical work and specific cases. This allows students to become involved in addressing the actual problems of their community and helps them adapt more quickly to the world of employment and further development following their graduation. In order to improve the quality of teaching and ensure the desired learning outcomes are achieved, it is important to maintain an ongoing investment in building on the pedagogical knowledge and skills the teaching staff already possess, as well as to introduce new skills. However, teachers must be allowed to maintain their autonomy with regard to the choice of specific teaching methodologies they find appropriate in their practice.

The teaching staff are recognised for their scientific and research excellence, and this needs to be integrated into the teaching process. This is why the inclusion of research results in teaching will be encouraged at all levels, including postgraduate specialist and doctoral studies, as well as lifelong learning programmes. Along with the goal to return to face-to-face teaching, the Management will explore the possibility of continuing innovative learning and teaching practices, particularly the opportunities offered by blended and online instruction, building on the good practice of many European universities. Participation in the new European University of Post-Industrial Cities, which for the most part envisions online student mobility, provides an additional incentive to use the available digital infrastructure for studies, learning, and education.

## **3. Modernisation of teaching and socially useful learning**

An earlier decision of the Faculty Council will ensure the continued implementation of modular instruction in the fourth year of the study programme in Law. The Management will prepare an evaluation framework and begin to analyse the data to see if this type of

instruction is proving successful. Additional modifications will be made if needed, taking care to maintain the desired quality standards of the defined learning outcomes. The Management will also prepare a needs analysis to determine current needs regarding the development of instructional resources and methods used in all the Faculty study programmes. The results of the needs analysis will be widely disseminated and discussed at the Faculty, as well as with the relevant external stakeholders.

The Management will amend the programme designed to foster academic skills development and encourage all students at the Faculty to familiarise themselves with its contents. The program will include the following skills: reading scholarly literature; presenting; writing essays and seminar papers; structuring and writing final and graduate theses; conducting various types of student research; processing cases, familiarisation with and searching databases; searching through scholarly journals, websites, and other online resources; searching through regulation databases; and so on. All students will be encouraged to join the programme.

In order to create a motivating, stimulating, and creative learning environment, the Management will support the introduction of contemporary learning and teaching approaches and foster an active approach to studying by requiring students to apply their academic knowledge and skills as they engage in a range of socially useful learning practices (e.g. legal clinics, moot court, various forms of practical training). The Management will also support the introduction of new practices (e.g. an administrative innovation laboratory, collaborative online international learning, and so on).

The Management will endeavour to adjust the academic calendar for all study programmes offered at the Faculty so as to have the academic year and classes begin mid-September. This would ensure the requisite number of teaching hours, flexible and and timely delivery of all forms of instruction, requisite preparation time for mid-semester and final examinations, and a more satisfactory class schedule during the calendar year.

## **Students**

All students should be provided with equal opportunities to participate in education in accordance with their competences and personal interests. In addition to acquiring professional competences, students need to be able to develop additional knowledge and skills that will prepare them for the labour market and life in a democratic civil society. This can be achieved through various extracurricular activities and international exchange programmes, as well as students taking responsibility for their own work and progress.

## **1. Facilitating better student performance**

So far a number of prerequisites have been put in place so as to allow students to achieve better performance. The Management will continue with activities aimed at increasing student satisfaction with their studying conditions, insofar as this is possible given the current circumstances at the Faculty. These activities will attempt to increase student motivation to study and participate in various in-class and extracurricular activities. An analysis of efficiency and other performance indicators will be conducted for all the study programmes offered by the Faculty. The aim is to reduce the time spent studying, enhance the quality of the educational process, bring about a higher completion rate, and increase the employability of students who have completed their studies.

## **2. Internationalisation and increasing student mobility**

The Faculty enjoys good outgoing and incoming mobility rates within the broader context of the University of Zagreb. The Management will continue to encourage different forms of mobility, both face-to-face and various online and blended models, in order to allow students to experience internationalisation, i.e. the opportunity to communicate in another language and study and work in multicultural European society. The Management will also continue to organise mobilities and encourage students to take advantage of mobility opportunities, given that the ECTS credit system clearly defines uniform criteria for the recognition of mobility results. In collaboration with the Office for International Cooperation of the University of Zagreb, the Management will continue to inform students of mobility opportunities. In addition to traditional face-to-face mobilities, various online and blended models will be encouraged, and efforts will continue to provide quality IT support for online mobilities. In addition to outgoing mobility, the Management will attempt to address the prerequisites for higher incoming mobility rates and will continue to foster the introduction of courses in languages other than Croatian. In addition to existing bilateral mobility agreements, inter-university mobility opportunities provided by the European University of Post-Industrial Cities (UNIC) project will be used to achieve all forms of mobility.

## **3. Ensuring higher incoming student mobility rates**

Collaboration with faculties from outside of Croatia will grow, particularly forms of incoming student mobility. There will be greater support for non-Croatian students studying at the Faculty within Erasmus+ agreements. The UNIC project will provide opportunities to increase incoming mobility rates significantly. A framework will be devised whereby it will be possible to track which classes non-Croatian students are taking, determine the quality of these classes, and get an insight into their examination results. If the resulting insights indicate this is

necessary, the Faculty Council will be encouraged to implement changes and upgrades to the support system for incoming mobilities and the way classes are delivered in the case of non-Croatian students. The Management will investigate the option of enrolling a number of students from abroad, particularly from neighbouring countries, who would complete their entire studies at the Faculty of Law in Zagreb and will prepare an action plan to that effect.

#### **4. Fostering special in-class and extracurricular activities**

The potential for excellence of our students can be seen, amongst other things, in the activities of the Legal Clinic, taking part in moot courts, student associations, and other student-led activities. These have resulted in local and international awards and various forms of recognition. The Management believes these student activities to constitute an important source of additional knowledge and skills; therefore, it will continue to support them by providing organisational, infrastructural, and financial assistance within its means. The Management will encourage students to take part in a range of extracurricular activities such as for instance, organising and participating in local and international student conferences or city labs, conducting research on their own or in collaboration with their instructors or researchers at the Faculty, writing and publishing academic papers and research reports, and the like. Because the Faculty offers study programmes in legal sciences, social work and social policy, as well as in public administration and public finance, the Management will strive to facilitate the collaboration of students pursuing different programmes. It is by regular communication and joint pursuit of activities that students will learn from each other, support one another in a number of ways, and acquire the competences to connect their own knowledge and skills with those that can be acquired in other professions. The Management will look into the options of awarding students ECTS points for activities of this kind.

#### **5. Administration and support services supporting students**

Students will also be motivated to strive for excellence by the high quality of faculty infrastructure and by various forms of support in their academic and career development. Therefore, we will continue to improve the quality and efficiency of administration and support services and student offices. Mutual understanding and respect is more easily achieved if administration and support services show openness, accessibility, reliability, adaptability, and expertise; if information is timely and readily available; and if teaching and administrative staff communicate well with students, taking into account their needs and the fact that students are studying in diverse conditions. An action plan will be drawn up and within a realistic timeframe all student records will be kept online.

## **6. Ensuring adequate working conditions for the library**

The Management will give particular consideration to the Faculty of Law Library, which is the largest and the central law library both in Croatia and Central and Southeast Europe. It therefore deserves better premises, an improved selection of books and other materials, and adequate IT infrastructure and software. Appropriate premises will be found for a reading room which will be adjacent to the library and include all that students and teaching staff need to study or do research. The Management will continue to invest in new library stock, including online resources, and will provide access to important databases in accordance with the needs of all study programmes, students, teaching staff, associates, and researchers. A working group will be established to investigate the opportunities for a long-term solution to the issue of library and reading room premises, using local and EU funding.

## **7. Supporting students and creating more favourable conditions for students with disabilities**

Students require support from the moment they enrol at the Faculty. All current forms of support will continue to be available and new forms will be introduced. The good practice of student counseling will carry on, particularly considering the challenges of studying and simply living through a pandemic and the devastating consequences of the earthquake. The Management will continue to maintain and enhance current support, for instance, academic and peer mentorship which aims to help students deal with their academic obligations.

In collaboration with Commissioners for Students with Disabilities and student associations, employees will be offered ongoing training opportunities to become acquainted with the rights and obligations of students with disabilities and the specifics of interacting with this student population, with an emphasis on attention and the willingness to be of assistance. In addition to the Commissioner for Students with Disabilities, a Contact Officer for Students with Disabilities will be appointed for each study programme and study centre. Efforts will continue to determine to what extent it is necessary to adapt teaching approaches, examination preparation materials, and the sitting of examinations to the needs of students with disabilities. Effective resolution of any other issues that may arise during their time at the Faculty will be ensured. The Management will strive to provide similar forms of assistance and support to disadvantaged or at-risk students, with a particular focus on solidarity and social sensitivity.



## **8. Improving student standards of living**

To the extent that this is possible in the circumstances, the Management will strive to improve student standards of living. Scholarships will be explored, as will the option of banks or other financial institutions extending loans to students in order to make studying easier for all regardless of their economic or social status, with a special focus on excellence and high-achieving students. The Management will continue to support the involvement of students in various student activities, both in-class and extracurricular ones; provide conditions for the operation of student associations; publish student newsletters and journals; and support other student activities within its financial means.

## **9. Further development of practical learning and student career guidance**

The Management will strive to provide all students with various opportunities to acquire practical knowledge during their studies. Lecturers and experts will continue to be involved, and students will be encouraged to complete their practical training in law firms and public notary offices, courts, ministries, other public administration and government bodies, state and public agencies, public institutions, local and regional self-government units, civil society organisations, companies, and other legal entities that may be appropriate. The involvement of practical experts and experiences will be given greater prominence in classes. All students will be able to view a list of all the bodies, offices, and organisations where they may complete their practical training.

The practice of organising career days for students in all programmes will grow, as will all other activities that contribute to an active policy of attracting students to the Faculty. The Management will pave the way for the establishment of a Career Development Office that would support students in preparing for their future employment, particularly in terms of helping them acquire the skill of actively seeking employment after graduation. It would serve as a bridge between students and their prospective employers.

## **10. Active student participation in improving Faculty activities**

The Management will attempt to take the views of students and their representatives into account as much as possible, particularly those on matters of interest to students. The Management will hold regular and other meetings with student representatives, usually before Faculty Council sessions, in order to discuss issues of importance to students. The Management will ensure the regular operation of the Student Council, the Student Ombudsman, and other student organisations and regularly consult them on all important matters regarding Faculty activities, in accordance with national, University, and internally

established regulations and standards and guided by good international practice. Once the Student Council has appointed student representatives, the Management will put them forward as members of Faculty Council committees and will remain open to all student initiatives and suggestions on how to improve Faculty activities.

### **11. Further development of ties with alumni**

The Faculty recognises the importance of staying in contact with alumni and will attempt to involve them in Faculty activities in the most suitable way, fostering the exchange of knowledge and experience between different generations of students. The Management will encourage alumni associations of all majors and strive to make the Faculty an essential component of alumni professional development. The Management will establish an alumni advisory committee and facilitate its regular meetings with current students to ensure that ties are formed and a sense of professional belonging and solidarity is fostered. The Management will involve the advisory committee in other Faculty activities in accordance with regulations and strategic commitments of the Faculty. Alumni associations will be supported financially and provided with administrative and professional assistance to the extent that this is feasible. Faculty staff will be introduced to best practices developed by alumni associations at universities beyond Croatia.

### **12. Attracting prospective students**

The Management will engage in a series of activities in an attempt to attract high school graduates to enrol in study programmes offered at the Faculty. During its first months in office, the Management will draw up an action plan and subsequently take a systematic approach to informing and networking with secondary schools, the association of secondary school principals, and student associations in order to present the Faculty to prospective students. The aim of presenting the Faculty is to attract high-achieving graduates, as well as to provide information on the education and career development opportunities available to students after they graduate from the Faculty of Law.

## **Quality assurance**

Quality assurance and management is an ongoing process in which all Faculty members take part: teaching staff, students, and administrative staff. The new Management Team will be fully committed to recognising the importance of the quality of study programmes and other

Faculty activities. It will also be fully committed to improving and ensuring quality, as well as managing it in accordance with the principles of public interest, fostering of excellence and innovation, efficiency and transparency, and promoting a culture of quality, responsibility, and collaboration.

The Faculty will undergo its second re-accreditation cycle in the academic year 2021/2022 and the new Management will build on the preparatory efforts of the previous Management Team to ensure a smooth re-accreditation process, meaningful cooperation with the re-accreditation committee, and positive and useful results for the further development of the Faculty.

Quality assurance comprises study programmes, teaching, student issues, research, international collaboration, Faculty funds and resources, public accessibility of Faculty activities, and other issues, in accordance with international, national, University, and internally established standards and regulations.

The Management intends to ensure the following in order to achieve its overall goal of improving quality:

### **1. Efficient work of the quality assurance body**

The Management will ensure the efficient work of the Committee and Coordinator for Quality Assurance, whose tasks comprise the following (in accordance with regulations and bylaws): proposing activities; preparing an action plan based on the Faculty Development Strategy and monitoring its implementation; reporting on the implementation and success of quality assurance activities; carrying out said activities by setting up dedicated working groups to address particular issues; drawing up polling guidelines; proposing steps to improve certain aspects of teaching and other Faculty activities, as well as some aspects of public relations; disseminating information via the intranet and Faculty Council meetings; organising discussions on relevant quality assurance issues; submitting proposals to the Management in timely fashion; and other tasks. The Faculty Management Team will enable and encourage the active participation of students in the work of the Committee for Quality Assurance and its working groups.

### **2. Continuing and improving internal quality assurance**

All the activities prescribed by law and University and Faculty bylaws relating to internal quality assurance will continue, including the monitoring of student progress and performance, polling students on various issues, monitoring the quality of study programmes and alignment of learning outcomes with labour market needs, monitoring whether learning outcomes are being achieved in all study programmes, and the like.

Specifically, this includes the following: conducting surveys at the end of a module or semester, improving course and study programme learning outcomes in accordance with legal criteria, using surveys to improve learning outcomes and assess whether they have been achieved, improving practical training on the basis of syllabi innovations, regular analyses of examination pass rates, monitoring survey results, monitoring teaching quality, further improvements to the survey system, monitoring the impact of academic mentoring, better use of the library in various educational activities, monitoring the quality of teaching literature, and other measures.

The Management will collaborate with the Committee for Quality Assurance, the Committee for the Improvement of Studies, and other Faculty bodies to prepare an analysis of the ECTS credit system in all study programmes and consider what needs to be done to upgrade it.

### **3. Improving collaboration with external stakeholders and connecting with Croatian Qualifications Framework standards**

Further development of the quality management system will include an in-depth analysis of the relevant labour market, with a focus on current and predictions of future trends. A proposal will be put forward to establish a forum to exchange information and discuss possible improvements to Faculty collaboration with relevant external stakeholders, taking into account the diversity of educational activity. The Management will examine research insights into the alignment between labour market needs and the competences which students acquire at the Faculty and, in accordance with the regulations and the Croatian Qualifications Framework, will propose several new occupational standards and take other appropriate measures to achieve long-term alignment between studying at the Faculty of Law and the needs of society, current and prospective employers, and other stakeholders.

### **III. Scientific research, innovation, and knowledge transfer**

The overall goal of the Management in its term of office with regard to scientific research is to provide structured, ongoing, and strong support for scientific research, innovation, and knowledge transfer within a transparent and long-term strategic framework, and to increase Faculty visibility at University level, as well as in Croatia and beyond.

In order to achieve this goal, the following activities will be undertaken:

#### **1. Systematic analysis of scientific activity**

Extensive scientific activity is continuously underway at the Faculty, indicating its significant resources and potential in this area. Scientific and research potential should be fully exploited and to this end a systematic analysis will examine the results of all scientific and research activity with a focus on events since 2013, i.e. when the last Faculty Development Strategy entered into force. The analysis will comprise comprehensive and verified data, which will be compared with initial data retrieved from existing databases. The analysis will examine the results of Faculty scientific and research activity, with a focus on its scope, range, structure, visibility, and scientific relevance. The results of the analysis will be used to define the Faculty Development Strategy, bring together scientists and researchers, prepare projects, and manage the scientific and research activities of the Faculty in general.

#### **2. Assistance in the application for and implementation of national and EU projects and the creation of an Office for Projects**

An office for scientific research, innovation, and knowledge transfer – the Office for Projects – will be set up to analyse and follow activities, as well as to prepare for and support the implementation of projects financed from various sources in Croatia and beyond, particularly EU funds. The Office for Projects will undertake the following main tasks: provide an overview of all primary and additional programmes, calls for applications, and organisations or institutions that finance various research projects; keep up with calls and tenders on a daily basis; inform the research staff of the various calls for applications and options for funding available from funds in and outside of Croatia; contact, support, and advise researchers as they choose which call to apply for, keeping in mind their areas of interest and ideas for projects; and provide support and assistance in drafting project applications.

During the project implementation phase, the Office for Projects will provide support and assistance to project coordinators and researchers as they fulfil their obligations with regard to project administration and financing, including the preparation of interim and final reports. Finally, the Office for Projects will be in charge of data collection, record-keeping, and any

other necessary analysis of scientific and research activities, in order to improve the quality and relevance of Faculty research and achieve greater visibility and availability of research results. The Office will also disseminate project results, and perform specific tasks with regard to supporting scientific innovations and knowledge transfer.

Depending on the available finances, the Management will consider applying for projects in collaboration with experts, i.e. firms specialising in providing assistance and logistical support in applying for EU-funded projects. Support and assistance of the relevant university services will also be enlisted.

Particular consideration will be given to ensuring the varied dissemination of research results, including presentations for students of doctoral and postgraduate specialist studies, inclusion in targeted publications, and presentations at Faculty conferences.

In addition to the Office of Projects, the Management plans to establish an international Council for Scientific Research, Innovation, and Knowledge Transfer. Invitations to join the Council will be extended to prominent scientists worldwide, including those of Croatian origin, thereby creating a forum for discussion and the transfer of knowledge and experience in order to play a more prominent role in global scientific processes.

### **3. Encouraging the publication of scientific papers in reputable international journals**

Dean and the new Management intend to provide active support and allocate financial resources to foster the individual productivity of research and teaching staff, associates, and researchers. The publication of papers in reputable international journals, i.e. collaboration with reputable Croatian and international publishers, in accordance with the criteria of excellence established by the Ordinance on the Conditions for Election to Scientific Titles of 2017, is a prerequisite for scientific growth and contributes significantly to the Faculty's international reputation and recognition. The Faculty will introduce remuneration for the authors of published papers, in accordance with the criteria to be determined by the Faculty Council. Financial resources will continue to be allocated to facilitate the preparation of papers for publication in reputable international journals and other publications.

### **4. Stronger Faculty involvement in international scientific exchange and development by supporting international scientific and scientific-professional conferences organised by the Faculty**

The Management will ensure stronger Faculty involvement in international scientific exchange and development by providing financial, organisational, and administrative support for international scientific and scientific-professional conferences organised by the Faculty. This will ensure the development of scientific competences and the visibility of research results of

scientific and teaching staff, associates, and researchers. The eligibility criteria will be determined by the Faculty Council.

#### **5. Supporting the active participation of teaching staff and associates at international scientific conferences**

The Faculty will continue to provide financial assistance to researchers and associates who are presenting at international scientific conferences, in accordance with the criteria to be determined by the Faculty Council. Depending on the finances available, this will include doctoral students at the Faculty.

#### **6. Publication of scientific research results**

The Faculty will also actively support the scientific research of its teaching staff, associates, and researchers by including their results in in-house publications. Particular emphasis will be placed on the publication of scientific monographs, edited volumes, as well as textbooks and other teaching resources whereby the research results may be included in teaching at all levels of study, including doctoral and postgraduate specialist studies and lifelong learning programmes. Particular support will be provided to facilitate the formal recognition of teaching resources as university textbooks.

The Faculty will place a particular focus on continuing to publish already established scientific and professional journals. This is an important means of affirming the scientific activity of the Faculty both in Croatia and beyond. Professional and administrative support will be provided to ensure the inclusion of scientific and professional journals in the world's leading indexing and citation databases. The Management plans to run occasional workshops with editors of reputable international journals to discuss key issues, good practices, and technology in the editing of scientific journals. Such events can be run online in most cases.

#### **7. Advocating for open science**

In accordance with EU research and innovation policy, the Management will strive to create the necessary conditions to ensure access to research results and new insights in accordance with standards of open science, with the help of digital and collaborative technologies. This is different from the customary approach of publishing results in scientific journals once research has been completed. In this the Faculty will follow the general guidelines of the EU and the European Research Area, UNESCO, the Republic of Croatia, and the University of Zagreb. The Management plans to prepare a state-of-the-art analysis and conduct seminars

and workshops for all Faculty researchers in order to facilitate the use of already established opportunities to foster open science, as well as create new ones.

## **8. Establishing an innovation support system**

The Faculty will establish a system to support innovation and thus ensure the necessary preconditions for a culture of excellence and socially responsible scholarly research. The Faculty Development Strategy will determine key future needs and future development directions regarding scientific research in the areas of law and justice, social work and social policy, and public administration and public finance in order to encourage innovative project proposals and approaches to research that will yield important new insights. The Management will attempt to involve the Faculty in activities related to the EU research and innovation policy, advocating for the concept of open innovation in particular, and in line with the commitment of the University of Zagreb to actively foster innovation and technology transfer. The Management intends to start running workshops with the world's leading research innovators on a regular basis in order for them to communicate good practices and experiences to all who may be interested at the Faculty, including young researchers and doctoral students.

## **9. Intensifying scientific collaboration within the European University of Post-Industrial Cities (UNIC)**

The Faculty of Law initiated and is coordinating the involvement of the University of Zagreb in the European University of Post-Industrial Cities (UNIC), approved by the European Commission in 2020. Furthermore, the alliance of eight UNIC universities have received approval for a project aimed at research and innovation resources. Therefore, the Management will take an active role in promoting the collaboration of the Faculty of Law within the alliance. UNIC is a three-year project aimed at building institutional collaboration among the University of Deusto in Bilbao, Spain; Ruhr University in Bochum, Germany; Koç University in Istanbul, Turkey; Erasmus University in Rotterdam, Netherlands; University of Cork in Ireland; University of Liège in Belgium; and University of Oulu in Finland. The Erasmus University of Rotterdam is the coordinator of the alliance and the Faculty of Law is the project coordinator for the University of Zagreb. This is an Erasmus+ project which started on October 1, 2020. The research component was approved under the Horizon 2020 call for European universities and its start is predicted for June 1, 2021.

Intensifying scientific collaboration within the UNIC alliance will be a significant addition to already established forms of international scientific collaboration (the joint doctoral human rights, society and multi-level governance study programme, international conferences, and so on). The Management will continue to pursue new formats of international networking.



## **10. Involving young researchers in scientific research and strengthening the bond between doctoral studies and scientific research**

The Faculty will make a special effort to include young researchers, associates, and doctoral students in scientific research. Bringing in new research staff should be a permanent focus of the Faculty of Law as the leading institution in the field of legal science and other disciplines at the Faculty. Following the implementation of the Bologna Process in the mid-2000s, a significant number of new research staff were brought in; however, by now it is again becoming necessary to provide young researchers with the opportunity to establish their careers so as to ensure the prerequisites for long-term scholarly development, which the Faculty of Law must enable. Given that those who used to be in this category have moved on with their careers, the shortage of young researchers at the Faculty has been apparent for some time, so it is necessary to be proactive regarding their selection, employment, and career development.

To this end, the present situation and long-term requirements will be examined first. The option of introducing new joint doctoral study programmes will be considered, so that the most promising students may receive particular attention during their studies and their prospective employment at the Faculty may be facilitated. Within the Development Strategy, particular consideration will be given to strengthening the bond between doctoral studies and scientific research at the Faculty. A special programme will be devised and a series of workshops will be run (to be repeated on occasion) during which experienced researchers who have worked on major international and local projects will pass on their project know-how to younger researchers, as well as to other scholars and associates at the Faculty, particularly doctoral mentors. Prominent researchers and other experts from Croatia and beyond will also be invited to speak at the workshops. The Faculty will actively look into opportunities for some associates and young researchers to attend reputable universities in Europe and elsewhere, as well as participate in research and obtain their doctorates at such institutions.

## **11. Knowledge transfer through inter-institutional collaboration and development of the profession**

The Management believes intensive collaboration with the professions represented at the Faculty to be a key area of development, which is why it will actively pursue knowledge transfer and a stronger bond between the Faculty and actors and sectors operating within these professions. Opportunities for scientific research within projects in public-public and public-private partnerships will be investigated, as will collaboration on professional projects, some forms of instruction (particularly practical training), in lifelong learning (particularly in

cooperation with the Judicial Academy, the State School for Public Administration and other actors in the sector), as well as within professional chambers and professional and other associations.

Particular support will be provided for collaborating with international scientific and professional associations of relevance to the professions represented at the Faculty, including student groups or clubs within these associations, where this is possible.

The Faculty will strive to create prerequisites for the establishment of a sound lifelong learning system for persons employed in the judiciary, judicial bodies, and the legal profession; in public administration, public services, public finance, and the financial sector as a whole; in the economy or the business sector; in civil society and other sectors whose professional development needs are related to the study programmes and professions represented at the Faculty. To this end, in addition to providing professional and administrative support, the Management will look into the possibility of introducing additional postgraduate specialist studies, lifelong learning programmes and informal education options such as organising professional conferences, seminars, workshops, and the like.

## **IV. International and inter-institutional collaboration**

Building on already established foundations and in accordance with the overall commitments of the University of Zagreb, the goal of the Faculty regarding international and inter-institutional collaboration in the following term of office is to effectively integrate Faculty activities into contemporary European and global development processes and utilise international and inter-institutional collaboration as a key contributor of success, quality, appeal, and relevance of the study programmes on offer, as well as a key component of Faculty research and professional activity.

This will add to Faculty recognition and its international reputation, as well to student interest in enrolment; quality, mobility and student satisfaction; appeal that the Faculty holds for students from outside of Croatia; involvement of renowned teaching staff from abroad in instructional activities; outgoing mobility of teaching staff, associates, young researchers and other employees; scientific collaboration; and finally, Faculty ranking at the regional, European, and global level.

To this end, in addition to all the aspects that have already been addressed in this programme and refer in part to international and inter-institutional collaboration, the following activities will be undertaken:

### **1. Increasing outgoing student mobility**

The Management will continue to pursue a uniform increase of outgoing student mobility in all its study programmes, including doctoral students, which is to be achieved by means of already established and new agreements within European exchange programmes. In addition to traditional face-to-face mobilities, online and blended mobility opportunities are growing more frequent, and the UNIC project, coordinated by the Faculty for the entire University of Zagreb, is expected to significantly increase student mobility at all its constituent units. Because of this, the Management will take an active role in organising these mobilities and encourage students to take advantage of them. The recognition of mobility results will be transparent and uniform due to the use of the ECTS credit system. The Management will play an active role in informing students of mobility opportunities and providing quality IT support for online mobilities.

## **2. Increasing the appeal of study programmes for students from outside of Croatia**

The Management intends to take a number of steps to increase the appeal of study programmes for students from abroad. These will apply to incoming mobilities, as well as to students from abroad enrolling in study programmes offered at the Faculty, regardless of the level. The International Office will continue to be in charge of providing information on the options for studying at the Faculty and this information will be comprehensive, clear and easy to access. The Management will investigate the possibilities of introducing study programmes in English and will, depending on the available finances, encourage new programmes and classes in English. The Management will draw up an action plan to attract students who are (relatively) fluent in Croatian, including the Croatian diaspora, who wish to study to acquire an edge in their prospective field of employment or the professional activity they will engage in after graduation, as well as students from neighbouring countries.

## **3. Increasing the mobility of teaching staff and associates**

The mobility of teaching staff and associates is crucial for sharing teaching knowledge and experience, as well as improving skills and competences, including knowledge, experience, and skills and competences in online instruction delivery. Increased outgoing mobility of teaching staff and associates will ensure that, regardless of the level of their studies, students will be taught relevant and updated content and their instructors will be using appropriate and customary teaching approaches. The outgoing mobility of teaching staff also helps them form personal international networks, gain visibility, and join international networks to apply for projects.

## **4. Increasing the participation of renowned professors from outside of Croatia in teaching**

For similar reasons, the Management will increase the participation of renowned professors from outside of Croatia in teaching by increasing the incoming mobility of teaching staff and striving to enable them to stay for an entire semester or academic year. The Management will attempt to strike a balance between those who will come to stay in Zagreb and teach face-to-face and those who will teach online. International staff will be provided with suitable accommodation during their stay in Zagreb, in collaboration with both the University and the University of Zagreb Student Centre, as well as directly by the Faculty. For shorter stays, accommodation in the city centre will be provided in accordance with the finances available.

## **5. Developing a plan and commencing with the international accreditation of selected study programmes**

Study programmes can only develop and improve in quality if they can be compared with programmes in other European countries. In some disciplines, European accreditation of study programmes is available, in accordance with predetermined international standards, while in others it is possible to carry out a comparison with reputable EU or other international programme. In its first six months in office, the Management will draw up a plan, determine what is necessary to meet the standards, and commence the international accreditation procedure for selected study programmes. In light of this, it is interesting to look at the prestigious European Association for Public Administration Accreditation, which has not yet awarded an accreditation to a Croatian study programme. On the other hand, a few study programmes have been accredited in Slovenia, while in other countries the number is higher still. For study programmes in legal sciences and those in social work and social policy, the Management will carry out a needs analysis, draw up a plan, and commence a comparison with reputable study programmes abroad, taking into account the specific requirements of the local context and utilising the expertise of international professional organisations, amongst other things.

## **6. Increasing the mobility of other employees**

The EU has lately focused its efforts on involving as many higher education employees as possible in mobilities, particularly those working in student offices, libraries, laboratories, digitisation offices, and the like. The UNIC project coordinated by the Faculty of Law expects the mobility of this category of employees to reach 25%, but it should be noted that this will be mostly online. The Management will ensure this significantly increased mobility of other Faculty employees, taking into account the need to develop and upgrade the services which the Faculty offers to students, teaching staff, and relevant external stakeholders who increasingly turn to the Faculty as they engage in lifelong learning activities or attempt to meet their professional needs.

## **7. Intensifying international research and professional collaboration**

The Management intends to continue significant investments in the further intensification of international research and professional collaboration in all available forms. Joint applications for international projects in partnership with reputable universities from the EU and beyond will be encouraged, as will the involvement of international scientists, researchers, and experts in scientific and professional projects which the Faculty is implementing, or the involvement of Faculty scientists and researchers in international projects. Publication of

research papers with co-authors from reputable European universities and beyond will also be encouraged, as will the organisation or co-organisation of renowned international conferences, participation of renowned international scholars on the editorial boards of scientific journals (co-)published by the Faculty, having international scientists and researchers stay at the Faculty, and others forms of international research and professional collaboration. The Management will encourage the establishment and development of research groups at the Faculty in order to establish national and international collaboration regarding specific areas and issues. The Management will also look into the possibility of applying for and establishing scientific centres of excellence. To achieve all this, the Management will ensure a close collaboration between the Office for Projects and the International Office.

#### **8. Establishing a system of international presentation of Faculty activities, results, and projects**

Given that the many research and professional activities of the Faculty are often unknown outside of Croatia, the Management plans to look into the current state and opportunities for international presentation of Faculty activities, results, and projects, as well as to identify areas for improvement in order to establish a comprehensive and appealing system of international presentation within a year's time. Presenting will be planned for national, European, and global audiences, depending on project relevance and results. The purpose of establishing this system is to ensure that the Faculty has an ongoing and coordinated international presentation so that projects, results, and activities of international value and relevance will reach an international audience. This will increase the appeal of the Faculty for students, teaching staff, scientists, researchers, and experts from Croatia and beyond. An action plan for international presentation will be drawn up, and implementation will include the Management, teaching staff, associates, researchers, the International Office, and others as necessary.

#### **9. Analysing options and commencing the implementation of measures to improve the Faculty's international ranking**

The Faculty of Law is one of the leading law faculties in Central and Southeast Europe, and as such it has attendant responsibilities. The Management therefore intends to further strengthen this position by starting to systematically improve the international ranking of the Faculty and the study programmes it offers. First, options will be analysed and necessary measures determined, and when the action plan has been adopted by the Faculty Council, the implementation of measures will commence whereby the ranking of the Faculty and its study programmes will be improved both within the EU context and beyond. The Management plans

to devote considerable effort and financial resources to improving Faculty ranking, in collaboration with the University of Zagreb.

#### **10. Expanding and intensifying inter-institutional collaboration at the national and international level**

The Faculty already enjoys good collaboration with relevant Croatian institutions; however, the Management intends to significantly enhance collaboration with institutions of the EU, the Council of Europe, and other reputable, important, and relevant professional and other institutions. To this end, the current state of inter-institutional collaboration will be determined first. It often goes unrecorded and takes place between individual study programmes, institutes or chairs, between journal editorial boards, or even between individual faculty members. Then the importance of particular institutions will be determined, both in national and international terms, as well as the possibility of collaboration, either by impacting on their activities, utilising their expertise and professional support in teaching and other Faculty activities, or applying for projects and sourcing financial support for Faculty projects and activities.

#### **11. Establishing a comprehensive system to monitor, record, support and evaluate international and inter-institutional collaboration**

The Management intends to improve the monitoring, data collection, and recording of the various forms of international and inter-institutional collaboration, as well as to list and evaluate them and identify how they may be supported and fostered in order to establish a comprehensive, efficient, development-oriented, and sustainable system of international and inter-institutional collaboration which will contribute to the achievement of goals, the quality of studies, scientific research and professional activities, and the overall activities of the Faculty.

## V. Faculty operation and management

### Faculty operation and financing

Some of the key concerns regarding Faculty business operation and financing include the following: the need to invest the institution's own funds in the restoration of buildings, equipment, and other necessities damaged in the earthquakes; the need to adapt to the requirements of online teaching; overall financial restrictions; a long-term general increase in costs; a continuous decline in the number of enrolments; and a growing number of study programmes on offer in the Croatian higher education system. These all require the Management to keep looking for new sources of revenue and to restructure costs in order to secure the funds necessary to achieve the Faculty's development goals.

Faculty revenues have been in steady decline, particularly those from tuition fees, while some revenues are fluctuating (those from projects, lifelong learning, tuition fees for postgraduate studies, and the like). However, attempts have been made to stabilise revenues and increase them through sales, including a webshop and some other initiatives.

The cost structure has changed in recent months, which is partly due to the objective external circumstances described above and partly to Faculty decisions. Certain savings have been realised through reduced material costs, completion of the Faculty of Law Science Project, and in other ways. However, current revenues will not be able to match current costs, particularly if the Faculty is not reimbursed for the money spent on the restoration of the buildings damaged by the earthquakes. Further costs may be incurred as a result of the earthquakes; i.e. if it is necessary to rent teaching premises.

The Management intends to prepare an in-depth analysis of the Faculty's financial position and business opportunities and then propose new steps aimed at increasing revenues and restructuring costs in accordance with the commitments and objectives set out in this programme. The plan is to address investment costs in particular by new funding opportunities available from various local and EU funds and funding streams.

The Office for Projects will constitute an important faculty service and will generate increased revenue from various projects, as has been described in an earlier chapter of this programme. Among other projects, the Office will ensure that the Faculty takes part, either on its own or in collaboration with other faculties at the University of Zagreb, in projects dealing with knowledge transfer and the development of technological innovations of interest to the economy and the public sector which can be a source of considerable revenue growth in the long term.



Stronger diversification of lifelong learning programmes and postgraduate specialist studies will ensure a more stable source of tuition revenue. The introduction of measures to increase the appeal of all other study programmes should contribute to this goal as well.

The Management will promote the activities of two foundations connected with the Faculty, which model the success of the Faculty in preserving and enhancing legal culture, legal professionalism, and social responsibility. Sustained efforts will be made to win over new founders for purposes related to the Faculty mission.

A Council for the Advancement of Faculty Business Operations will be established, which will be composed of members representing key segments of the economy and the public sector. They will be the voice of experience advising the Faculty on how to enhance its business operations and financing.

### **Faculty management, internal organisation, and work environment**

The Faculty will continue to operate legally and responsibly within the legal order of the Republic of Croatia, the Statute and other bylaws of the University of Zagreb, and its own Statute and other bylaws. The managing bodies of the Faculty are the Dean and the Faculty Council. The Management consists of the Dean, Vice Deans, Heads of Study Centres, and the Faculty Secretary.

Sound academic and public management methods will be used to manage the Faculty. These will include encouraging all students and employees to participate in decision-making insofar as this is permitted by the law and various University and Faculty regulations and documents, implementing sound financial management, and compiling reliable records of various Faculty activities which will allow their results to be continuously and objectively evaluated.

Key documents for successful management include the Development Strategy, the action plan of the Committee for Quality Management, the action plans described in this programme, and other instruments that will facilitate swift action. It has proven difficult to take necessary action to manage something in a sound, appropriate, and timely manner without structuring activities beforehand, particularly if we take into consideration the unquestionably taxing external circumstances (the pandemic, dealing with the aftermath of the earthquake, and so on), the relative brevity of the term of office, and the activities of the Management defined by the programme.

The Management will ensure some elements of organisational independence regarding the Social Work Study Centre, the Study Centre of Public Administration and Public Finance, and the institutes and chairs. The Management will make a particular effort to affirm the role of the institute (in accordance with the Statute of the Faculty of Law) in order to advance scientific research activity, carry out doctoral study programmes, and intensify international collaboration and professional activity. The Legal Clinic contributes to the reputation of the

Faculty in the wider community and as such will receive continued support for its excellent work.

The Management will conduct a thorough analysis of the compliance of the organisational structure of Faculty services with legal and other requirements, as well as University and Faculty regulations and documents, and strategic commitments. This will ensure a rational and efficient organisational structure of all services. The organisational structure will include the offices described in this programme.

We will give particular consideration to the library and intend to persevere with its development. We must lose sight of the fact that the Faculty of Law Library is of great national importance, as well as a space which brings together Faculty students, teaching staff, and researchers. The library is to the Faculty of Law what laboratories and other worksites are to other faculties. The quantity, wealth, and value of our library stock is such that the library deserves consideration and financial investment far beyond what the Faculty is able to provide. Because of its national importance, the library requires quality in terms of its premises, IT resources, staff, and finances. Investments in library development should definitely include a modern reading room equipped with contemporary users in mind.

The Management will develop a communication strategy with an action plan aimed at improving external and internal communication and informing all stakeholders in order to improve the quality, reliability, and visibility of the Faculty.

Dean intends to act conscientiously, diligently, transparently, openly, and responsibly, in full compliance with laws, statutes, University rules, and other regulations, as well as the principles and standards governing general and academic ethics, while also respecting the equality of all Faculty organisational units, and academic rights and freedoms.

I will strive to involve all teaching staff and other employees in management processes and other activities depending on their interests and readiness to become involved, and ensure open, critical, and constructive discussions. I will give particular consideration to the involvement of younger teaching staff in various committees tasked with decision-making, in order to utilise the excellent potential of the Faculty and create a culture of inclusive decision-making. This will contribute to the creation of a shared future for the Faculty.

I will prioritise Faculty autonomy and the ensuring of ideological and political impartiality.

I, as well as the Management and all teaching staff, associates, researchers, and other employees, wish to make the Faculty a good place to work, study, and engage in academic activity and professional development. I will foster a culture of cooperation within the Faculty, with other constituent units of the University of Zagreb, and with external stakeholders. I will also strive to create the conditions for the Faculty to fulfil its social role and responsibility.

I will advocate for an excellent Faculty of New Opportunities which is firmly embedded within European and global academic and research networks that foster collaboration and mobility within the European Higher Education Area. The EHEA already includes the University of

Zagreb and the Faculty of Law as coordinator (at University level) of the European University of Post-Industrial Cities (UNIC) project and the H2020-sponsored UNIC4ER programme.

## **VI. Relations with the University of Zagreb and collaboration within the University**

From the very beginning, the Faculty of Law has enjoyed a strong bond with the University of Zagreb, and this bond has endured to this day. The Management believes that it is the responsibility of the Faculty to contribute significantly to University development and that what benefits one institution automatically benefits the other. Therefore, the Management will endeavour to participate in all development processes and management activities taking place at the University, all the while advocating for a more prominent position and stronger engagement of the Faculty and its teaching staff and students. We will support the University with regard to the restoration of the building at Trg Republike Hrvatske 14, given its symbolic meaning as well as its practical importance as far as regular Faculty activities are concerned.

The Faculty of Law will seek recognition within the University by setting high standards in collaborating with its other constituent units in teaching, scientific research, and professional activity, taking part in projects which facilitate the transfer of knowledge to the economy and the public sector, and in other applicable ways.

Because the Faculty of Law is one of the oldest constituent units of the University and is dedicated to its longevity and autonomy, the Management will strive to achieve adequate representation of teaching staff and other employees, as well as students in various bodies and management activities at University level. Dean will advocate for the Faculty to receive the recognition and respect it deserves in its intra-university relations, as well as to be provided with the adequate means of funding its teaching, research, and professional activities.

Dean will place a particular focus on attempting to secure adequate premises for the Faculty of Law Library, and to ensure adequate protection and promotion of library book stock. The relevant authorities will be approached regarding this issue in conjunction with the University Management.

This programme has already noted that the Faculty of Law has the role of University level coordinator for two projects: European University of Post-Industrial Cities (UNIC), which began on October 1, 2020 and aims to increase student and teaching staff mobility, and H2020 UNIC4ER, which will start on June 1, 2021 and is aimed at strengthening the collaboration of the eight partner universities taking part in UNIC in terms of their research and innovation capacity. Dean is heading both projects and is a member of the Management Office of the UNIC University Alliance. As such, I will advocate for stronger cooperation within that alliance.

I will also advocate for a more prominent role to be played by the University of Zagreb in the European Education Area, both at the level of coordination mechanisms for European universities as part of a working group at the Ministry of Science and Education, and at a broader European level.

I value the essential role of the University of Zagreb and its contribution to the activities and development of the Faculty of Law. He also considers it of crucial importance to foster stronger collaboration between the Faculty of Law and other constituent units of the University, as well as its various bodies, offices, and services. This should be achieved taking into account the values and principles of university autonomy, which implies faculty independence, independent academic activity, and efforts of the university teaching staff to achieve the highest possible standards of work and management, all in accordance with constitutional guarantees, legal regulations, and University and Faculty of Law statutes.

## VII. Conclusion

The Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb is the oldest and largest law faculty in the country and will celebrate its 245<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021. The Faculty plays a prominent social role and carries special responsibility for the development of legal sciences, the legal profession, and the rule of law in the Republic of Croatia. Faculty teaching staff and students are regular contributors to the legal and social sphere, carrying out various responsible tasks in international and national tribunals and other bodies, as well as in a range of development processes of importance to the country.

As dean of the Faculty of Law, I intend to ensure a stronger central role for the Faculty in the following: modernising higher education, educating and bringing together top experts in their fields, and ensuring the high quality and excellence of teaching, research, and professional activity in the areas of law, social work and social policy, public administration and public finance. This I intend to do by ongoing communication, exchange of ideas and knowledge, and close collaboration with other legal and related faculties in Croatia and beyond, as well as with various bodies and constituent units of the University of Zagreb.

The programme of dean and the new Management comprises a number of goals and measures for their implementation. These goals will ensure that the Faculty has a long-term focus on quality in its internal, intra-university, national, and international activities. They will also ensure the synergy of the institution, a cohesive organisational culture, and the growth of students, teaching staff, various associates, and other employees, not just as individuals but as part of a community. The slogan of the programme – “For a Faculty of Excellence and New Opportunities” – emphasizes the importance of an integrative, innovative, excellent, open, socially responsible, and knowledge-oriented community of students, professors, researchers, and other members of all the professions that the Faculty of Law brings together

In my 30 years at the Faculty, I have acquired extensive experience in research, teaching, and professional activity, as well as sound organisational and managerial skills. My experience stems from the many positions I have held at the Faculty, the University and in other bodies and organisations. These include the following: head of the UNIC project for the University of Zagreb and head of other local and international projects; Vice Dean of the Faculty of Law; Head of the Institute of Public Law and Public Administration; Head of Administrative Science Department; Head of the Study Centre for Public Administration and Public Finance; Head of the Postgraduate Doctoral Studies Council (Public Law and Public Administration Programme); Secretary of the Postgraduate MSc Programme for Administrative and Political Sciences at the Faculty of Law; Head of the Council for the Postgraduate Study Programme in Public Administration; Editor-in-chief of the journal “Croatian and Comparative Public Administration” and editor of some 40 books in Croatia and beyond; editorial board member for a number of international scholarly journals; head of department and Dean of the Social Science Polytechnic, President of the Institute for Public Administration; President of the

Scientific Council of the Croatian Academy of Legal Sciences; Vice President of the Open Government Partnership Initiative Council of the Republic of Croatia; member of the Social Sciences and Humanities Council at the University of Zagreb; president and member of accreditation committees for study programmes in Croatia and beyond; organiser of many local and international scientific and professional conferences; head of the working group for drafting legislation, member of the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders, and Political System of the Croatian Parliament; member of several national councils dealing with public administration reform; reviewer of scientific project proposals in Croatia and beyond; member of the Sectoral Council of the Croatian Qualifications Framework for the areas of law, political science, sociology, public administration, and public affairs; member of the Ethics Committee for Elections to the Croatian Parliament, member of two executive committees of the International Political Science Association, and so on).

Considering the experience listed above, I am convinced that I am qualified to achieve the goals elaborated in the programme, working together with the Management Team, the teaching staff, associates, researchers, and other employees, as well as with students and other actors within the professional community which the Faculty brings together.

Professor Ivan Koprić