



UNIVERSITY "UKSHIN HOTI" PRIZREN
FACULTY OF LIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

**FACULTY OF LIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL
SCIENCES**

University "Ukshin Hoti" Prizren
Rr. Shkronjave 1, 20000 Prizren, Republic of
Kosovo

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2029



FACULTY OF LIFE AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2029

Care for nature – care for our
future

March 2026

SHKURTESAT

FLES – Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences
FES – Forestry and Environmental Sciences
AGB – Agribusiness
MAGB – Agribusiness Management
MESTI – Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MAFRD – Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development
MH – Ministry of Health
EU – European Union
KAA – Kosovo Accreditation Agency
SER – Self-Evaluation Report
NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations
IAB – Industrial Advisory Board
GIS – Geographic Information System
KPI – Key Performance Indicators
QA – Quality Assurance
EHEA – European Higher Education Area
R&D – Research and Development
MoU – Memorandum of Understanding

PËRMBAJTJA

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DEAN'S FOREWORD

In my capacity as Dean of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences (FLES) at the University "Ukshin Hoti" in Prizren, on behalf of the academic and administrative staff, as well as our students, I extend a warm welcome and express my appreciation for your interest in our institutional vision and commitment.

Our Faculty is dedicated to providing high-quality higher education in accordance with the standards of the European Higher Education Area and the principles of quality assurance. Through contemporary study programmes and modern teaching methods, we aim to ensure professional training and the development of students' academic and practical competences. The teaching process at FLES is based on active interaction between staff and students, through an interdisciplinary approach that combines theoretical knowledge with practical experience through fieldwork and professional activities. At the same time, scientific research and cooperation with public institutions, industry sectors, and international partners constitute important pillars of the Faculty's development.

This Strategic Plan defines the main strategic orientations for the development of the Faculty, aiming to enhance the quality of teaching, develop scientific research, promote internationalization, and strengthen the role of FLES in sustainable development.

I invite you to become part of our academic community, where knowledge and cooperation are transformed into opportunities for development.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Albana Milaimi

Dean of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences

DRAFTING OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This Strategic Plan has been drafted based on the decision of the Council of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences (FSHJM), with reference number 01-224, dated 09.10.2025, and the decision on the amendment and supplementation of the commission with reference number 01-50.

The Strategic Plan 2025–2029 has been prepared through a comprehensive consultation process with the internal and external stakeholders of the Faculty. This process included academic and administrative staff, student representatives, as well as representatives of partner institutions and organizations. This document defines the main developmental orientations of the Faculty for the period 2025–2029 and will serve as a basis for the planning and implementation of academic, research, and institutional activities of FLES.

Members of the Strategic Plan Drafting Committee

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mirvjena Këllezi-Kortoçi, Chair

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kushtrim Braha, Member

Assist. Prof. Dr. Liridon Buqaj, Member

Assist. Prof. Dr. Kujtim Hameli, Member

Mr. Refki Zogaj, Member (IAB Representative)

Mr. Avni Gashi, Member (IAB Representative)

Ms. Anila Trupaj, Member (Student Representative)



INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

The Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences (FLES) was established in 2016, based on the proposal of the Rector of the University “Ukshin Hoti” and the professional commission for drafting study programmes. By decision of the University Governing Council, this Faculty was established with the aim of developing study programmes in the fields of life sciences, agribusiness, forestry, and environment.

Based on the developmental specifics of the University “Ukshin Hoti”, the natural and economic potential of the Prizren region, and the labour market demands in Kosovo, the study programmes of FLES aim to contribute to the preparation of professional staff and to the sustainable economic, environmental, and scientific development of the country. Through the development of contemporary programmes and a strong orientation towards scientific research and innovation, the Faculty also aims to contribute to enhancing the academic performance and profile of the University “Ukshin Hoti” Prizren.

Currently, 584 students are enrolled at FLES, namely 364 students in the Agribusiness programme, 247 students in the Forestry and Environmental Sciences programme, and 60 students in the Master’s programme in Agribusiness Management. The socio-economic structure of the students largely reflects the inclusion of students from rural areas of

Kosovo, particularly from the Prizren region, as well as from other regions of the country.

FLES organizes Bachelor-level study programmes in the Albanian language. At the same time, within a medium-term period, it plans to open study programmes at the Master level. The current study programmes at the Bachelor level are:

- Agribusiness
- Forestry and Environmental Sciences

The planned study programmes at the Master level are:

- Agribusiness Management

Development of New Study Programmes

In accordance with the recommendations of accreditation experts, contemporary developments in the field of Life and Environmental Sciences, as well as the strategic orientations of the University “Ukshin Hoti”, FSHJM aims to gradually expand its academic offer through the development of new study programs.

Planned study programs at the Bachelor level:

- Landscape Architecture
- Technology and Innovation in Agribusiness

Planned study programs at the Master level:

- Forestry Science and Forest Ecology (under evaluation)
- Ecotoxicology and Environmental Monitoring

The Faculty also plans the possibility of establishing an integrated doctoral study program (in English) in the field of Life



and Environmental Sciences, in cooperation with international partner universities.

The development of these new study programmes will be implemented gradually, based on the academic and infrastructural capacities of the Faculty, as well as on the analysis of labour market needs.

Scientific Research and Internationalization

The academic staff of FLES carries out scientific research activities both individually and in collaboration with other academic and research institutions. The results of these studies are presented at scientific conferences and congresses within the country and abroad, as well as published in international scientific journals.

In order to strengthen scientific research and the internationalization process, the Faculty aims to increase participation in international research projects, strengthen academic cooperation with partner universities, and involve international academic staff in the teaching and research process.

Cooperation with Industry and the Community

FLES has established the Industrial Advisory Board (IAB) with the aim of strengthening cooperation between the Faculty and the economic sector. This board serves as a mechanism for the exchange of experiences, identification of labour market needs, and the development of joint initiatives in the fields of training,

research projects, professional practice, and student employment.

Infrastructure and Technological Development

The building of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences is located within the campus of the University “Ukshin Hoti” in Prizren. The Faculty’s infrastructure supports the teaching process and scientific research through teaching spaces, laboratories, and technological equipment.

Although some of the laboratories are well equipped, the Faculty aims to further modernize its technological infrastructure, including equipping laboratories with contemporary equipment, expanding the capacities of research laboratories, developing the IT laboratory, and enriching the library with contemporary scientific literature and electronic resources.

PLANNING OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Priority Areas of Scientific Research

In accordance with the recommendations of accreditation experts, the strategic orientations of the University “Ukshin Hoti”, and the academic profile of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences, the development of scientific research at the Faculty aims to focus on several priority areas related to sustainable development, natural resource management, and the development of the agro-environmental sector.



The definition of these priority areas aims to guide the research activities of the academic staff, the development of scientific projects, international cooperation, and the involvement of students in scientific research.

Priority Research Areas in Agribusiness

- Strategjitë dhe politikat e zhvillimit rural të integruar
- Strategies and policies for integrated rural development
- Agricultural policies and the development of the agri-food sector in Kosovo
- Analysis of the functioning and development of agribusiness companies
- Supply chain management and value creation in the agri-food sector
- Strategies for managing inputs and outputs in agricultural production
- Integration of farmers into local and international markets
- Development of rural enterprises and agribusiness companies
- Development of rural tourism and economic diversification in rural areas
- Analysis of agri-food markets and food security
- Agricultural advisory systems and support for farmers
- Innovation and digitalization in agribusiness

Priority Research Areas in Forestry and Environmental Sciences

- Sustainable management of forests and natural resources
- Study and monitoring of biodiversity in forest ecosystems
- Study of pests and diseases of forest plants
- Inventory and monitoring of forest resources and aromatic and medicinal plants
- Dendroecological and dendrochronological studies of forest species
- Structure and physical, mechanical, and technological properties of wood and wood-based materials
- Forest planning and sustainable management of forest resources
- Management of protected areas and biodiversity
- Application of silvicultural methods and sustainable forest regeneration
- Silvicultural interventions and management of forest structure
- Revitalization and restoration of degraded forest areas
- Prevention and management of forest fires
- Application of agroforestry systems in land and ecosystem management
- Use of new technologies and geospatial systems (GIS) in forest management and monitoring
- Development of mountain and eco-tourism in forest areas
- Development of professional capacities and training of personnel for forest operations and sustainable forest management

Priority Research Areas in Environmental Monitoring and Ecotoxicology

- Environmental monitoring and assessment of ecosystem quality
- Study of the impact of environmental pollution on vegetation and biodiversity
- Ecotoxicology and analysis of the effects of pollutants on natural ecosystems
- Use of bioindicators in environmental assessment
- Analysis of bioaccumulation of potentially toxic elements in ecosystems
- Use of GIS and modern technologies for ecosystem monitoring and analysis

The development of these research areas will be supported through the promotion of scientific projects, international collaborations, the establishment of thematic research groups and the involvement of students in research activities.

1. FOUNDATIONS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategic decisions of FLES are based on the historical, economic, and cultural characteristics of the Prizren region, as well as on the role of the University “Ukshin Hoti” Prizren in the academic, scientific, and economic development of the country.

- The headquarters of FLES is located in the city of Prizren, one of the most important historical and cultural centers of the Republic of Kosovo, known for its role in national history and for its tradition of economic, commercial, and cultural development.
- The community in which FLES operates is characterized by a developed tradition of economic activity and entrepreneurship, particularly in the sectors of agribusiness, agricultural production, and services. This socio-economic context creates important opportunities for the development of study programmes and cooperation with the private sector.
- The macro-environment of the Prizren region is characterized by linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity, which represents an important value for the development of an inclusive and intercultural academic environment.
- Currently, FLES offers two study programmes at the Bachelor level: Agribusiness and Forestry and Environmental Sciences.
- At the Master level, the Faculty offers the programme: Agribusiness Management.

- Additionally, the Master's programme in Forest Sciences and Forest Ecology is under evaluation by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (AKA).
- FLES has academic and laboratory infrastructure in accordance with the needs of teaching and scientific research, including teaching laboratories, research workspaces, and facilities for academic activities.
- The Faculty has developed international cooperation through agreements with universities and academic institutions abroad, contributing to the internationalization of teaching, scientific research, and the mobility of students and staff.
- The University Library and reading areas within the Faculty provide support for the teaching process and scientific research, while the literature fund is continuously enriched in accordance with the needs of the study programmes.
- FLES has established structured cooperation with the business community and the professional sector through the Industrial Advisory Board (IAB), which contributes to aligning study programmes with labour market requirements, developing professional practice, and implementing joint projects.

1.1. Mission

The Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences (FLES) has the mission to provide high-quality and standardized higher education, to develop scientific research and applicable innovation, and to prepare competent and competitive professionals for the labour market in the fields of agribusiness, agribusiness management, forestry and environmental sciences, as well as forest ecology. Through quality teaching, scientific research, cooperation with the public and private sectors, as well as international cooperation, FLES aims to contribute to the sustainable economic, environmental, and social development of the local, national, and broader community.

1.2. Vision

FLES aims to develop as an important center of education and scientific research in the fields of agribusiness, forestry, and environment, recognized at the national level and competitive at the regional level. The Faculty aims to contribute to the development of scientific knowledge, innovation, and sustainable solutions for the management of natural resources and the economic development of society.

In achieving this vision, the Faculty aims to focus on:

- increasing the quality of teaching and strengthening quality assurance systems;
- developing study programmes aligned with European standards and labour market requirements;

- strengthening laboratories, professional practice, and field-based learning;
- increasing research projects and scientific publications;
- strengthening internationalization through academic mobility, partnerships, and international networks;
- developing cooperation with industry, public institutions, non-governmental organizations, and the community;
- supporting students in professional practice, employment, and the development of entrepreneurial and innovative initiatives.

1.3. Values

The values on which the Strategic Plan 2025–2029 is based are oriented towards fulfilling the mission and vision of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences. FLES promotes and cultivates universal academic values that guide its activities in teaching, scientific research, and service to the community.

- **Academic freedom:** The Faculty supports and protects academic freedom, independent research, and the free exchange of ideas. In this context, academic dialogue, collegiality, and mutual respect for the perspectives and contributions of each member of the academic community are valued.
- **Quality and excellence:** The Faculty aims for high standards in teaching, scientific research, and service to society. Through the commitment of academic staff and students, FLES promotes a culture of quality and continuous institutional improvement.

- **Academic integrity:** The Faculty promotes honesty, responsibility, and professional ethics in all academic, research, and administrative activities.
- **Innovation and creativity:** FLES supports the development of innovative ideas, scientific research, and the application of knowledge to address contemporary challenges in the fields of agribusiness, forestry, and environment.
- **Cooperation and collegiality:** The Faculty promotes a culture of cooperation among academic staff, students, public institutions, the private sector, and international partners.
- **Diversity and inclusion:** FLES respects and promotes cultural, ethnic, linguistic, gender, and socio-economic diversity, building an inclusive and equitable academic environment for all.
- **Effectiveness and institutional responsibility:** The Faculty aims for transparent and efficient management of human, financial, and infrastructural resources in support of sustainable institutional development.
- **Academic and professional development:** FLES supports the continuous professional development of academic and administrative staff, as **well as the personal and academic growth of students.**

1.4. Stakeholders

FLES plans its strategic development for the period 2025–2029 based on continuous cooperation and interaction with stakeholders involved in the academic, research, and developmental activities of the Faculty.



Academic Staff

Academic staff constitutes the main carrier of the teaching process and scientific research activities at the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences. This group includes full-time professors, engaged professors, assistants, and research associates. Full-time academic staff are categorized according to academic ranks as associate professors, assistant professors, and assistants. Through teaching, scientific research, and engagement in development projects, academic staff contribute to fulfilling the mission and strategic objectives of FLES.

Administrative and Technical Staff

Administrative and technical staff constitute internal stakeholders who perform the operational and technical functions of FLES.

- Faculty Secretary
- Student Services Officers (Bachelor and Master)
- Librarian
- Technical staff

FLES Management

The Faculty management represents the leadership structure responsible for managing, developing, and ensuring the smooth functioning of academic and research processes at the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences. This structure includes:

- Dean
- Faculty Council
- Quality Council

Students

Students are the primary beneficiaries of the knowledge creation and transfer process at FLES. This stakeholder group includes local and international students, including full-time students and employed students. Students are an active part of the academic community and contribute to the development of the Faculty through participation in the teaching process, research activities, professional practice, and representation in Faculty bodies.

Alumni (Graduated Students)

Alumni represent graduates of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences who continue to maintain connections with the Faculty after completing their studies. Through their professional and academic experience, alumni contribute to strengthening the Faculty's cooperation with the external community, identifying labour market needs, and creating opportunities for professional practice and employment for current students.

Business Community

The business community is a strategic stakeholder for the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences. This community includes representatives of industry, enterprises, and local and international businesses operating in the sectors of agribusiness, agriculture, forestry, and environment. FLES cooperates with the business community through the Industrial Advisory Board (IAB), which contributes to aligning study programmes with labour

market requirements, developing professional practice, and implementing joint projects.

Local and Central Government Authorities

Government authorities at the local and central levels represent an important stakeholder in the development and implementation of the Faculty’s strategy. This category includes public institutions responsible for education policies, rural development, environment, and economy, as well as local governance institutions of the Prizren region. Cooperation with these institutions contributes to aligning academic and research activities with public policies and the developmental needs of the country.

External Academic and Scientific Community

The academic and scientific community consists of academic partners and research institutions with which the Faculty cooperates at the national and international levels. This category includes partner universities, related faculties, research institutes, and other education and research institutions. This cooperation contributes to the development of joint research projects, academic mobility of students and staff, and the internationalization of the Faculty’s academic activities.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

Structure of Active Students

The number of active students at FLES has shown a stable trend of enrollment in study programmes in recent years. The Agribusiness programme has the highest number of enrolled students, while the Forestry and Environmental Sciences programme has shown a gradual increase in interest in recent years. The Master’s study programme in Agribusiness Management has stabilized with a consistent number of students. Table 1 presents the number of active students by study programmes and academic years.

Table 1. Enrolled Students by Programme (2018–2025)

Study Programmes	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020*	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023	2023/ 2024	2024/ 2025
Agribusiness	48	0	49	42	66	79	80
Forestry and Environmental Sciences	49	0	39	26	33	50	50
Agribusiness Management	/	/	/	15	15	15	15

Note: In the academic year 2019/2020, the number of students is 0 due to the lack of institutional accreditation.



Figure 1 presents the trend in the number of active students, reflecting a clear upward trend. After the decline in the academic year 2019/2020 due to the lack of institutional accreditation, FLES shows a rapid recovery and continuous growth, reaching 584 students in the academic year 2024/2025. This reflects increased interest and the consolidation of institutional capacities.

Figure 1 Number of Active Students (2018–2025)

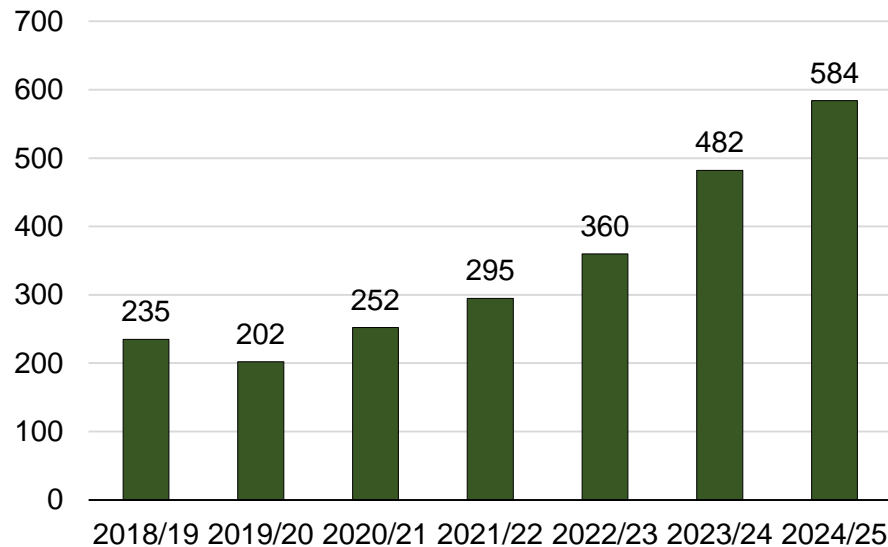
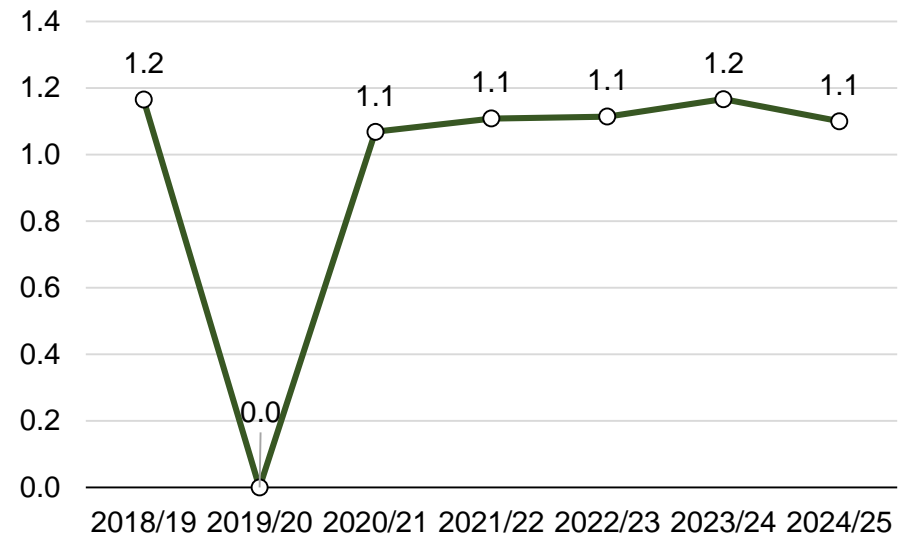


Figure 2 reflects the ratio of applicants to admitted students in FLES programmes, where it is observed that this ratio has stabilized at the level of 1.1–1.2 after 2020, indicating steady demand for the study programmes. The zero value in the academic year 2019/2020 is related to the lack of institutional accreditation.

Figure 2 Applicants/Admitted Students Ratio (2018–2025)



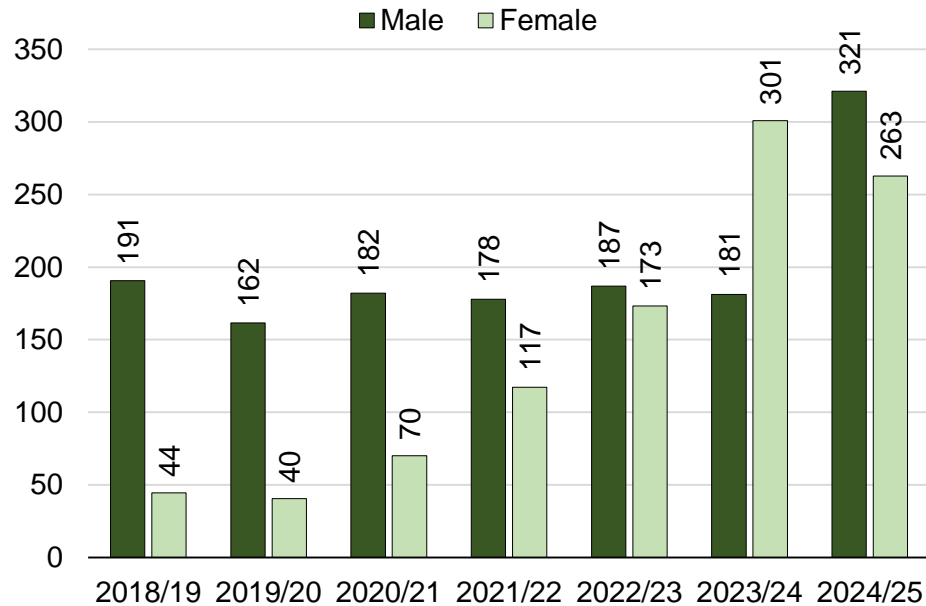
Gender Structure of Students

The analysis of the gender structure of students at FLES (Figure 3) shows a stable balance between genders, reflecting fair and inclusive representation across all study programmes. The participation of women in programmes traditionally associated with the agricultural and environmental sectors is particularly important, as it contributes to promoting gender equality in strategic sectors of economic development.

This balanced structure represents a positive indicator of equal access to higher education and the attractiveness of the Faculty’s programmes for both genders.



Figure 3 Number of Active Students by Gender (2018–2025)

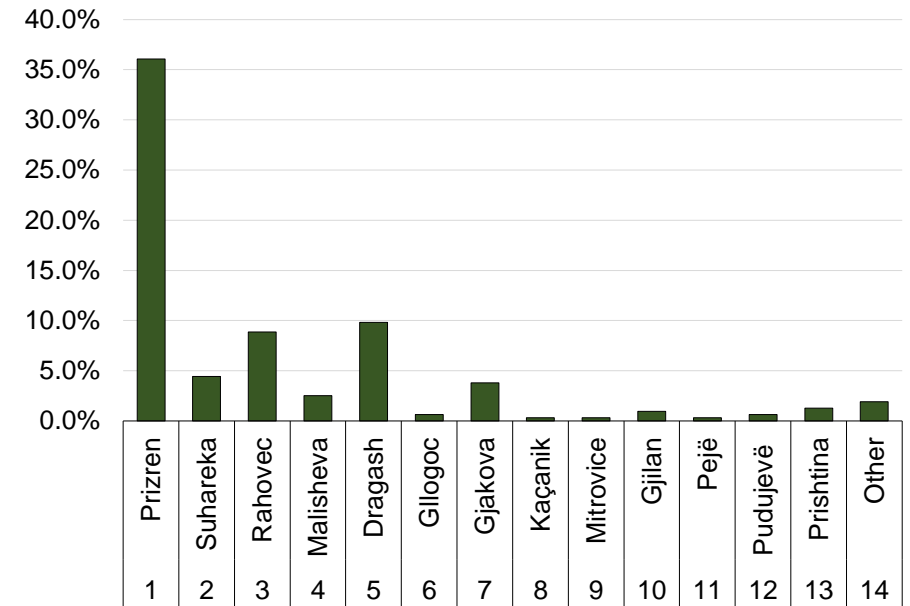


Structure of Students by Municipality

The analysis of students' origin shows that the majority of FLES students come from the Prizren region and surrounding municipalities. In the academic year 2024/2025 (Figure 4), the largest share of students comes from the municipality of Prizren (36.1%), while a considerable representation also comes from other municipalities such as: Dragash (9.8%), Rahovec (8.9%), Suhareka (4.4%), Malisheva (2.5%), Gjakova (1.6%), and Prishtina (1.3%).

This geographical distribution indicates a regional concentration, but also a gradual expansion at the national level, demonstrating potential for further growth of the student base.

Figure 4 Number of Active Students by Municipality (2018–2025)



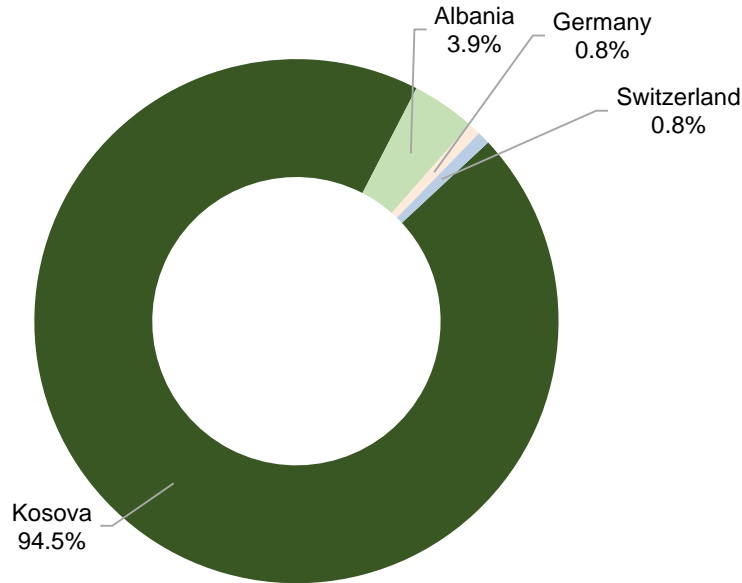
Structure of Students by Country of Origin

The structure of students by country of origin (Figure 5) shows that the vast majority of FLES students come from the Republic of Kosovo, while a small but important proportion comes from the northern region of Albania (approximately 3.9%) and from other countries. This distribution reflects the role of the Faculty as a primarily national center of higher education, while at the same time as an institution with cross-border influence within the Albanian-speaking region. The presence of students from



outside Kosovo indicates the increasing attractiveness of the study programmes and the potential for further internationalization of the institution.

Figure 5 Students by Country of Origin (in percentage)

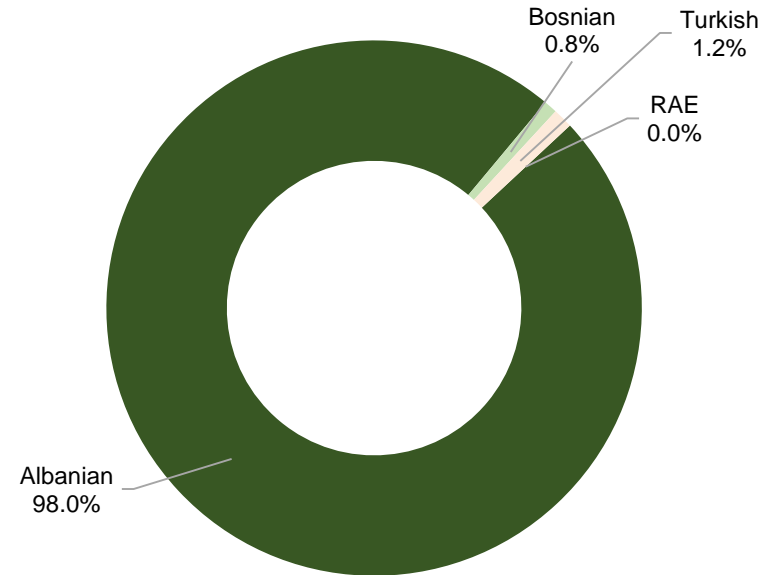


Ethnic Structure of Students

The ethnic structure of students at FLES is predominantly Albanian. However, Bosniak and Turkish communities are also represented at the Faculty, reflecting the inclusive character of the institution.

Students from all communities and religious backgrounds have equal rights to enroll and pursue studies in the programmes offered by FLES.

Figure 6 Students by Ethnic Affiliation (in percentage)



Structure of Graduates and Study Dropout

The number of graduates at FLES has shown progressive growth in line with the development of study programmes. Figure 7 shows a generally increasing trend in the number of graduates at FLES during the period 2018–2025. After a very low level in the academic year 2018/2019 (2 graduates), the number increases significantly in subsequent years, reaching a peak in the academic year 2024/2025 with 47 graduates

Figure 7 Number of Graduates at FLES (2018–2025)

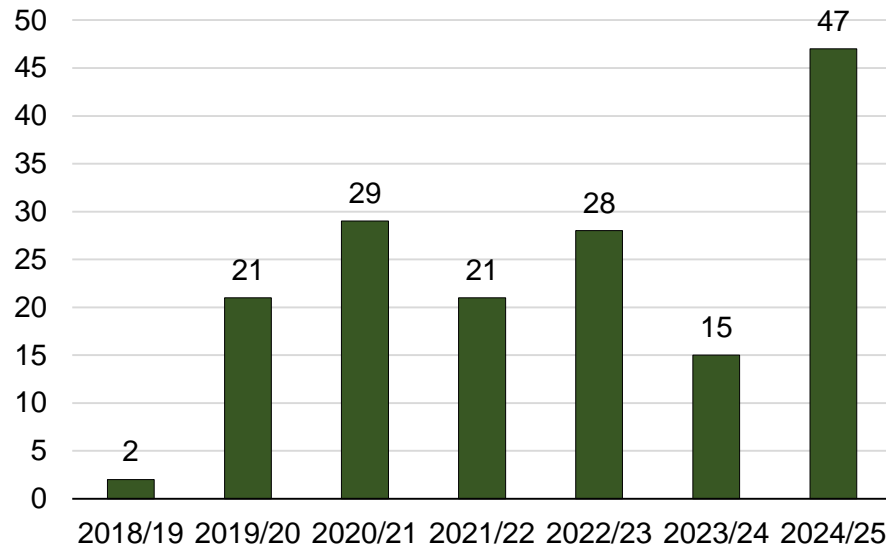
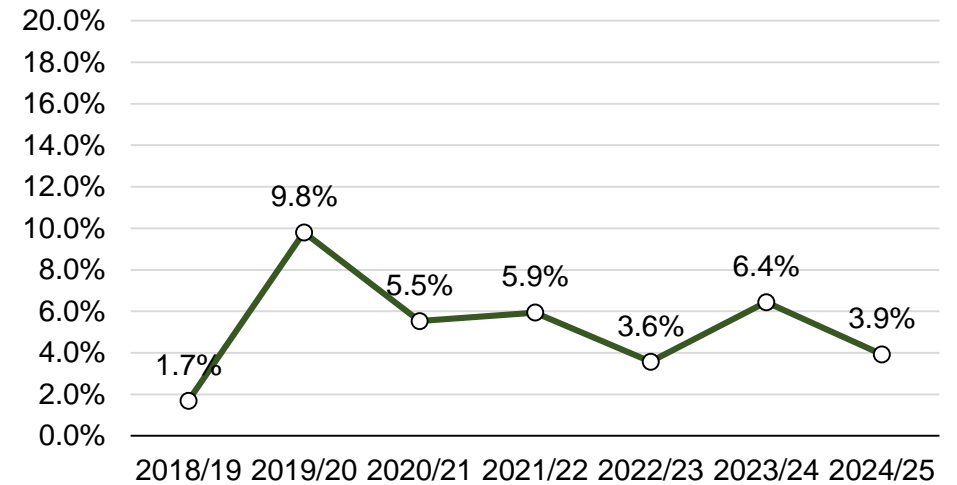


Figure 8 shows that the student dropout rate at FLES remains relatively low during the period 2018–2025, fluctuating mainly between 3% and 6%. A temporary increase is observed in the academic year 2019/20 (9.8%), while in subsequent years the rate stabilizes at lower levels.

This trend indicates a gradual improvement in student retention within the study process and suggests that the Faculty has managed to create a relatively supportive environment for students. However, dropout levels remain present and are mainly related to factors beyond direct institutional control, such as personal reasons, economic difficulties, or international migration.

Figure 8 Student Dropout Rate (2018–2025)



Research Performance of Academic Staff

Figure 9 presents the number of publications of the academic staff of FLES up to September 2025, reflecting a considerable level of research activity. The data indicate 84 publications indexed in Web of Science, 99 publications in Scopus, and 238 publications recorded in Google Scholar.

This distribution shows that a significant portion of the scientific output is indexed in well-known international databases, demonstrating the quality and internationalization of research at the Faculty. The higher number of publications in Google Scholar reflects a broader range of academic output, including publications in journals and conferences that are not necessarily indexed in WoS and Scopus.

Overall, these indicators suggest a strong research potential and a solid foundation for further improving the quality and scientific impact of FLES academic staff.

Figure 9 Number of Publications of FLES Staff (September 2025)

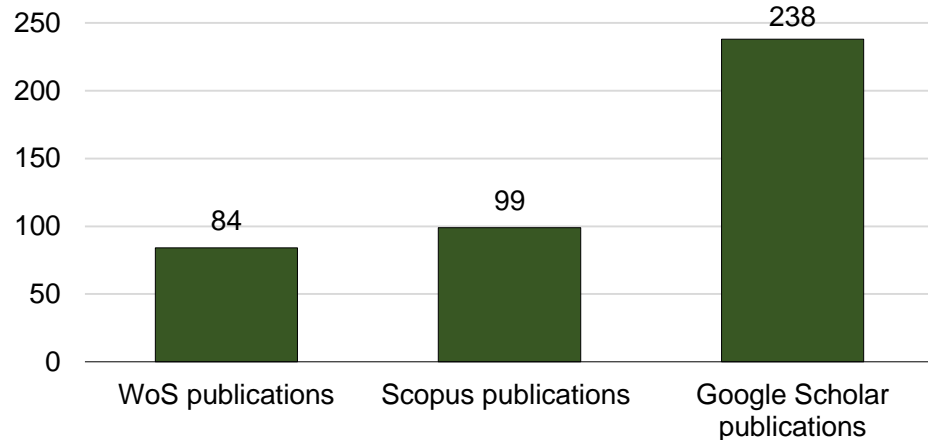
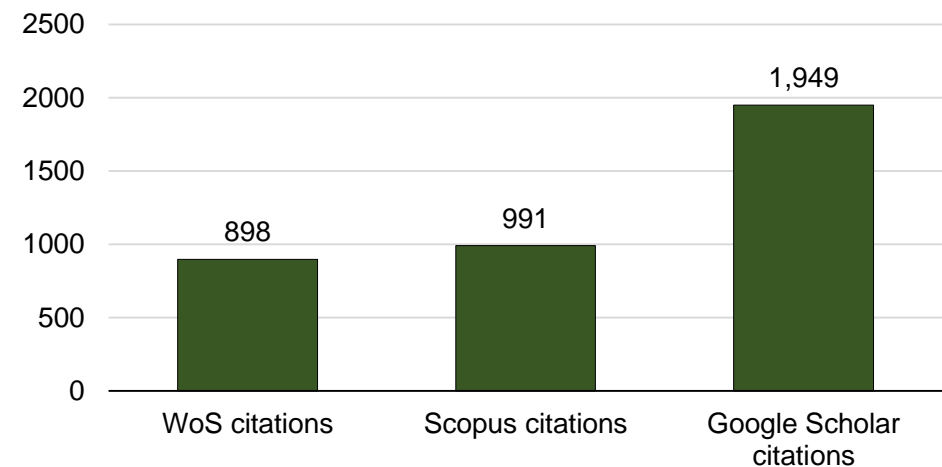


Figure 10 presents the number of citations of the academic staff of FLES up to September 2025, reflecting the scientific impact of publications. The data indicate 898 citations in Web of Science, 991 in Scopus, and 1,949 in Google Scholar.

The higher number of citations in Google Scholar reflects the broader coverage of this platform, while citations in WoS and Scopus demonstrate the presence and impact of research in internationally indexed journals.

Overall, these indicators suggest a good level of visibility and academic impact, reflecting the gradual improvement in the quality and relevance of scientific research at FLES.

Figure 10 Number of Citations of FLES Staff (September 2025)



Academic and Administrative Human Capacities

Figure 11 presents the structure of academic staff at FLES for the year 2025. The data show that the academic staff is dominated by associate professors (7), while the number of assistant professors and assistants is more limited (2 in each category). This structure reflects a relatively consolidated academic base with considerable experience, but at the same time indicates the need to strengthen the new academic generation to ensure continuity and long-term development of teaching and research capacities.

Figure 12 presents the structure of administrative and technical staff, which appears to be limited in number. Specifically, the Faculty has one secretary, one student services officer, and one trainee, while the category “others” includes 2 employees. This indicates a functional administrative structure.

Figure 11 Academic Staff of FLES (2025)

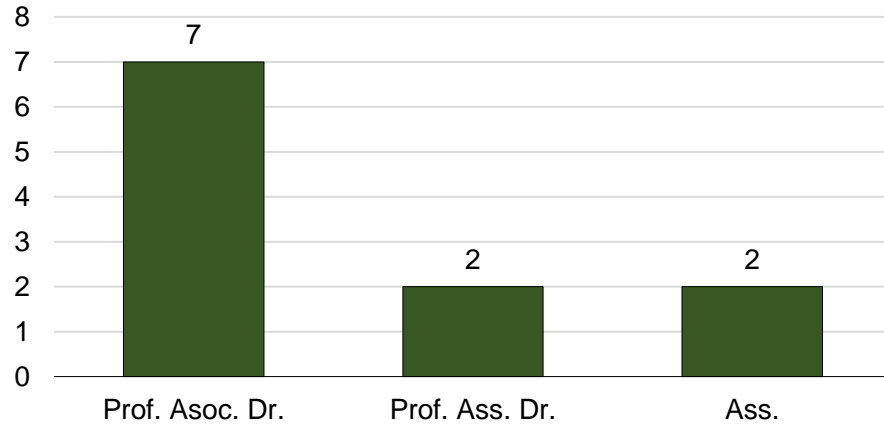
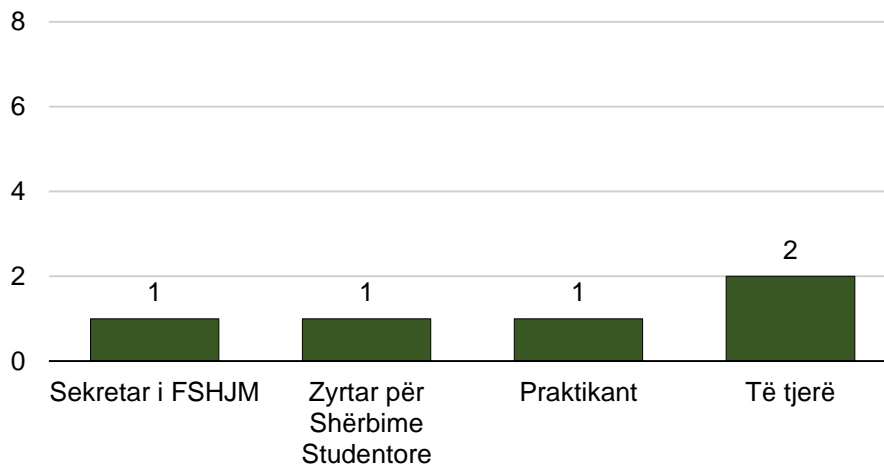


Figure 12 Administrative and Technical Staff of FLES (2025)



Overall, the human capacities of FLES are characterized by an experienced academic staff and a relatively limited administrative staff, suggesting the need for further balancing and strengthening of human resources in line with institutional development.

3. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Strategic Plan 2025–2029 represents the main guiding document for the development of FLES in the medium term and has been drafted in accordance with the strategic priorities of the University “Ukshin Hoti”, as well as consultations and recommendations from stakeholders.

FLES aims to develop and advance the quality of teaching, scientific research, and cooperation with the community, in line with higher education standards and European best practices. In this context, FLES promotes synergy between the education process and scientific research, considering this interaction as a key factor for academic and institutional development.

This strategic plan identifies the strategic objectives of FLES, taking into account the institutional, academic, and scientific context, as well as labour market demands. FLES aims to strengthen its role as a higher education institution in the fields of agribusiness, forestry, and environment, contributing to the sustainable development of society and the economy.

Within this plan, the expected results for each strategic objective have also been identified, defining the key performance indicators that will be used to monitor and evaluate progress in achieving the Faculty’s objectives.

This strategic plan includes the Action Plan, which defines concrete activities, measures for the implementation of strategic objectives, timelines, responsible units for their implementation, and the necessary resources.



EXPECTED RESULTS

The Strategic Plan 2025–2029 of FLES has identified the following strategic objectives:



Strengths

- Study programmes oriented towards the labour market
- Dynamic academic staff with international professional experience
- Developed network of international cooperation
- Focus on developing students' practical skills
- Active cooperation with the business community
- Good cooperation and coordination among academic staff
- Effective administrative and support services
- Infrastructure supporting the teaching process and research

Weaknesses

- Relatively limited number of full-time academic staff
- Limited financial support for scientific research
- Relatively low level of international mobility
- Limited laboratory and equipment capacities
- Limited number of women in academic staff
- Limited publications in international scientific journals
- Limited resources for international research projects
- Low participation in international research projects
- Low representation of women in academic and administrative

Opportunities

- Increased interest of high school graduates in studying at FLES
- Development of new study programmes in interdisciplinary fields
- Cooperation with public institutions and the private sector for the development of research projects and professional practice
- Increased opportunities for funding through international projects
- Opportunities for the development of start-ups and entrepreneurship
- Strengthening the institutional capacities of FLES
- Potential for increasing the productivity of scientific publications
- Opportunities for cooperation in joint projects with international academic institutions

RISKS

- Strong competition from private universities
- Youth emigration and declining student numbers
- Relatively low youth employment rate
- High dependence on public funding
- Financial constraints for infrastructure development and scientific research
- Competition from other domestic universities
- Rapid technological changes requiring continuous investment in infrastructure and equipment
- Increasing level of complacency

4. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Strategic Plan of FLES for the period 2025–2029 is based on a framework of seven (7) strategic objectives, which are aligned with the development strategy of the University “Ukshin Hoti” and with European higher education standards.

These objectives aim to advance academic quality, develop scientific research, internationalize academic activities, modernize infrastructure, and increase the Faculty’s impact on the economic and social development of the country.

The strategic objectives of the FLES Strategic Plan are:

- Advancement of the quality of academic teaching
- Strengthening scientific research and innovation
- Internationalization and institutional cooperation
- Advancement of infrastructure and digitalization
- Development of academic and administrative staff
- Linkage with the labour market and the community
- Building capacities for financial sustainability

These strategic objectives are further elaborated into expected results and concrete activities aimed at the sustainable development of the Faculty during the period 2025–2029.

4.1. Advancement of the Quality of Academic Teaching

Within this strategic objective, FLES has defined the following expected results:

- **Expected Result 4.1.1:** Strengthening the quality assurance system in the teaching process through the implementation of procedures and mechanisms defined by the University “Ukshin Hoti”;
- **Expected Result 4.1.2:** Implementation of contemporary teaching methods and competency-based learning through the use of interactive methods, practical work, and digital technologies;
- **Expected Result 4.1.3:** Organization of study visits, professional practice, and field activities in cooperation with public institutions and the private sector;
- **Expected Result 4.1.4:** Updating syllabi for all courses, reflecting contemporary pedagogical approaches, modern scientific literature, and the integration of scientific research into the teaching process;
- **Expected Result 4.1.5:** Development and application for accreditation of new study programmes in priority fields of life and environmental sciences;

- **Expected Result 4.1.6:** Recruitment of new academic and administrative staff in accordance with the needs of study programmes and the institutional development of the Faculty;
- **Expected Result 4.1.7:** Gradual development of modules and study programmes in English to increase internationalization and the attractiveness of the Faculty for international students.

4.2 Strengthening Scientific Research and Innovation

This objective aims to develop the Faculty's research capacities and increase scientific contribution in the fields of agribusiness, forestry, and environment. Expected results:

- **Expected Result 4.2.1:** Establishment and operationalization of the Institute of Life and Environmental Sciences as a research center for the development of scientific projects and international cooperation.
- **Expected Result 4.2.2:** Support for scientific research in the fields of agribusiness, natural resource management, forestry, biodiversity, and environmental monitoring.
- **Expected Result 4.2.3:** Increase in the number and quality of scientific publications of academic staff in internationally indexed journals.
- **Expected Result 4.2.4:** Development of joint research projects with universities and research institutes within and outside the country.

- **Expected Result 4.2.5:** Active involvement of Bachelor and Master level students in research projects and scientific activities.
- **Expected Result 4.2.6:** Establishment and development of a university botanical garden for teaching, scientific research, and environmental education.
- **Expected Result 4.2.7:** Development of thematic research centers in the Faculty's priority areas, such as biodiversity, environmental monitoring, GIS, and natural resource management.
- **Expected Result 4.2.8:** Development of institutional capacities for initiating and accrediting doctoral (PhD) study programmes in the Faculty's priority areas, in accordance with national and international higher education standards.

4.3. Internationalization and Institutional Cooperation

This objective aims to increase international cooperation and integrate the Faculty into European academic and research networks. Expected results:

- **Expected Result 4.3.1:** Expansion of the network of cooperation agreements with international universities and research institutes.
- **Expected Result 4.3.2:** Increase in the mobility of academic staff through international exchange programmes and academic projects.
- **Expected Result 4.3.3:** Increase in student mobility through exchange programmes and joint studies.

- **Expected Result 4.3.4:** Engagement of international professors and experts in teaching and research activities at the Faculty.
- **Expected Result 4.3.5:** Development of long-term strategic partnerships with international academic and research institutions.

4.4. Advancement of Infrastructure and Digitalization

This objective aims to modernize academic infrastructure and develop digital systems that support teaching and scientific research. Expected results:

- **Expected Result 4.4.1:** Equipment and modernization of existing laboratories, including soil, microbiology, and environmental monitoring laboratories.
- **Expected Result 4.4.2:** Establishment of a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) laboratory for teaching and scientific research.
- **Expected Result 4.4.3:** Modernization of teaching and laboratory spaces in accordance with contemporary academic standards.
- **Expected Result 4.4.4:** Development of digital infrastructure and online platforms to support the teaching process.

4.5. Development of Academic and Administrative Staff

This objective aims to enhance the professional capacities of the Faculty's academic and administrative staff. Expected results:

- **Expected Result 4.5.1:** Enhancement of professional and pedagogical capacities of academic staff through training and professional development.

- **Expected Result 4.5.2:** Implementation of transparent mechanisms for evaluating the performance of academic and administrative staff.
- **Expected Result 4.5.3:** Creation of equal opportunities for career advancement based on meritocracy and performance.
- **Expected Result 4.5.4:** Improvement of managerial, organizational, and digital competences of administrative staff.

4.6. Linkage with the Labour Market and the Community

This objective aims to strengthen the Faculty's connection with the labour market and the community. Expected results:

- **Expected Result 4.6.1:** Organization of joint activities with the community and public institutions.
- **Expected Result 4.6.2:** Strengthening partnerships with the public sector, private sector, and civil society organizations.
- **Expected Result 4.6.3:** Development and implementation of professional internship schemes for students.
- **Expected Result 4.6.4:** Establishment of the FLES Alumni network and development of a system for tracking graduates' careers to assess the impact of study programmes on the labour market.

4.7. Building Capacities for Financial Sustainability

This objective aims to enhance the financial sustainability of the Faculty through the diversification of financial resources.

Expected results:

- **Result 7.1:** Generation of own revenues through professional services and laboratory analyses.
- **Result 7.2:** Increased participation in research projects funded by the European Union and international organizations.
- **Result 7.3:** Knowledge transfer and commercialization of scientific research results through cooperation with the private sector and the provision of professional services and laboratory expertise.

5. ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

The Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences carries out its activities in the building of the University “Ukshin Hoti” in Prizren. The current academic infrastructure is organized into spaces for teaching, scientific research, administration, and student support. The total usable area of the Faculty is approximately 3,134 m², which includes classrooms, laboratories, offices, administrative spaces, and study areas.

This infrastructure supports the implementation of study programmes in the fields of agribusiness, forestry, and

environment, as well as the development of research and professional activities of the Faculty.

Table 2. Existing Infrastructure and Planned Development

No.	Infrastructure Unit	Number	Area
1	Classrooms	6	649 m ²
2	Amphitheatre and Library	1	251 m ²
3	IT Laboratory	1	50 m ²
4	Offices for Academic Staff	6	231 m ²
5	Professors’ Room	1	75 m ²
6	Faculty Management Office	1	—
7	Offices for Administrative Staff	2	48 m ²
8	Nature and Biodiversity Laboratory	1	100 m ²
9	Other Teaching and Research Laboratories	5	270 m ²

Note: Total infrastructure area: 3,134 m²

Within the Strategic Plan 2025–2029, FLES aims to advance academic and research infrastructure through: Modernizimit të laboratorëve ekzistues;

- Modernization of existing laboratories;
- Equipping laboratories with contemporary equipment for environmental and biological analyses;
- Development of the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) laboratory;
- Strengthening digital capacities for teaching and scientific research



Parku i
Qyetetit

3,134 m²

6 Classrooms

1 Amphitheatre

**1 Library
1 IT Laboratory**

**6 Offices for
Academic Staff
1 Professors' Room**

**1 Faculty
Management Office**

**2 Offices for
Administrative Staff
1 IT Offices**

**1 Office for the
Innovation and
Employment Center**

**1 Office for the
Innovation
1 Office of the
Governing Council**



6. ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan 2025–2029 represents the operational instrument for the implementation of the strategic objectives of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences. This plan includes expected results, key activities, implementation measures, responsible institutional units, timelines, and estimated financial costs. The Action Plan has been developed in alignment with the Faculty's strategic objectives, the orientations of the Strategic Plan of the University "Ukshin Hoti", as well as with the recommendations of

international experts for improving academic quality, developing scientific research, internationalization, digitalization, and strengthening the link with the labour market.

The implementation of this plan will be periodically monitored by the responsible structures of the Faculty, in cooperation with the relevant bodies of the University, in order to ensure the achievement of strategic objectives and the efficient use of human, infrastructural, and financial resources.

No.	Expected Results	Activities	Measures	Responsible Bodies	Timeline	Cost (Euro)
Strategic Objective 1: Advancement of the Quality of Academic Teaching						
1.1	Strengthening the quality assurance system in the teaching process	Conducting student surveys and monitoring teaching	Preparation of periodic reports and improvement of the teaching process	Dean, Vice-Dean, Quality Assurance Committee	2025–2029	0
1.2	Implementation of contemporary teaching methods	Training for academic staff in modern teaching methods	Application in professional development programmes	Faculty Council, Senate	2025–2029	0
1.3	Organization of study visits and field practice	Organizing visits to public institutions and private companies	Preparation of activity plans and organization of transport	FLES, institutional partners	2025–2029	3,000
1.4	Updating syllabi and alignment with learning outcomes	Review of course content and literature	Integration of contemporary pedagogical approaches	Academic staff	2025–2029	0
1.5	Development and accreditation of new study programmes	Feasibility study and programme design	Application for accreditation to KAA	FLES, Senate, Governing Council	2025–2029	100,000
1.6	Recruitment of new academic and administrative staff	Announcement of vacancies for academic and technical staff	Selection and engagement of staff	University, FLES	2025–2029	150,000

1.7	Gradual development of modules and study programmes in English	Identification of courses that can be offered in English	Preparation of syllabi and staff training	FLES, University	2025–2029	0
Strategic Objective 2: Strengthening Scientific Research and Innovation						
2.1	Establishment of the Institute of Life and Environmental Sciences	Equipping laboratories and training staff	Accreditation and licensing of laboratories	FLES, University	2025–2029	150,000
2.2	Support for scientific research	Creation of research groups and scientific projects	Support for scientific activities	FLES	2025–2029	0
2.3	Increase in scientific publications	Training in research methodology and use of databases	Creation of a support platform for research	FLES, academic partners	2025–2029	5,000
2.4	Development of joint research projects	Establishment of thematic groups and collaborative projects	Preparation of regulations for projects	Academic staff	2025–2029	0
2.5	Involvement of students in scientific research	Participation in conferences and projects	Selection of research topics and locations	Academic staff, students	2025–2029	0
2.7	Development of thematic research centers in priority areas	Identification of priority research areas	Establishment of research groups and thematic projects	FLES	2025–2029	0
2.8	Development of capacities for doctoral programmes	Feasibility analysis and identification of priority fields	Development of programme concept and preparation for accreditation	FLES, University	2025–2028	0
Strategic Objective 3: Internationalization and Institutional Cooperation						
3.1	Expansion of international agreements	Signing new cooperation agreements	Organization of joint activities	FLES	2025–2029	0
3.2	Academic staff mobility	Academic exchanges with partner universities	Organization of joint lectures	FLES	2025–2029	0
3.3	Student mobility	Participation in international programmes	Use of existing agreements	FLES	2025–2029	0

3.4	Engagement of international professors	Organization of intensive lectures and special modules	Selection of partner universities	FLES	2025–2029	0
3.5	Long-term institutional cooperation	Analysis of partnerships and development of strategies	Monitoring of joint activities	FLES	2025–2029	0
Strategic Objective 4: Advancement of Infrastructure and Digitalization						
4.1	Modernization of laboratories and teaching spaces	Equipping laboratories and classrooms with modern equipment	Investments in laboratories and equipment	FLES, University	2025–2029	90,000
4.2	Establishment of GIS laboratory	Procurement of GIS equipment and software	Preparation of equipment list and procurement	FLES	2025–2029	20,000
4.3	Modernization of teaching spaces	Digital equipment and computers in classrooms	Procurement and installation procedures	FLES	2025–2029	20,000
4.4	Development of digital infrastructure	Improvement of internet and online platforms	Monitoring and maintenance of systems	FLES	2025–2029	10,000
Strategic Objective 5: Development of Academic and Administrative Staff						
5.1	Enhancement of professional capacities of staff	Pedagogical and methodological training	Annual professional development plan	FLES	2025–2029	15,000
5.2	Transparent performance evaluation	Use of performance indicators	Periodic evaluation reports	FLES	2025–2029	0
5.3	Merit-based career advancement	Development of clear promotion criteria	Decisions based on performance	FLES	2025–2029	0
5.4	Development of administrative staff	Training in services and management	Annual development plan	FLES	2025–2029	5,000
Strategic Objective 6: Linkage with the Labour Market and the Community						
6.1	Community engagement activities	Organization of trainings and awareness campaigns	Development of community engagement strategy	FLES	2025–2029	0

6.2	Partnerships with public and private sector	Signing cooperation agreements	Establishment of office for industry cooperation	FLES	2025–2029	0
6.3	Professional internships for students	Cooperation with employers	Identification of companies and institutions	FLES	2025–2029	0
6.4	Establishment of Alumni network and career tracking	Creation of alumni database	Organization of meetings and alumni surveys	FLES	2025–2029	0
Strategic Objective 7: Linkage with the Labour Market and the Community						
7.1	Generation of own revenues	Activation of laboratories for analyses	Equipment provision and research staff engagement	FLES	2025–2029	5,000
7.2	Increase in international projects	Application to EU programmes and research projects	Formation of project application teams	FLES	2025–2029	0
7.3	Knowledge transfer and commercialization of research results	Development of professional services and laboratory expertise	Cooperation with private sector and public institutions	FLES	2025–2029	0

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The implementation of the Strategic Plan 2025–2029 of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences will be continuously monitored to ensure the effective achievement of strategic objectives and to guarantee the continuous improvement of institutional performance. Monitoring of the strategy implementation will be carried out in accordance with the institutional mechanisms of the University “Ukshin Hoti” for quality assurance and strategic management. The monitoring process will include the following key elements:

7.1. Periodic Progress Reporting

Responsible units within the Faculty will prepare periodic reports on the progress of the implementation of planned activities and results within the Strategic Plan. The reports will analyze the level of achievement of strategic objectives and identify challenges or needs for improvement.

7.2. Annual Evaluation of Strategy Implementation

Each academic year, a comprehensive evaluation of the progress of the Strategic Plan will be conducted, including the analysis of performance indicators, achieved results, and recommendations for further improvement.

7.3. Role of Institutional Structures

The monitoring of the Strategic Plan will be the responsibility of the governing structures of the Faculty and the University, including:

- The Dean and Faculty management
- The Faculty Council
- The Quality Assurance Committee
- The University Quality Assurance Office

These structures will ensure coordination of activities, analysis of progress, and alignment of strategic actions with the institutional priorities of the University.

7.4. Continuous Improvement

The results of monitoring and evaluation will be used to improve academic and administrative processes, identify new development priorities, and adapt strategic activities to the needs of the Faculty and the labour market. In this way, the Strategic Plan will function as a dynamic instrument for the sustainable institutional development of the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences.

8. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI)

In order to assess the progress and effectiveness of the implementation of the Strategic Plan, the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences has defined a set of performance indicators (KPI), which will enable the objective measurement of

the achievement of strategic objectives. These indicators will be used for systematic monitoring of progress and for institutional reporting within the framework of quality assurance mechanisms.

Table 3 Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

Strategic Objective	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
Advancement of the Quality of Academic Teaching	Number of revised and updated study programmes; number of newly accredited programmes; student evaluation results of teaching; percentage of staff with doctoral qualifications; use of innovative teaching methods
Strengthening Scientific Research and Innovation	Number of scientific publications in indexed journals (Scopus/WoS); number of funded research projects; number of conferences and scientific activities; number of citations and h-index; inter-institutional research collaborations
Internationalization and Institutional Cooperation	Number of international agreements; number of staff and student mobilities (Erasmus+ and other programmes); number of engaged international professors; number of international projects; participation in international academic networks
Advancement of Infrastructure and Digitalization	Number of modernized laboratories; investments in laboratory and IT equipment; development and use of digital learning platforms; level of digitalization of administrative processes; percentage of courses offered in blended/online formats
Development of Academic and Administrative Staff	Number of trainings and professional development activities; number of academic promotions (scientific titles); participation in international activities; percentage of staff trained in advanced teaching and research methods; staff satisfaction
Linkage with the Labour Market and the Community	Number of agreements with businesses and public institutions; number of student internships; percentage of graduates employed within 6–12 months; number of community engagement activities (workshops, trainings, projects); involvement of external stakeholders in curriculum development
Building Capacities for Financial Sustainability	Level of faculty own revenues; number of donor-funded projects; diversification of funding sources; efficiency in budget management; investments in institutional development

9. Conclusions

The Strategic Plan 2025–2029 of FLES represents a guiding document for the medium-term development of the Faculty and for strengthening its role in the higher education and scientific research system in Kosovo and beyond. Through this strategic plan, the Faculty aims to further develop its academic, research, and institutional capacities, focusing on improving the quality of study programmes, strengthening scientific research, internationalizing academic activities, developing infrastructure, and enhancing cooperation with the labour market and the community.

The strategic objectives defined in this document are aligned with the development priorities of the University “Ukshin Hoti” and with European higher education standards. Through the implementation of the Action Plan and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, the Faculty aims to ensure effective implementation of planned activities and continuous improvement of institutional performance.

In this context, the Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences aims to consolidate its position as a modern academic and research center in the fields of life sciences, forestry, agribusiness, and environment, contributing to the sustainable economic and social development of the country.

The implementation of this strategic plan requires the commitment and cooperation of all institutional stakeholders, including academic and administrative staff, students,

institutional partners, and the wider community. Through a collaborative and results-oriented approach, the Faculty aims to create an innovative and competitive academic environment that contributes to the advancement of knowledge and the preparation of professionals capable of addressing the challenges of sustainable development.