



Experiences from the development of first HR strategy for researchers in Serbian academic landscape

WeB-InUnion

Bringing Western Balkan Countries closer to the Innovation Union – Final Conference

Belgrade, September 18th 2014

University of Niš, Serbia



UNI – Central Point



About UNI

❑ **Founded
on June 15th 1965**

3 faculties

**234 fulltime
teaching staff**

~10500 students

❑ **Built in 1889**

❑ **The seat of
University of Niš
since 1966**



About UNI

- ❑ ~ 140 accredited programmes
- ❑ ~ 1600 teaching staff
- ❑ ~ 28000 students enrolled in all years



About UNI

- ❑ ~ 59000 students have graduated (~ 1,350 foreign citizens)
- ❑ ~ 2600 have earned master's degree
- ❑ ~ 1500 have successfully defended doctoral dissertation



University Structure

SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANISTICS

- Faculty of Economics
- Faculty of Law
- Teacher-Training Faculty
- Faculty of Philosophy
- Faculty of Sport and Physical Education

MEDICAL SCIENCES

- Faculty of Medicine

ARTS

- Faculty of Fine Arts



University of Niš

TEHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL SCIENCES

- **Faculty of Civil Engineering & Architecture**
- **Faculty of Electronic Engineering**
- **Faculty of Mechanical Engineering**
- **Faculty of Technology**
- **Faculty of Occupational Safety**

NATURAL SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS

- **Faculty of Science and Mathematics**



HRS4R Process

The University of Niš was the first university in Serbia that signed

“*The European Charter for Researchers*” and “*The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (C&C)*”,

thereby accepting the initiative of the European Commission which adopted in 2005 these two documents with the aim of increasing employability and promoting research career as vital elements in the strategy of greater economy growth, employment, and setting up European Research Area.



Entering European Research Area

It is not only a self-sufficient goal, *but activity that supports global reform of HE systems through:*

- ❑ the internationalization of HE systems,
- ❑ the harmonization within HEIs,
- ❑ implementation of the idea of a Europe based on knowledge,
- ❑ the integration of a growing number of university functions,
- ❑ establishment of university network between EU universities and WB universities.



Our way to ...

- ❑ European Union's policy for human resources in science and research

- ❑ The 40 principles of the European Charter and Code for Researchers (C&C), related to
 - ethical and professional aspects,
 - employment,
 - working conditions,
 - social security,
 - training.



Our way to ...

- University of Niš incorporated all the principles of C&C into its
 - regulations and practice,
 - organizational and financial instruments.

- This commitment is taken by the “*Human Resources Strategy for Researchers incorporating the EU Charter and Code*”, adopted by the University Senate on March 26, 2014.



Recognition ...

Entering European Higher Education Area and European Research Area

- ❑ offers many benefits, but
- ❑ requires the necessary changes such as
 - parallel process of integration,
 - rationalization of university structure,
 - adequate level of competence, etc.



Objective difficulties

- ❑ **University of Niš is (still) not integrated.**
- ❑ All faculties are autonomous legal units, while University has only some coordinative role.
- ❑ Some, but very important centralized functions are related to the process of PhD thesis confirmation and elections into positions.
- ❑ Most of the problems come from the fact that the employers of researchers are faculties and not University.
- ❑ Hence, the scope of the action plan is restricted because it is not possible to impose certain decisions and regulations onto the faculties.



Towards Integrated University

□ Multidisciplinary study programs

- Master Academic Studies
- Doctoral Studies
- Life-Long Learning

□ (Any kind of) International Cooperation

□ International Projects (TEMPUS, ERASMUS MUNDUS, FP7, ...)

□ Integrated Departments/Divisions



Toward Integrated University

□ Integrated University System for Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement

- Integrated strategy for quality assurance;
- Integrated system for internal quality control;
- Integrated tools for quality control;
- ...
- ***Vice-Rector for quality assurance and quality enhancement.***



Integrated Units

- Center for Quality Enhancement
- Center for International Cooperation
- Center for Career Development
- Center for Technology Transfer
- Center for Life-Long Learning
- Interface Center
- Center for Multidisciplinary Study
- Innovation Center
- ...



Our way to ...

- The HR Strategy comprises of the:
 - Internal Analysis, which highlights the issues related to misalignment of the current practices of managing human resources with C&C principles, and
 - Action plan, which identifies and schedules the actions, needed to address the above issues.



Methodology

□ Full responsibility for implementing the internal analysis and definition of the action plan were assigned to a dedicated workgroup with most relevant composition:

- Management representative
- Legal expert
- Member of the C&C cohort
- IT Expert
- EURAXESS BH
- C&C Expert



Working on HRS4R

- Different versions of the internal analysis and action plan were written, whereas workgroup were responsible for providing data, information, suggestions and any other feedback.
- Internal analysis also taken into account the results of special survey which was carried out among researchers at University of Niš.
- Workgroup was coordinated externally, by the C&C expert from EURAXESS BHO office.



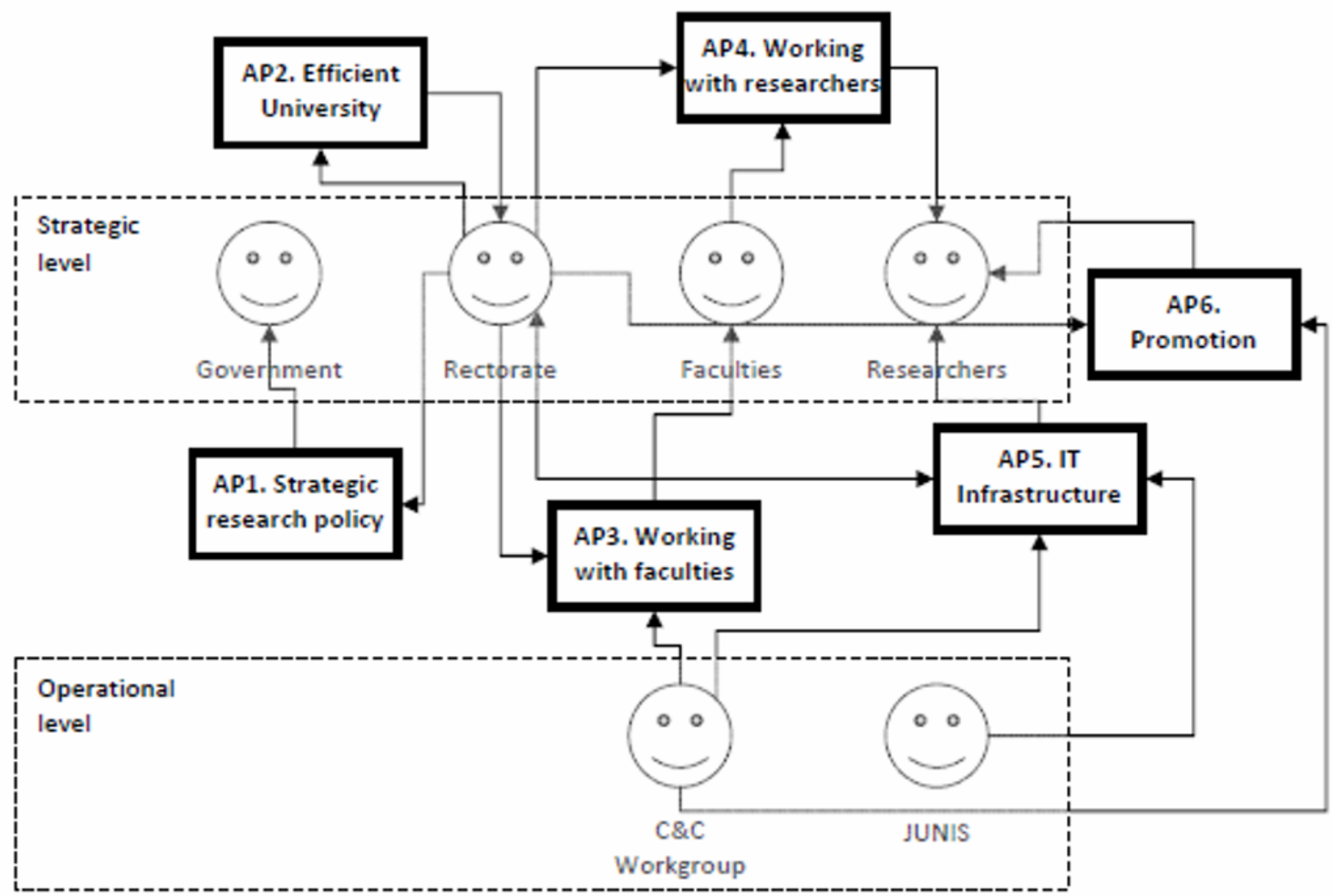
Survey on ...

Survey on the rights and responsibilities of the researchers employed at University of Niš:

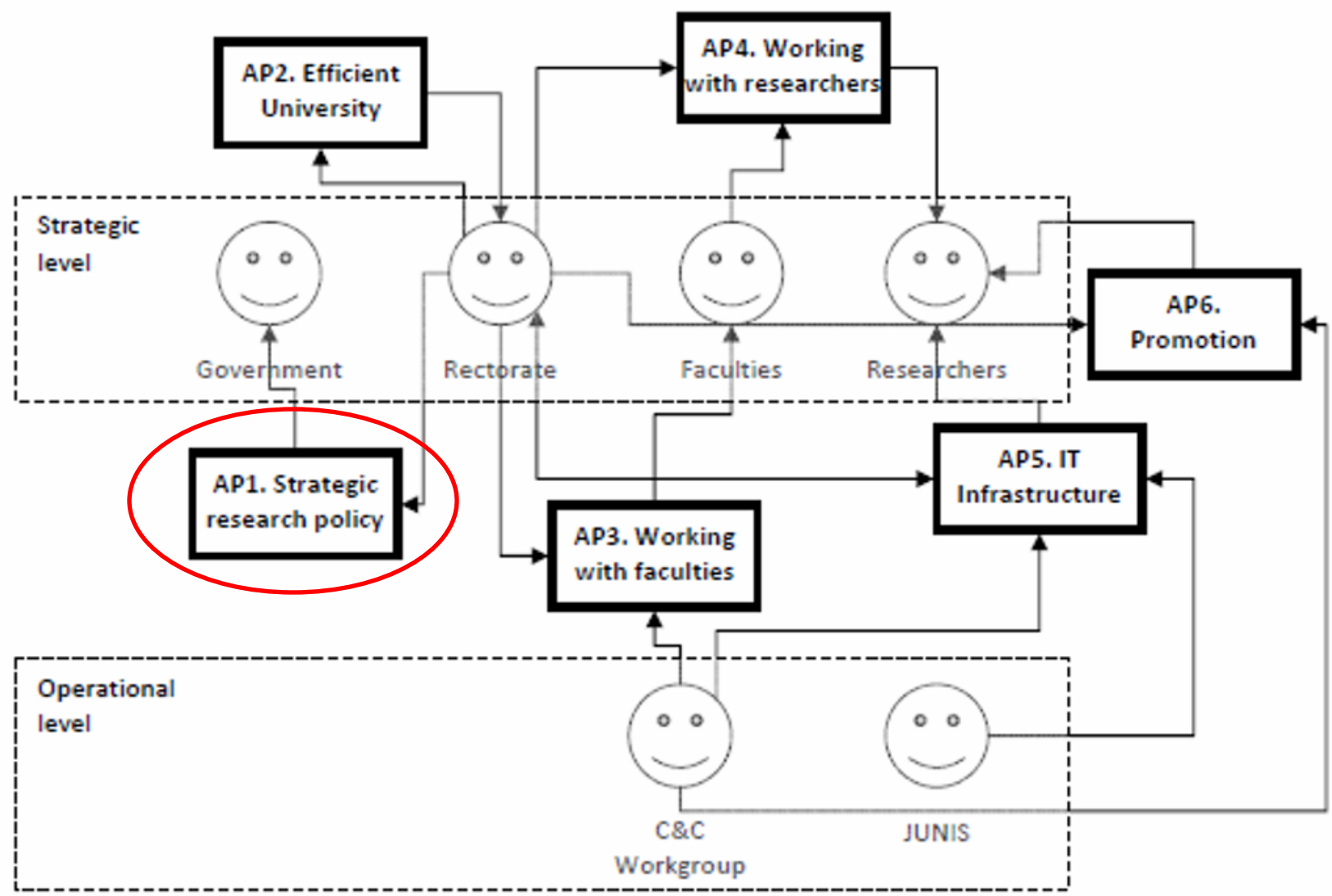
- ❑ Researchers from 11 faculties took part in.
- ❑ Type of researchers:
 - 24% - research assistants,
 - 28% - assistant professors
 - 12% - associate professors,
 - 28% - full professors.
- ❑ 71% of the respondents were not aware of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.



Interrelation between APs and Stakeholders



Interrelation between APs and Stakeholders

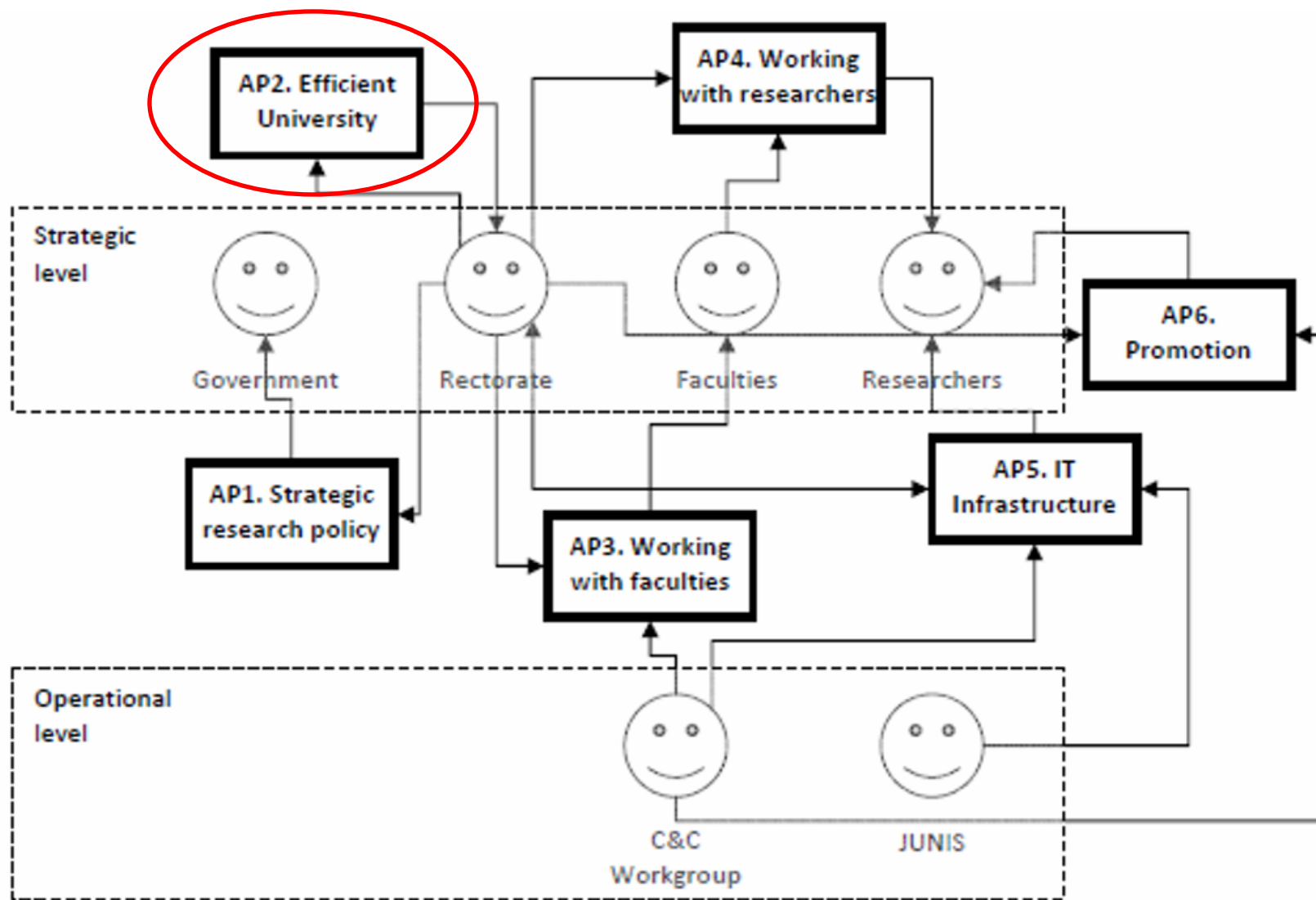


AP1 - Strategic research policy

- Developing the strategic research policy statement, which includes the proposals for improving and enhancing the national research system laws and bylaws.
- This policy should be disseminated by lobbying through the participation of the University representatives in the inter-university and other high level bodies, such as: KONUS, CAQA, HERE team, NCHE, conferences, national research committees, etc.



Interrelation between APs and Stakeholders

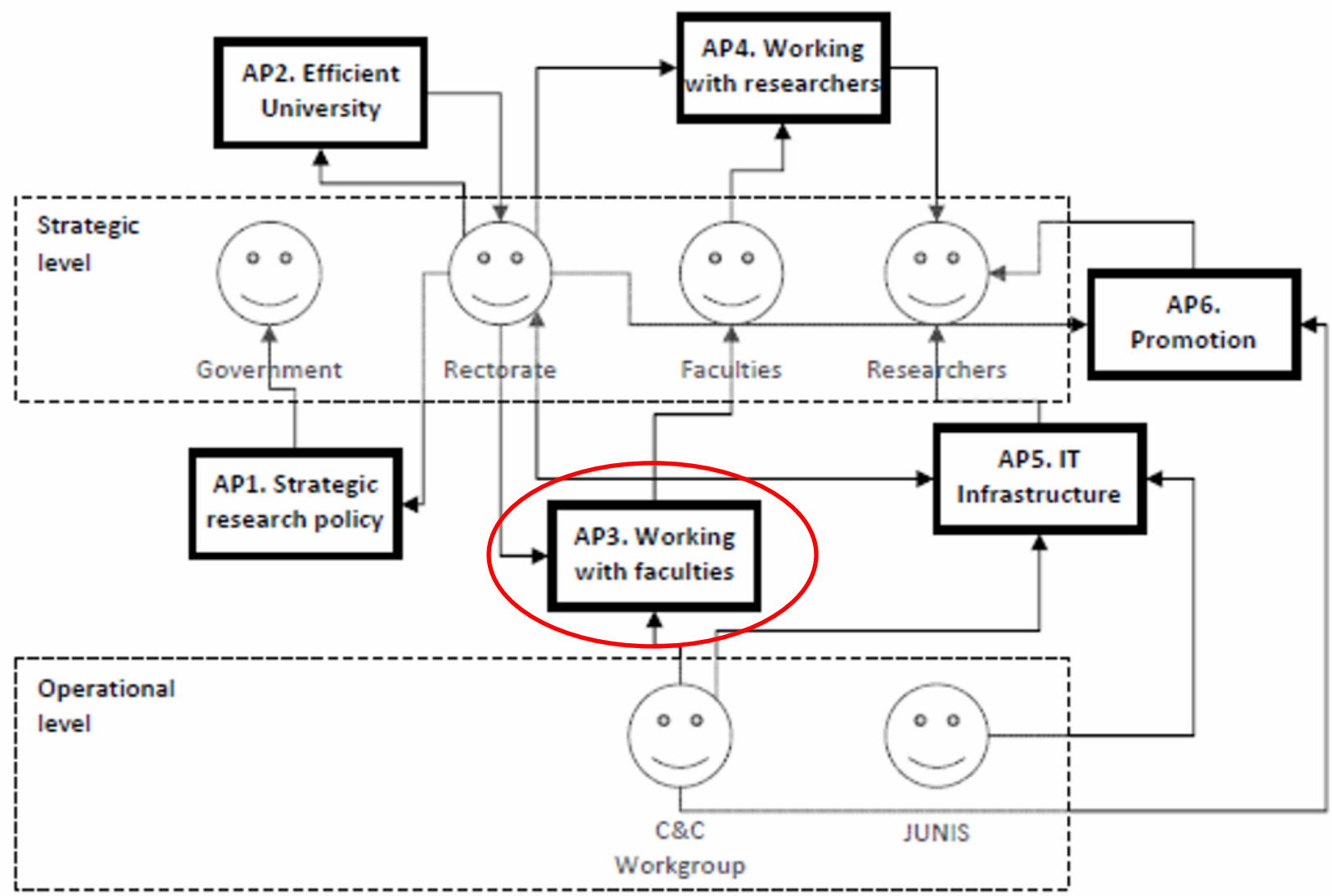


AP2 - Efficient and effective University

- Define the standards and procedures for revoking the teaching, scientific and PhD titles.
- Improve and enhance the efficiency of the work of the Ethical committee.
- Further develop University Alumni.
- Make the procedures for diploma recognition shorter and more efficient.
- Facilitate a scientific mobility.
- Extend the scope of work of Career Development Centre at the University of Niš to early-stage researchers.



Interrelation between APs and Stakeholders

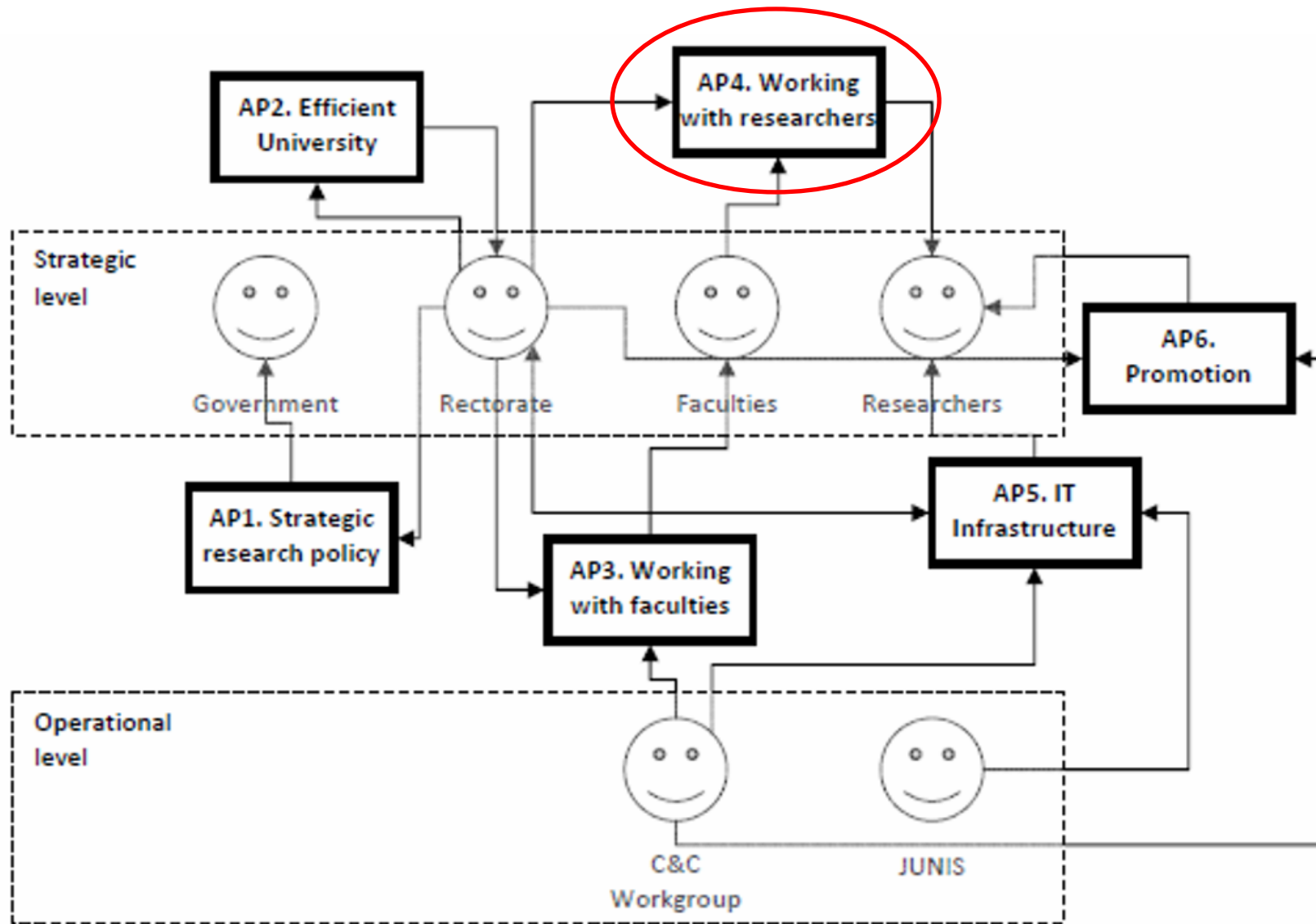


AP3 - Working with faculties

- ❑ Different regulations at the levels of University and Faculties are not harmonised. There is a clear need to achieve this harmonisation.
- ❑ Implement new system of communication with faculties which will ensure a better awareness of faculties of the existing regulations and decisions made at the University level.
- ❑ Improve the process of reporting by faculties to University.
- ❑ Develop and disseminate a common template for evaluation reports for all faculties.



Interrelation between APs and Stakeholders

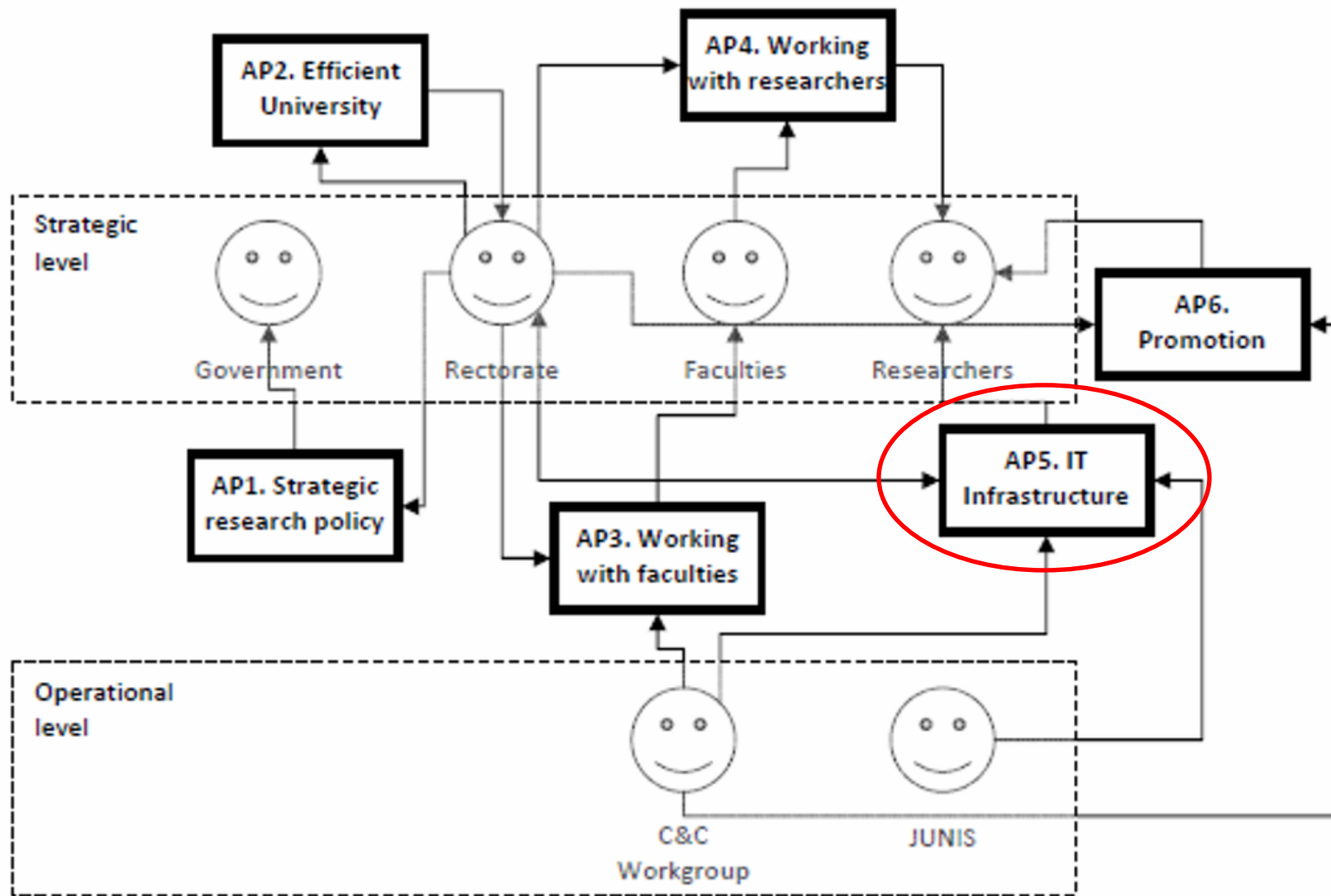


AP4 - Working with researchers

- ❑ Design and implement a programme for stimulating and motivating young researchers, through promotional events, prizes, travel grants, honorary event participations, etc.
- ❑ Design and implement a professional skills development programme at both faculty and university levels:
 - Project management
 - Responsibilities of the selection committees
 - Writing research project proposals
 - Inter-cultural communication
 - Research ethics.



Interrelation between APs and Stakeholders

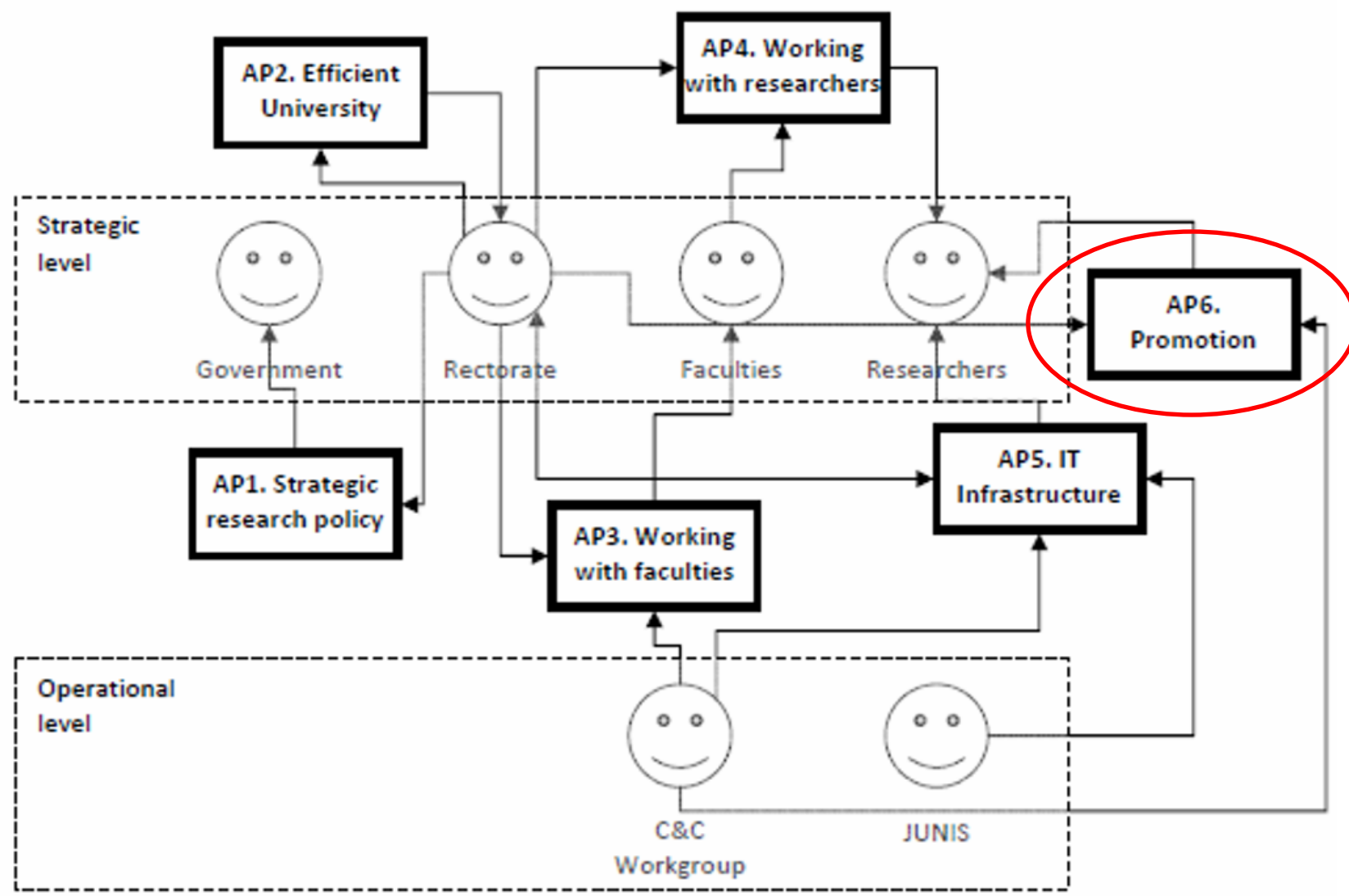


AP5 - IT Infrastructure

- ❑ Improving IT infrastructure of University of Niš.
- ❑ Develop the university public database of papers, patents, PhD dissertations and other results (as open-access repositories).
- ❑ Develop and maintain database of PhD students.
- ❑ Develop and maintain the database of master and PhD studies in English.
- ❑ Implement a tool for automatic monitoring of plagiarism (based on data in self-archiving public database of papers).



Interrelation between APs and Stakeholders



AP6 - Promotion and dissemination

- Design and implement a research promotion plan of the University of Niš.
- Promote project opportunities, especially those related to strategic research agenda.
- Implement an official mailing list for regular dissemination (such as newsletters, important information, invitations, web portal updates, etc.)
- Design and publish procedures for employment of the foreign citizens, on official University website.



Implementation of HRS4R Process

- Final versions of internal analysis and action plan were
 - approved by Rector,
 - approved by Senate,
 - published on the University website
 - with all other associated documents,
 - necessary information about the Charter and Code
 - submitted to EC.



Implementation of HRS4R Process

- ❑ A special workgroup was formed for the purpose of coordination of the execution of action plan.
- ❑ This workgroup was composed
 - of the members of the workgroup who performed the internal analysis and developed the action plan,
 - of the heads of departments and centres who are designated as responsible for the implementation of the individual actions.





HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH



Human Resources Strategy for Researchers incorporating the EU Charter and Code

<http://www.ni.ac.rs/en/component/content/article/267-human-resources-strategy-for-researchers-incorporating-the-eu-charter-and-code.html>

University of Niš, Serbia



Foster Successful Partnerships



**Bringing Western Balkan Countries
closer to the Innovation Union!**

