ΔΗΜΟΚΡΙΤΕΙΟ ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΘΡΑΚΗΣ
DEMOCRITUS UNIVERSITY OF THRACE

DUTH at the crossroads of Europe and Asia
Connecting worlds

Strategic Plan
DEMOCRITUS UNIVERSITY OF THRACE
2025-2028

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FOREWORD

The Strategic Plan serves as a guiding framework for the future of the Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH), reinforcing its commitment to high quality education, impactful research, and social responsiveness. This plan is designed to evolve continuously, ensuring that the university adapts to the ever-changing needs of society while maintaining quality in teaching, research, and societal engagement.

A FEW WORDS FROM THE RECTOR

It is with great pride and a deep sense of purpose that I present our **Strategic Roadmap 2025–2028**. This roadmap is the result of a collective endeavour, involving our university community, professors, students and administrative staff, as well as our partners in both the private and the public sector. Their contributions have helped shape our new vision and drive our shared commitment to the future. Thanks to them, this roadmap is not only a framework for progress; it is a declaration of our ambition to strengthen our role in the region we serve and to amplify our presence on the national and international stage.

DUTH stands at a pivotal moment in its history. Following a successful merger that expanded both our academic departments and our student community by 30%, we are today the only Higher Education Institution in Eastern Macedonia & Thrace. With this roadmap, we set out how we will build on that unique position — reimagining how we engage with the world around us, enhancing the quality and impact of our research and teaching. Our transformation is symbolised by **our ambition to become a bridge between Europe and Asia.**

Our goals are both bold and clearly focused:

- In **education**, we are committed to transforming the student experience. We want every student to have the tools, the environment, and the opportunities they need to thrive—both during their time at DUTH and well beyond graduation. That means modernizing curricula, fostering interdisciplinary learning, welcoming international students, and investing in state-of-the-art infrastructure.
- In **research**, we aim to deepen our relevance and impact. Our focus is on creating knowledge that serves society—locally, nationally, and globally. We are designing and building support systems that enable our researchers to better address regional challenges, connect with local communities, and share their discoveries more effectively. We are also expanding international partnerships and joint initiatives, notably through our active participation in the European alliance **EMERGE**.
- **Operationally**, we are working to make our University more efficient, collaborative, and forward-looking. Better communication, improved digital infrastructure, and new ways to engage with local and global partners will be key drivers of this transformation. We are also exploring new funding models to ensure that our growth is sustainable.

This roadmap is grounded in dialogue—with our academic community and with the society we serve. It is not an abstract vision; it is a call to action, built on achievable steps and measurable goals.

Together, we are shaping the future of DUTH. I invite every member of our University—faculty, staff, students, and partners—to join us on this journey. Let us seize this moment to lead with courage, to innovate with purpose, and to build a university that inspires the next generation.

WHO WE ARE

The Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) is a truly unique institution, setting itself apart from other universities in Greece and beyond in several significant ways. Founded in 1973, Democritus University of Thrace is a public research university in Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, Greece, with nearly 30,000 active students, comprising 10 faculties and 28 departments across seven cities and ten campuses.

First and foremost, **DUTH is a comprehensive university**, distinguishing it from the more specialized institutions in Greece. DUTH offers a broad spectrum of academic disciplines, providing a diverse range of programs across the humanities, social sciences and sciences, and including professional fields such as agriculture, engineering, law, medicine and more. This allows us to cater to a wide variety of student interests and meet the dynamic needs of society.

DUTH is also uniquely positioned in the Eastern Macedonia and Thrace region, an area known for its **rich cultural and religious diversity**. This region is home to various cultural and religious minorities. In fact, one of the standout features of DUTH's Department of Medicine is its focus on the mental health of young minorities, a subject that is rarely studied in other major Greek cities like Athens or Thessaloniki. Additionally, the School of Education and the School of Humanities play a key role in minority education, focusing on teacher training and research related to diverse communities. Given the region's multicultural environment, DUTH offers a distinctive opportunity for research and graduate programs centered around these populations, allowing the university to lead in an area of significant academic and social importance.

DUTH is also notable for its **multi-campus structure**. Unlike many multi-campus universities where the main campus dominates, at DUTH, the main campus hosts less than 30%[1] of the total student body. Our resulting wide distribution of campuses across the region enables us to cater to the diverse needs of local communities. Each campus is specialized, focusing on specific fields of study, ensuring that we have the critical mass to meet the educational and vocational demands of the region as a whole. At the heart of our academic mission lies a strong emphasis on applied sciences, aligning our research and education with regional needs, particularly in sectors critical to local development. This sets it apart from nearly all other universities, not only in Greece but around the world[2].

A further interesting and unique aspect of DUTH is its **integration of campuses that were once part of the International Hellenic University (and previously Technological Educational Institution-TEI)**. The combination of applied, hands-on training from the former TEIs with the broader, more research-oriented academic programs of DUTH positions the university as an engine of regional innovation.

Finally, DUTH holds a special place as the **only public university in the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace**, a rare situation shared by only five universities across Greece.

Given its comprehensive nature, multi-campus structure, integration of former departments from TEIs, and its regional significance, **DUTH is unlike any other university in Greece and is among a few institutions in the world with such a combination of characteristics**.

This uniqueness requires a personalized, strategic approach, one that leverages our diverse strengths, fosters regional and global connections, creates public value to a developing region and continues to position DUTH as a university that not only serves but shapes the future of its students, its community, and beyond.

[1] Many universities have campuses in different cities but they usually have a larger central campus. In the case of DUTH less than 30% of students are on the central campus. We have found no other example where this was the case - see for example, G. Moodie, 2005, Contextual statement for the learning and teaching performance fund ; reproduced in Benchmarking Framework: Griffith University and University of Western Sydney 2007-2008.
[2] In Greece the only partly comparable university is the University of the Aegean.

STRATEGIC PLANNING METHODOLOGY

The process officially began with a meeting with the General Director of the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE) that took place in January, composed of an in-depth review of the previous strategic plan while addressing specific needs and characteristics in combination with the latest legislation on higher education, with a particular focus on the evolving funding framework for HEIs.

This meeting was followed by a rigorous and structured process, grounded in a four-month diagnosis exercise and a two-day workshop involving the university's leadership team composed of the rector, vice rectors, board members, heads of departments and administrative leadership. This approach allowed for a comprehensive assessment of the institution's current state and an informed definition of future priorities.

To further enrich the planning process, extensive consultations were held with key institutional stakeholders, including the Strategic Planning Unit (DUTH-SPU), the Quality Assurance Unit (DUTH-QAU), the Sustainability Committee, the Digital Governance Committee, the Research Committee, and the Property Development and Management Company. These meetings facilitated a structured dialogue on the challenges faced by each entity, enabling the collection of valuable insights, suggestions, and identified needs.

Additionally, key external reports and evaluations were examined, including the annual recommendations of the HAHE on funding allocation, reports from the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA), institutional financial statements, internal evaluation reports, and quality assurance documents.

Finally, to incorporate innovative approaches, the strategic planning process also considered best practices from both domestic and international higher education institutions and input from international colleagues and experts. By integrating insights from within and beyond the institution, the new strategic plan lays a solid foundation for the university's continued development in the years to come.

1. VISION

Our vision

We believe in a better world. A world that is more equal, sustainable and open, a world in which all can thrive.

We are at the heart of the most multicultural and multi linguistic region in Greece, at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, between Thessaloniki, Sofia and Istanbul. We connect Europe, the Mediterranean, the Balkans and Anatolia.

We connect knowledge and people. Our university is distributed across the region, with campuses in seven different cities. This unique model is designed to better serve the people of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace. It ensures our regional impact and connects our territory to the world. Our research is aligned with regional needs, with a focus on applied fields from sport science, to engineering and agricultural science. We are proud of our excellence, illustrated by our success in competitive projects both at the national and the European level, but even more so of our impact on society, the alignment of our research with both the UNs Sustainable Development Goals and our regional priorities.

We connect our students to their future careers. Our educational programmes are designed to ensure that our students acquire the necessary skills and competences to thrive in a changing world. We constantly update them to ensure they respond to societal needs.

We are part of EMERGE, a European University empowering the margins of Europe through regional and global engagement, with campuses in nine different countries. Through our namesake, Democritus, we connect the past to the future, the atoms, which he was the first to conceive, with a global world.

OUR COMMITMENT **TO THE FUTURE**

To achieve this vision, DUTH is embarking on a transformation, expressed by placing societal and regional engagement at the heart of our identity. This engagement will drive our approach in research and education and define the way we operate as a university, both at the local and the global scale.

This vision implies a deliberate shift in how the University defines and communicates its identity. Building on its regional presence, the University is evolving into a dynamic regional hub — deeply rooted in its territory, yet actively engaged with national, international, and European networks. As stated in our slogan : We are at the crossroads of Europe and Asia - connecting worlds. This position offers a distinct vantage point for contributing to the European Higher Education and Research Area not as a peripheral actor, but as a relevant and active center of knowledge, co-creation, collaboration, and innovation. Through this transformation, the University strengthens its role in shaping regional development while amplifying its impact across borders. This shift has strong implications:

- **A decentralized vision for Higher Education**
  DUTH takes a proactive stance against centralized decision-making in Greece and across Europe. We champion a distributed model of higher education—one that fosters adaptability, and innovation[3].
  Our University is proud to be a hub for open exchange, welcoming external collaboration and fostering the free flow of knowledge. Together we promote new approaches to excellence focused on the needs of our society and our region.

- **A renewed perspective for our students**
  This transformation provides students with a clearer sense of purpose, reinforcing their choice to study at DUTH and equipping them with the skills and mindset needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.
  Our Students will graduate not only job-ready but also with strong critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative skills to address regional, national, and global challenges. They will be guided by ethics, social responsibility, and a deep commitment to human rights, justice, freedom, and solidarity.

- **A source of inspiration for our faculty and staff**
  Our faculty and administrative teams are reinvigorated by this new direction, recognizing the tangible impact of their work on the university, the region, and beyond.
  Our Researchers aim to generate impactful, basic and applied research that addresses societal needs, with a particular focus on issues relevant to our region. Our Faculty and Staff engage actively in socially responsible activities, strengthening connections with local communities and connecting them to the world.

It requires us to update **the way we operate**, by empowering each campus to produce public value and better serve the people residing in Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, by scaling successful initiatives and integrating innovative practices, by leading change with academic excellence and a spirit of innovation. Knowledge creation and mobilization in DUTH reinforces its role as a dynamic, self-reflective, and forward-thinking institution, one that continuously seeks improvement. Additionally, we will amplify our visibility through enhanced communication strategies, showcasing impactful initiatives and refining our structures to maximize reach and societal impact.

[3] Greece is currently an outlier according to the EUA Autonomy Scorecard, produced by the European University Association. It is the only country ranked in the fourth lowest cluster on three dimensions (autonomy of funding, staffing and financial) and on the third cluster in one dimension (organisational).

2. VALUES

At DUTH, we are fully aligned with the classical university values, such as Academic Freedom, enshrined in Greek law[4] and upheld by the European University Association. We are deeply committed to fostering a university environment where strong values are infused into all of our practices and instilled in our students, faculty members, and administrative staff. While we stand by the values defined in our quality policy[5], we emphasize three fundamental values and two key principles that guide our institution. These values are crucial to ensure that we fulfill our mission as a regionally anchored university.

VALUES

Justice & Equity

We uphold the principles of fairness and equity in all our academic and administrative activities. DUTH is committed to fostering a just environment where every individual, regardless of background, has equal opportunities to learn, grow, and contribute to society. Justice and equity guide how we design policies, allocate resources, and support underrepresented groups, aiming to build a university environment that actively combats discrimination and promotes human dignity.

Solidarity & Inclusion

We cultivate a culture of mutual support and shared responsibility. Solidarity, for us, means standing with communities and working collaboratively to overcome challenges. Inclusion goes beyond representation: we strive to ensure that all voices are heard, all contributions are valued, and diverse identities are fully integrated into campus life. Drawing on the rich social and cultural diversity of our region, we aim to model a university community where difference is embraced and participation is meaningful for all.

Social Responsibility

We recognize our academic mission as inherently tied to societal progress. Through participatory research, responsive education, and inclusive governance, we advance social justice, solidarity, and civic engagement. Our work is oriented toward upholding dignity, democratic values, and fostering a more equitable world. This responsibility extends beyond the university, reinforcing our commitment to act as a driver of positive change in our region and beyond.

PRINCIPLES

Transparency

We are committed to openness in how we work and communicate. Key data and results are made accessible to all university staff. Beyond our internal practices, our assessments of public engagements, including evaluations of this strategic plan, will be transparently available on our website. As the university strengthens its connections with regional, national, and global actors, these transparent practices will play an increasingly relevant role in building credibility and accountability to our stakeholders.

Accountability

We operate with integrity, responsibility, and clarity in all our processes. Our governance model is participatory, responsive, and designed to create public value. We encourage evidence-based decision-making, collective learning, and continuous institutional self-reflection to ensure ongoing improvement and adaptability.

[4] Article 16, Paragraph 1 of the Hellenic Constitution
[5] Democritus University of Thrace : Quality policy

3. DIAGNOSIS

This **SWOT analysis** is the result of a **four-month diagnosis study** aimed at understanding the university's operations, strategic positioning, and key challenges. The process involved a **comprehensive documentary analysis, in-depth interviews with the university leadership, and benchmark comparisons with peer institutions**. By combining qualitative insights from stakeholders with quantitative data, this study provides a well-rounded assessment of DUTH's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, serving as a foundation for priority definition and future strategic decision-making.

Strength

1. **Successful Merger with departments from the International Hellenic University**
   The merger process is progressing smoothly, demonstrating the university's strong adaptability and effective management

2. **Comprehensive characteristic of the university**
   Its broad disciplinary scope fosters interdisciplinary collaboration, enriching both research and teaching.

3. **High-Quality Administrative Staff**
   Despite being limited in number[6], the administrative staff are highly efficient and play a crucial role in ensuring smooth university operations.

4. **Collaborative Environment**
   Faculty collaboration is particularly strong in key fields such as Engineering, Medicine, and Social Sciences, creating synergies across departments.

5. **Strong Industry Connections**
   The university has established robust industry ties, notably in Engineering, Molecular Biology, and Oenology, facilitating research applications and career opportunities for students.

6. **Transdisciplinary Research Structures**
   Innovation-driven structures such as the Incubator, Greenhouse, and Research & Innovation Center actively support interdisciplinary projects, encouraging collaboration across faculties and departments.

Weakness

1. **Limited Financial & Human Resources**
   National budget cuts and a restrictive funding model severely impact faculty and administration hiring[7], infrastructure development, and research activities. Additionally, DUTH has one of the highest student-to-staff ratios in Greece, straining administrative efficiency and support services.

2. **Low Faculty Motivation & High Turnover**
   Overworked faculty, a lack of incentives, and limited engagement in securing research funding contribute to low motivation.The high attrition rate, combined with a significant proportion of faculty members with reduced presence at the institution, limits student-faculty interaction and participation in the institution's governance bodies.

3. **Bureaucratic Inefficiencies**
   The multi-campus structure and recent merger have led to some administrative burdens, slowing down processes and decision-making

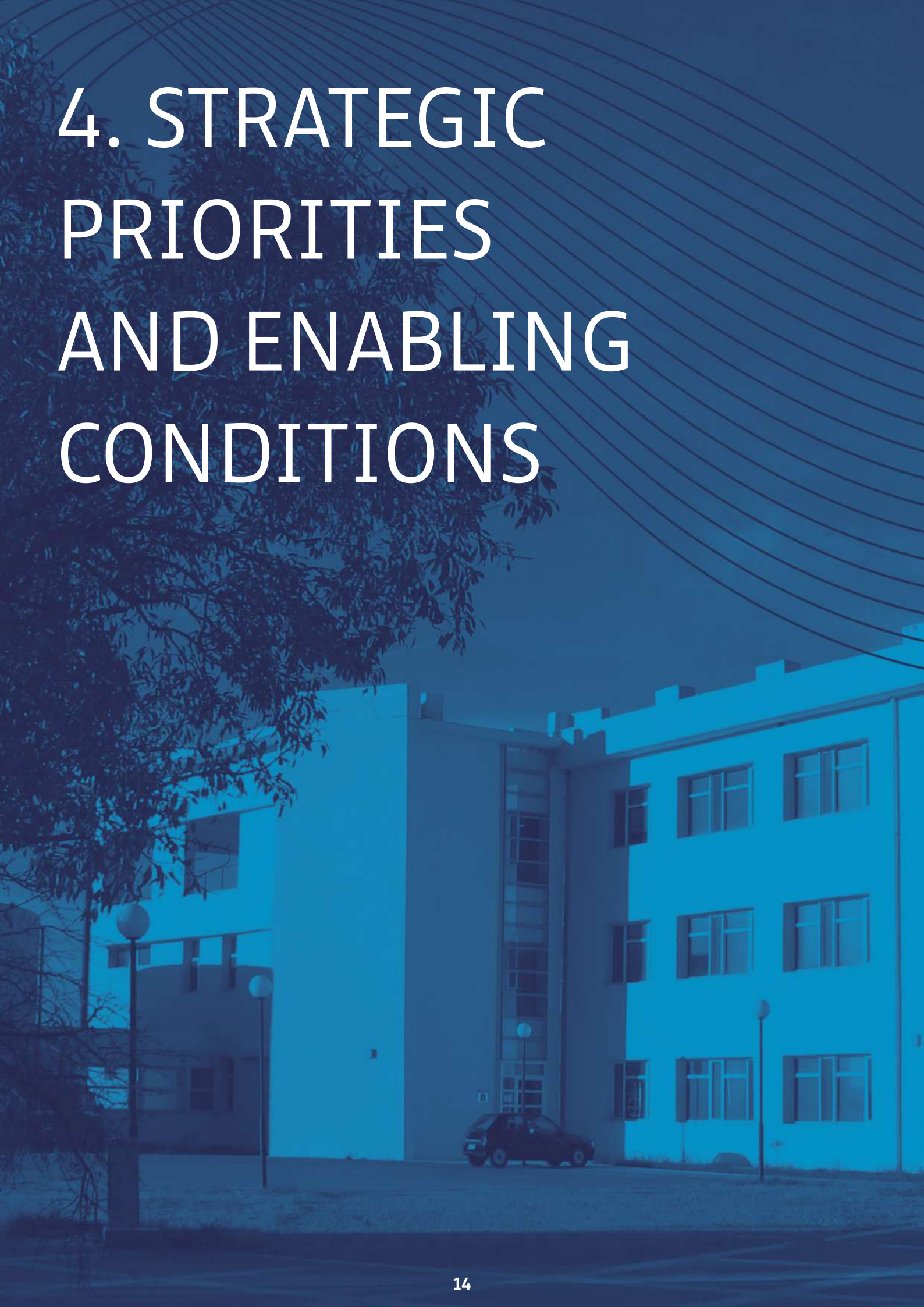
4. **Challenges in student attraction, performance & retention**
   DUTH struggles to demonstrate its uniqueness, attracting poorly motivated students and experiences a growing concern over retention. On average 30% of students transfer to metropolitan universities. In addition, some departments are strongly affected by student dropouts, emphasising the need for better orientation services.

[6] DUTH have 251 admin staff for 21 000 active students and 600 faculty members (4th worst ratio in Greece)
[7] Greece experienced a 38% decline of employed researchers' headcount since 2013 following recovery measures after the 2008 financial crisis

Opportunity	Threat
1. Enhancing Financial Autonomy & Diversifying Funding Sources Exploring new funding avenues and reaching for more autonomy could open doors to alternative funding streams, including EU grants and private-sector partnerships. Strengthening ties with alumni and industry partners can further support fundraising efforts and long-term financial stability. **2. Expanding Internationalisation Efforts** Leveraging DUTH's participation in EMERGE University alliance and developing English-taught Master's programs and forming global academic partnerships will enhance DUTH's international appeal. Additionally, targeting students from neighboring countries can help counter declining domestic enrollment. **3. Strengthening Regional Economic Integration & Community Engagement** Aligning academic programs with regional industry needs to improve graduate employability and anchor the university in its territory. Closer collaboration with local businesses through applied research projects and training programs will further boost DUTH's role in regional development and serve industries by meeting their needs (skills and research). **4. Enhancing Institutional Visibility & Digital Presence** Addressing website translation errors is essential to maintaining a consistent and professional identity. Additionally, improving storytelling and branding can help attract high-quality students, faculty, and partners, reinforcing DUTH's reputation at a national and international level.	**1. Growing Competition from Private Universities** The establishment of new private universities in major metropolitan areas poses a significant challenge, drawing students away from DUTH and intensifying competition for enrollment. **2. Demographic Decline & Brain Drain** Greece's declining birth rate and persistent emigration of students and faculty continue to shrink the talent pool, making it increasingly difficult to attract and retain high-caliber academics and students. **3. Restrictive National Educational Policies** Government-imposed restrictions on faculty hiring limit DUTH's ability to expand its academic offerings and adapt to emerging educational and industry demands. **4. Weak Regional Economy & large skill mismatches** The region's low-tech, low-productivity economy struggles to provide adequate career opportunities for graduates, leading to skills mismatches (The region is characterised by a large skill mismatch of around 36%[8]) and contributing to student migration toward more prosperous areas.

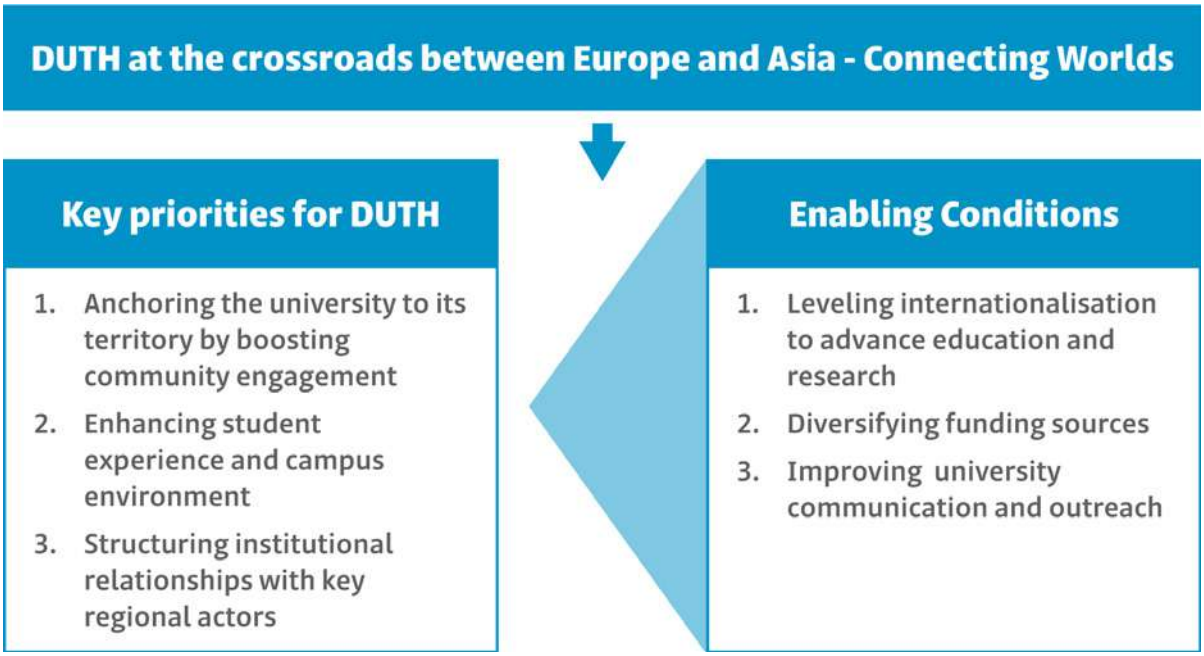
[8] OECD report : Job Creation and Local Economic Development 2024 - Country Notes: Greece, November 2024

4. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ENABLING CONDITIONS



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our vision and commitment to the future translate into three key strategic priorities (P1, P2, P3) and three enabling conditions (E1, E2, E3) that form the core of our new strategy.



DUTH is committed to strong societal engagement, encompassing both community engagement and industrial partnerships, as well as connections with key regional and global actors, reflected in priorities 1 and 3. Our approach to community engagement is tailored to the needs of local communities and residents, while our collaboration with institutional actors extends more broadly, from the regional level to global partnerships. The purpose with the first priority is to provide the right conditions to develop education and research considering also the needs of our local communities. Our second priority aims to enhance the student experience and the environment of the campus by creating a dynamic and supportive setting that will promote academic success, well-being, and a sense of community through improved infrastructure, services, and engagement opportunities. The third priority is aimed at structuring institutional relations, scaling existing collaborations, and advancing DUTH's strategic engagement with actors from the regional to the global level.

The text in white background in this section showcases existing DUTH initiatives underscoring our commitment to building on established strengths rather than reinventing the wheel

PRIORITY 1

ANCHORING THE UNIVERSITY TO ITS TERRITORY BY BOOSTING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

DUTH commits to anchoring the university to its territory, meaning we will forge stronger, more structured, and mutually beneficial relationships with the communities we serve. Our objective is to strengthen interactions with local communities, while fostering connections with global institutions facing similar challenges. We aim to incorporate local community perspectives into relevant decision-making processes, engage and connect stakeholder communities to co-design and actively participate in initiatives, establish knowledge-generating teams that work in, for, with, and about our local communities, creating lasting social and economic impact. Through this priority, we ensure that the knowledge produced within the university is accessible, relevant, and responsive to societal needs; building on the belief that a university must not only exist in a region, but also for and with that region.

Building on DUTH's existing commitment to Community Engagement and Social Cohesion

GAMES WITHOUT BORDERS[9]

The Department of Physical Education and Sport Science of DUTH proudly organises the Games Without Borders Festival, an initiative that champions inclusivity, cooperation, and cultural exchange among local communities through the power of sport and play.

Since its inception, the festival has welcomed over 2,200 primary school students (editions in 2019, 2023, and 2024), hosted at the university's sports facilities in Komotini. Endorsed by the **Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs & Sports – General Secretariat of Sports** and part of the European program **#BEACTIVE,** the festival brings together **5th-grade students** from the cities of **Xanthi and Rhodope**.

What makes this festival truly impactful is the essential training provided to primary school teachers before the event. Led by university faculty, these sessions equip teachers with practical tools and knowledge to address inclusion, diversity, and cooperation in their classrooms and on the field. This preparation ensures that the values of empathy and teamwork are woven into the entire experience, from school to festival day.

More detail : A Festival of unity and inclusion

Students are placed in mixed, randomly formed teams, encouraging interaction across different cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds. In Thrace, a region where Christian and Muslim communities often attend separate schools, this approach plays a vital role in breaking down barriers and fostering mutual understanding.

The festival is also a key learning platform for volunteer university students from the Department of Physical Education and Sport Science, who, under the guidance of faculty, help plan and run the event. Their involvement reflects DUTH's commitment to community engagement, experiential learning, and promoting social inclusion through sport.

[9] https://fpxs.phyed.duth.gr/

PRIORITY 2

ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

DUTH spans 10 campuses across 7 cities, creating a geographically diverse university environment where ensuring a uniform student experience can be challenging. Instead of applying a one-size-fits-all approach, we place students at the heart of our mission, focusing on:

- Improving campus infrastructure and digitally transforming our institution to support learning, well-being, and accessibility
- Fostering a vibrant student community that encourages engagement and collaboration by supporting campus led initiatives
- Strengthening education, research, and career opportunities to equip students with the skills needed to pursue academia or entering the job market
- Centralising information on our student services for easy access by our student community such as the DUTH Centre for Counselling and Psychological Support and the Centre for the Support of Teaching & Learning.

By prioritizing these efforts, we ensure that every student benefits from a supportive, dynamic, and inspiring environment, allowing them to thrive academically, socially, and professionally, regardless of their campus location.

Building on DUTH's strengths to drive Student Success: The Innovation Challenge[10]

As a driving force for student innovation and entrepreneurship, DUTH Innovation Generator and Innovation Challenge empower students to turn ideas into impactful ventures.

Following a highly successful 2023 edition, which attracted 80 students and 20 teams, the 2025 competition has already surpassed expectations, with over 140 students and 42 teams participating in the initial phase, set to conclude in May. The event features practical workshops, expert mentoring, team coaching, and live pitch presentations, equipping students with the skills to develop and present their innovative startup concepts.

One of the standout success stories is **Team GreenWave**[11], led by Yiannis Thimianidis, which secured second place in the 2023 Innovation Challenge at DUTH. Their groundbreaking work in green technology earned them an Honorable Mention from the Rector in May 2023, and Yiannis was later recognized as one of Forbes Greece's 30 Under 30 for his contributions to ecological innovation.

The impact of these initiatives extends beyond the university, with select teams advancing their projects through the THInc Thrace incubator, reinforcing DUTH's role as a hub for innovation and startup activity in Northern Greece. With each passing year, the competition continues to grow in scale and influence, equipping students with the entrepreneurial mindset and resources needed to drive change.

[10] https://innovation.duth.gr/innovationchallenge/
[11] https://www.inem.gr/anastasios-konstantaras/

PRIORITY 3

STRUCTURING INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH KEY REGIONAL TO GLOBAL ACTORS

DUTH already counts a number of collaborations involving regional actors whether through research projects, educational programmes and lifelong learning demands and curricula adaptations. These collaborations currently depend on interpersonal relations, limiting their long-term impact and potential for broader institutional engagement. Our objective is thus to structure the links with regional actors at the level of the faculty, department or governance, depending on needs. We will:

- Support cross-institutional research to foster collaborations aimed at solving identified needs or challenges through mechanisms such as problem-solving labs, real-life demonstrators, and other practice-oriented initiatives that bring together interdisciplinary teams in an applied, purpose-driven way
- Promote strategic alliances in fields where DUTH has global visibility
- Provide targeted support for collaborative projects with regional and international partners through seed-funding and/or small scale funding.

At the university level, this approach will enhance transdisciplinarity and capacity to contribute to non-academic problems and challenges, bringing together diverse teams to address industry needs and advance research in key areas.

DUTH : A powerful agent of regional innovation

DUTH is driving regional innovation and collaboration through **DigiAgriFood, Greece's only European Digital Innovation Hub (EDIH)** dedicated to the agri-food sector. As the coordinator of DigiAgriFood, DUTH leads a powerful consortium that including:

- The Region of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace (REMTH)
- University of Thessaly
- National Center for Research and Technological Development (CERTH)
- Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH)
- Leading agribusiness and technology firms

As a recognized European Digital Innovation Hub, DigiAgriFood plays a pivotal role in i) bringing together academia, industry, and policymakers, ii) promoting sustainable food production through technology, iii) positioning DUTH as a leader in agri-tech innovation. Through this strategic collaboration, DigiAgriFood accelerates research-driven innovation and promotes real-world applications in smart agriculture and digital food systems. The initiative actively supports farmers, agripreneurs, and researchers by providing specialized training programs, hands-on workshops and online learning platforms.

By bridging cutting-edge technology with traditional farming practices, DUTH ensures that Greece's agri-food sector remains resilient, efficient, and globally competitive. Through DigiAgriFood, the university reinforces its commitment to regional development, technological advancement, and a sustainable agricultural future.

DIGI AGRIFOOD European Digital Innovation Hub Hellas

LEVERAGING INTERNATIONALISATION TO ADVANCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

DUTH will strengthen its international presence by building on existing partnerships, particularly through the European University Alliance EMERGE, and leveraging agreements with national, European, and global institutions. To further advance global partnerships, student and faculty mobility, and cross-border research collaborations, we will actively seek new opportunities. We are already in negotiation with institutions in Egypt, Cyprus and China to develop further collaborations. Our approach has two main goals:

- Enhancing research practices by integrating innovative approaches and expanding the impact of our research outputs
- Equipping students with the skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly globalized world, by making our educational programs more attractive and offering high-quality learning experiences that foster essential skills for both Greek and international students, implying the transformation of part of our educational offering in English.

Through this internationalization approach, we will better serve our current student body but also work to increase our share of international students, both on our campuses and through digital formats.

Leveraging EMERGE European Alliance to Develop a New Program of Study

New joint undergraduate Medical degree Programme

In a novel initiative to enhance medical education and cross-border academic collaboration, **DUTH and Neapolis University Pafos (NUP)** have joined forces to develop a pioneering undergraduate programme in Medicine. This collaboration marks a significant step toward internationalizing medical education and strengthening academic ties between Greece and Cyprus.

As partners of the European University Alliance EMERGE, DUTH and NUP are leveraging this strategic alliance to create a curriculum that reflects the latest advancements in medical science. With a curriculum that balances theory and practice, students will gain an in-depth understanding of medical sciences, patient care, and emerging global healthcare trends.

Designed to attract students from across Europe and beyond, the program fosters an international learning environment that promotes cross-cultural exchange, interdisciplinary collaboration, and knowledge sharing. By engaging with faculty and peers from diverse backgrounds, students will benefit from a truly global perspective on healthcare challenges and medical innovation. A strong emphasis on practical training, research-based learning, and clinical rotations ensures that students gain hands-on experience in state-of-the-art medical facilities across Greece and Cyprus. These clinical placements allow students to work alongside experienced healthcare professionals, applying their knowledge in real-world medical settings. Beyond technical and clinical skills, the program also focuses on medical ethics, patient-centered care, and leadership skills, preparing graduates not only to become skilled physicians but also to lead the transformation of healthcare systems worldwide. **By creating a dynamic and future-focused medical curriculum, DUTH and NUP next generation of medical professionals to meet global healthcare challenges with innovation, expertise, and compassion**.

emerge
EUROCAMPUS
EUROCAMPUS UNIVERSITY

ENABLING CONDITION 2

DIVERSIFYING FUNDING SOURCES

DUTH faces financial limitations (as outlined in the Diagnosis section) due to a restrictive national funding model, which significantly impacts faculty and administration hiring, infrastructure development, and research activities. Strategic direction and institutional management require adequate resources, and as such, we have developed a roadmap that not only considers our current resources but also emphasizes the diversification of funding sources. To achieve this, we have two main strategies:

- Expand research funding across the entire university by improving support for large research project applications, targeting European funding opportunities, exploring contract research where companies fund DUTH for specific challenges, and positioning ourselves as expert providers for regional authorities.
- Optimize revenue from our educational programs by developing English-taught master's programs and lifelong learning programmes, and mutualising services across campuses.
- We also propose some financial commitments in section 7 in order to further support the implementation of our strategic actions

This approach to diversifying our funding sources will support the university's long-term sustainability by expanding revenue streams through competitive research grants, industry partnerships, and entrepreneurial initiatives.

Diversifying resources : Mobilising research infrastructure funds for state-of-the-art equipment

Transforming Research at the Department of Molecular Biology & Genetics: Using Research Infrastructure Funds for State-of-the-Art Equipment

The Department of Molecular Biology & Genetics (DMBG) at DUTH, the only department in Greece specializing in Molecular Biosciences, has established itself as a dynamic force in scientific research. A testament to its dedication and expertise, the department has successfully secured approximately €4.5 million in competitive funding for Research Infrastructures over the past seven years. This funding, obtained through three major calls—the "1st Call for HFRI Research Projects to Support Faculty Members and Researchers and the Procurement of High-Cost Research Equipment", the "Development of National Research Infrastructures", and "Regional Excellence"—has been instrumental in enhancing the department's research capabilities.

Through these initiatives, DMBG has acquired state-of-the-art research equipment, significantly elevating its ability to conduct cutting-edge studies in molecular biology and genetics. This investment has also facilitated the creation of advanced research networks that support the training and professional development of the next generation of scientists. By integrating these high-tech resources into its research ecosystem, DMBG has strengthened its role as a hub for scientific discovery, innovation, and collaboration.

Notably, DMBG is an active participant in 8 out of the 9 National Research Infrastructures in Biosciences, as outlined in the Greek National Roadmap for Research Infrastructures. This remarkable achievement underscores the commitment to research excellence. Through strategic partnerships with national and international institutions, DMBG continues to expand its influence, fostering interdisciplinary research that bridges the gap between molecular biosciences and real-world applications in health, agrobiology, and environment.

By leveraging national research infrastructure funds to acquire cutting-edge equipment, DMBG remains at the forefront of biosciences research, driving innovation, discovery, and excellence.

ENABLING CONDITION 3

IMPROVING UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

This enabling condition is particularly crucial for DUTH, given our distribution across ten campuses in seven cities, which requires a concerted effort to strengthen a unified identity. It's essential that all members of DUTH stay informed about university-wide developments. As one can expect, when internal communication falters, critical information rarely reaches all identified external stakeholders. As such, we are committed to improving both our internal and external communication practices.

- Internally, enhanced communication will foster knowledge sharing, encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, ensure better resource utilization across departments and help cultivate a unified institutional identity
- Externally, it will increase the university's visibility particularly through our innovative teaching approaches and impactful research, attract funding opportunities, engage with industry and society, showcase its achievements and societal contributions and solidify DUTH's position as a key player in regional and global networks

DUTH's knowledge sharing initiatives

Managerial and Governance Empowerment through Teaching and Learning (MAGNET KA2) initiative

DUTH coordinates high-impact projects like the Managerial and Governance Empowerment through Teaching and Learning (MAGNET KA2) project, exemplifying its strong practices in communication, dissemination, and network participation. This Erasmus+ Capacity Building project focuses on knowledge-sharing across Europe to improve university pedagogy in the Western Balkans.

As the project coordinator, DUTH facilitates the exchange of best practices between countries with established Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) and institutions in the Western Balkans. The MAGNET KA2 Project also aims to establish the Balkan Network for University Pedagogy (BalkanNetUP), a network that will i) ensure long-term collaboration among universities in the Western Balkans and beyond and ii) drive professional development and teaching modernization, contributing to the development of inclusive and effective educational systems.

Through these strategic priorities and enabling conditions, DUTH is committed to driving regional development, fostering innovation, and shaping a brighter future for its students and society as a whole.

5. STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES

As part of our strategic planning process, we developed an initial roadmap outlining a series of visionary initiatives we would pursue in an ideal scenario—without resource constraints. This forward-looking roadmap, included in the Annex, represents our ambition to elevate the University.

While not all actions may be immediately feasible, the initial roadmap will serve as a reference point throughout the implementation of our strategy. Should additional resources become available during the 2025–2028 strategic period, the University will revisit and potentially activate elements from this broader vision.

From this initial roadmap, we have distilled eight strategic action axes that we are fully committed to implementing between 2025 and 2028, forming the core of our strategic agenda.

TRANSVERSAL ACTIONS

1.

Given the multi-campus structure of DUTH, we recognise that establishing a single, centralised Community Engagement Office may not effectively address the diverse needs and dynamics of our various locations. As an alternative, we propose **appointing Community Engagement Officers** (on the basis of our Erasmus and Internships model) **who will work across all campuses, supporting and coordinating efforts to strengthen our societal engagement**. This role would serve as a connector, facilitating partnerships, sharing best practices, and ensuring that community engagement is embedded in the culture and activities of each campus, while maintaining a cohesive institutional approach. Through this initiative, DUTH aims to:

- Strengthen community-university partnerships by reinforcing and building new channels for dialogue and mutual learning
- Empower student learning through civic engagement, offering real-world experiences that enrich academic development and foster a sense of social responsibility
- Catalyze cross-disciplinary solutions to societal challenges by encouraging cooperation between faculties, researchers, and community stakeholders in addressing regional and global issues.

Institutional KPIs:

- Community engagement structure fully operational by 2026
- At least 10 university-community research collaborations/actions annually

2.

DUTH will renovate and modernize its campus infrastructure to foster student research participation, increase university attractivity and motivation.

To achieve this, DUTH has secured funding to maintain, renovate, and upgrade university buildings through the Public Investment Program (PIP), ensuring a more modern and functional academic environment. Additionally, through European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) financing, Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), the university is expanding its infrastructure with:

- Purchasing of a property in Xanthi to house the Institutes of the University Center for Research and Innovation laboratories.
- Construction of a new office and laboratory building in Orestiada.
- Upgrading and modernization of the buildings and infrastructure of the Elatia Residential Complex, Drama.

These infrastructure improvements will strengthen DUTH's academic and research capabilities, creating an inspiring space for students and faculty to engage in pioneering work.

Institutional KPIs:

- Percentage of completed renovation projects vs. planned projects

National KPIs:

- **D1.067-22:** Fixed operating costs per student
- **D1.071-22:** Average annual public expenditure per student
- **D1.074-22:** Average annual total funding per student
- **D1.016-22:** Student-faculty ratio
- **D1.032-22:** Average annual number of active undergraduate students per Departmental Registrar
- **D1.075-22:** Average annual number of active students per classroom
- **D1.080-22:** Ratio of students/central library seats

3.

DUTH will strengthen its internal and external communication strategies to improve engagement with students, faculty, stakeholders, and the wider academic and professional community. By enhancing transparency, promoting success stories, and fostering collaboration, DUTH will reinforce its reputation as a leading institution in key fields. DUTH will do so by :

Internal

- Facilitating collaboration across faculties and departments to discuss institutional priorities and share best practices.
- Communicating University Impact: Regularly highlight DUTH's contributions to students, faculty, and society through internal newsletters and digital platforms.
- Standardizing Internal Communication Protocols: Develop and implement protocols to ensure efficient information flow across departments, reducing delays and miscommunications

External

- Training the Communication Team: Provide professional development programs to ensure effective messaging and storytelling aligned with DUTH's vision.
- Revamping the DUTH Website: Improve user experience (UX), navigation, and accessibility, enhancing sections related to academics, research, and student life.
- Boosting Media Engagement: Increase DUTH's presence in national and international media by actively promoting institutional achievements and milestones
- Showcasing Success Stories: Publish case studies, testimonials, and performance metrics that highlight student achievements, research breakthroughs, and teaching quality.
- Launching "DUTH Talks" Series: Feature successful alumni and industry leaders sharing insights and experiences to inspire students.
- Hosting Open Days and Seminars: Organize interactive events to connect prospective students, industry partners, and academic collaborators with DUTH's educational and research opportunities.
- Implementing Targeted Outreach and Marketing Campaigns: Develop promotional strategies to attract domestic, international, and professional learners to DUTH's programs.

Institutional KPIs:

- Train 100% of the communication team by 2026
- Percentage increase in website user satisfaction
- Assess the visibility of university achievements, with media mentions annually in national and international outlets
- Number of strategic seminars hosted yearly with the leadership of the University
- **National KPIs:**
- **Q1.2:** Number of scientific conferences organised by students,
- **E1.3:** Number of international scientific conferences (co-)organised by the Foundation in relation to the number of departments

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

4.

DUTH will reinforce national and international collaborations with research centers and universities to foster undergraduate research engagement. By fostering strong partnerships, the university aims to provide students with increased research opportunities, global exposure, and access to cutting-edge resources.

To achieve this, DUTH will:

- Strengthen partnerships with national and international universities to facilitate research collaborations and academic exchange.
- Enhance collaboration through the EMERGE alliance, reinforcing thematic research clusters and interdisciplinary projects with EMERGE universities.
- Develop joint PhD and postdoctoral programs, enabling students and researchers to benefit from shared expertise, resources, and international mobility opportunities.
- Expand student and faculty exchange initiatives, creating cross-border academic networks that foster innovation and knowledge sharing.
- Support research-driven educational programs that integrate real-world challenges, preparing students for advanced studies and research careers.
- Provide scholarships for top MSc and BSc graduates, encouraging them to pursue funded PhD opportunities.
    - Collaborate with industry and research organizations to secure funding for doctoral research projects.
    - Develop co-funded PhD programs with private sector partners to align research with market needs.
- Develop and market Master's programs that attract international students and global talent.
- Expand internship programs, industry projects, and applied research opportunities, allowing students to gain hands-on experience and practical skills.

Institutional KPIs:

- Percentage of increase in student participation in research projects
- Percentage of increase in undergraduate students transitioning to postgraduate studies at DUTH
- Number of undergraduate students doing internships in research institutions to active students,
- At least 5 new international research collaborations annually,
- Number of programmes of study (Undergraduate, Postgraduate) with compulsory bachelor's/diploma thesis to total number of Study Programmes (Undergraduate, Postgraduate)

National KPIs:

- **D1.011-211:** Average annual number of PhD candidates per faculty member at the institution level
- **B1.2:** Scientific publications per doctoral candidate

5.

DUTH will valorise and support regional collaborations with industry and local authorities to secure long-term relations. By sharing information about inter-personnel collaborations at the institution level, the university will be able to centralize information about projects conducted with external partners, and better support those proactive actors.

To enhance the effectiveness and visibility of these partnerships, DUTH will:

- Enhance coordination between the start-up incubator, research hubs, and DUTH Innovation hub, ensuring seamless communication and integration of initiatives. For example, we will promote interdisciplinary research hubs and living labs in Alexandroupolis, serving as collaborative spaces where academia, industry, and society co-develop solutions.
- Facilitate industry-academia partnerships, linking research projects with market needs to drive economic growth through seed-funding and/or small scale funding
- Expand and reinforce entrepreneurial structures, fostering a culture of innovation and commercialization of research.
- Increase public engagement and dissemination of research through regional forums, conferences, and online platforms.
- Host hackathons addressing key regional and global challenges, encouraging participation from students, faculty, industry experts, and external stakeholders.
- Provide mentorship and funding opportunities for promising ideas emerging from hackathons, helping them evolve into real-world applications.
- Integrate regional actors into Advisory Committees of undergraduate and graduate programs, ensuring that curricula reflect industry trends, technological advancements, and societal needs.
- Develop joint educational initiatives with global universities and institutions, fostering knowledge exchange and international learning opportunities.
- Expand internship programs, industry projects, and applied research opportunities, allowing students to gain hands-on experience and practical skills.

By institutionalizing collaborations, strengthening innovation ecosystems, and fostering interdisciplinary research, DUTH will amplify its impact on regional development and global challenges while empowering students, researchers, and industry leaders to drive meaningful change.

Institutional KPIs:

- Number of formalized agreements (MOUs, contracts) with industry and local authorities per school

National KPIs:

- **D1.099-21:** Project funding per faculty member
- **D1.111-21:** Average annual total funding per faculty member
- **D1.097:** Average annual number of active projects per faculty member
- **D1.120:** Average number of patents in force per member of the Foundation
- **D1.121:** Average number of new patents - patents in force per member of the Foundation
- **C4.3:** Number of spin-offs or start-ups founded

6.

Based on activity 3 described above, DUTH is committed to strengthening its research and communication visibility to maximize research impact, foster knowledge sharing, and enhance institutional recognition. By improving both internal and external communication strategies, DUTH will create a more interconnected and accessible research environment.

To ensure seamless knowledge exchange and accessibility within the university, DUTH will:

- Create a Centralized Open Access Research Registry
  - Develop a digital platform that provides faculty, researchers, and students with easy access to research projects, equipment, and resources.
  - Enhance collaboration opportunities by making research outputs and ongoing studies more visible.
- Promote Interdisciplinary Research & Conference Participation
  - Organize internal knowledge-sharing sessions to encourage collaboration across disciplines.
  - Provide support and funding for researchers and students to attend national and international academic events.

To elevate DUTH's research profile and impact beyond the university, DUTH will:

- Develop Digital & Media Outreach Strategies
  - Showcase high-impact research through social media, newsletters, and a dedicated research portal.
  - Increase engagement with research-focused blogs, podcasts, and video content to reach wider audiences.
- Increase Visibility of Research Supporting Regional Development
  - Highlight research projects addressing regional socio-economic and environmental challenges to attract external funding.
  - Strengthen partnerships with local industries, government agencies, and international research networks.
- Publicize University Research Achievements
  - Engage with media, policymakers, and industry leaders at national and international levels.
  - Organize research exhibitions, public lectures, and policy dialogues to showcase groundbreaking discoveries.

By implementing these initiatives, DUTH aims to position itself as a leading research institution, fostering innovation, collaboration, and regional development while amplifying its research impact on a global scale.

Institutional KPIs:

- DUTH Open Access Registry operational by 2026
- Percentage of increase in the number of research equipment and resources listed in the registry per School
- Growth in faculty participation in academic conferences.
- Growth in student participation in academic conferences per School.
- Percentage of research projects addressing regional priorities (economic growth, sustainability etc) established with local industry, authorities etc.

National KPIs:

- **D1.110-21:** Percentage of external funding in total funding
- **D1.089:** Percentage of European projects
- **D1.090:** Percentage of national projects from European funds
- **D1.091:** Percentage of projects from international companies and organisations
- **D1.092-21:** Percentage of projects from national bodies (public and private)
- **D1.093:** Percentage of active small budget projects
- **D1.094:** Percentage of active medium budget projects
- **D1.095:** Percentage of active high-budget projects
- **D1.088:** Percentage of active projects coordinated by the Foundation

EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

7.

Based on activity 1 described above, DUTH will mobilize the Community Engagement Officers to actively connect with students and faculty, ensuring that academic programs align with local socio-economic and environmental priorities. It will play a crucial role in integrating real-world challenges into education, enriching curricula, and fostering a dynamic learning environment that reflects regional needs. Through this initiative, DUTH aims to:

- Integrate experiential learning into curricula, enabling students to participate in hands-on projects, internships, and service-learning initiatives that directly impact the community.
    - Allow students to take elective courses across different departments, encouraging interdisciplinary learning.
    - Develop a portfolio of hybrid courses (online and in-person) focusing on transversal skills such as digital literacy, entrepreneurship, leadership, sustainability, and intercultural communication.
- Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration, encouraging students from different fields to work together on regional challenges, promoting problem-solving and innovation.
- Enhance partnerships with local industries and authorities, ensuring that educational programs prepare students with the skills and knowledge needed for regional development.
- Promote civic responsibility and social innovation, inspiring students to become active contributors to society through engagement with local communities.

Institutional KPIs:

- Percentage of students' service-learning, or community-based projects
- 20% of courses to incorporate new pedagogies by 2028
- Number of curriculum updates based on advisory committee recommendations annually relative to the total number of study programmes
- Average of the results of the evaluation of the teaching work of the institution.

National KPIs:

- **D1.4.15-22:** Annual participation rate in the internship

8.

DUTH will internationalise its educational programmes to strengthen the quality, accessibility, and global competitiveness of its educational programs. By expanding international opportunities and equipping students with essential skills for a globalized world, DUTH aims to attract both Greek and international students while fostering a diverse academic environment.

- Launch English-taught undergraduate and postgraduate programs to attract international students and enhance global mobility.
- Expand the new Sports Science program launched in collaboration with Helwan University in Cairo, Egypt, by extending similar academic initiatives to other disciplines, with the medium-term goal of establishing a full branch campus in Cairo.
- Broaden the scope of developing academic programs with partners in China and Cyprus to deepen institutional collaboration and expand DUTH's global academic footprint.
- Develop interdepartmental undergraduate courses in English, providing multidisciplinary learning opportunities.
- Introduce summer and winter schools in English, appealing to Erasmus+ and international students.
- Establish joint and double degree programs with EMERGE partners and prestigious global universities (e.g., Columbia University, Sorbonne University, University of Zurich).
- Facilitate faculty and student exchanges, encouraging academic collaboration and cultural integration.
- Align curricula with international academic and industry standards, ensuring global recognition of DUTH degrees.

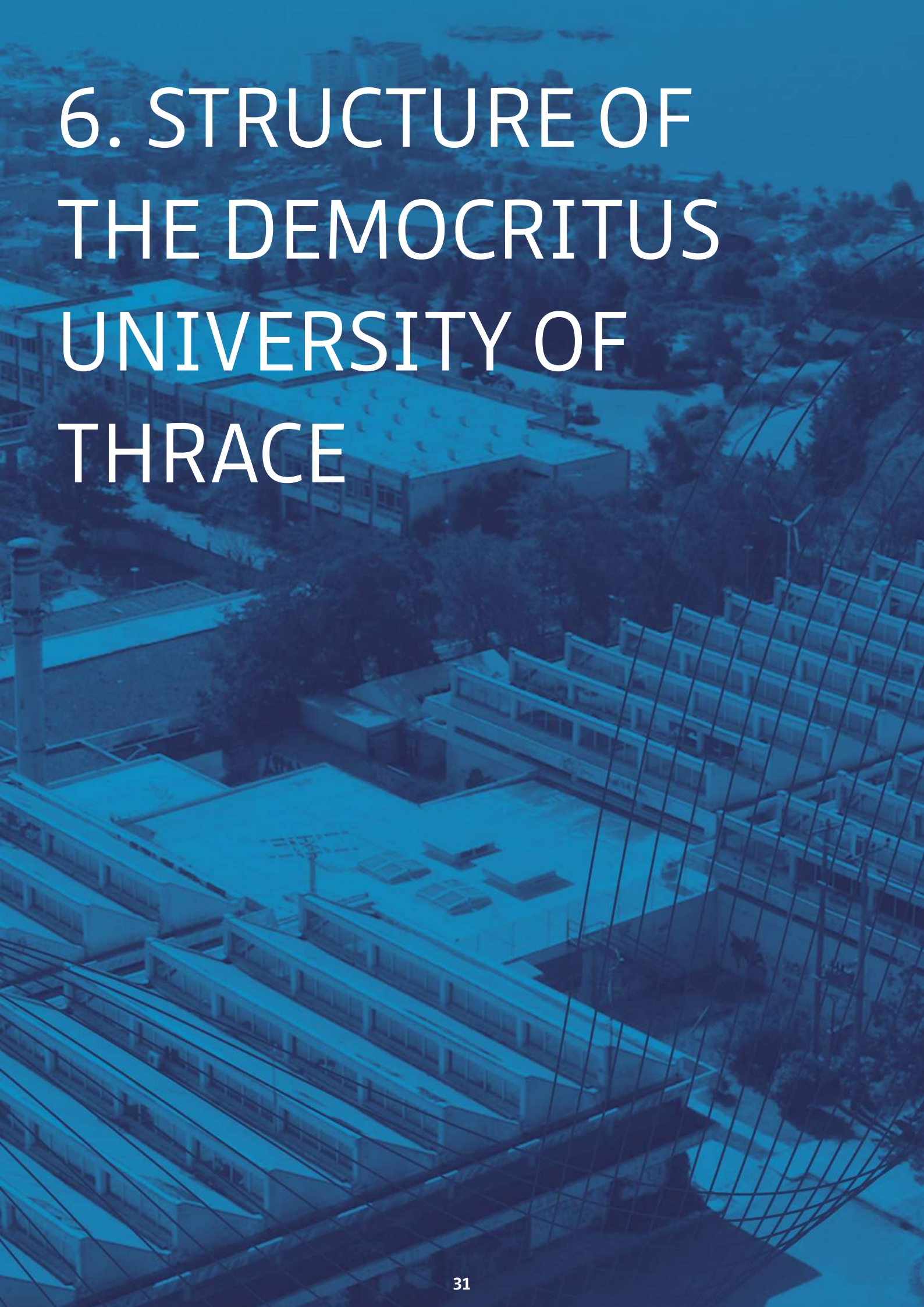
Institutional KPIs:

- Number of English-taught undergraduate and postgraduate programs launched
- Enrollment rates of international students in English-language programs
- Number of joint and double degree programs established with EMERGE partners and prestigious global universities
- Student and faculty participation rates in international exchange programs

National KPIs:

- **D1.4.34-22:** Annual percentage of outgoing ERASMUS students out of total active students
- **D1.4.35-22:** Annual percentage of incoming ERASMUS students relative to the total number of active students
- **D1.3.18-211:** Annual percentage of outgoing academic staff (faculty members) through Erasmus
- **D1.3.19-211:** Annual number of incoming teaching staff from abroad via Erasmus per faculty member
- **D6.2:** Number of visiting professors per Department

6. STRUCTURE OF THE DEMOCRITUS UNIVERSITY OF THRACE



Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) is Greece's first polycentric regional university. Its administrative headquarters are in Komotini, with services operating across the following cities of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace: Alexandroupolis, Didymoteicho, Orestiada, Komotini, Xanthi, Drama and Kavala.

1. The Alexandroupolis campuses (Campus A and Campus B) are composed of :

Departments of the Health Sciences School:
- Department of Medicine (Campus A)
- Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics (Campus A)
- Department of Nursing (Campus A)

Departments of the School of Education Sciences:
- Department of Primary Education (Campus B)
- Department of Education Sciences in Early Childhood (Campus B)

2. The Didymoteicho campus is composed of :

Department of the School of Education Sciences:
- Department of Psychology

3. The Orestiada campus is composed of :

Departments of the School of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences:
- Department of Forestry and Management of the Environment and Natural Resources
- Department of Agricultural Development

Department of the School of Health Sciences:
- Department of Veterinary Medicine

4. The Komotini campuses (Campus A and Campus B) are composed of :

the School of Law (Campus A)

the School (A) and offices of Humanities (Campus A and Campus B)

Departments of the School of Physical Education, Sport Science, and Occupational Therapy (Campus A):
- Department of Physical Education and Sports Science (Campus A)
- Department of Occupational Therapy (Campus A)

Departments of the School of Social, Political and Economic Sciences:
- Department of Economics (Campus A)
- Department of Political Science (Campus A)
- Department of Social Policy (Campus B)
- Department of Social Work (Campus B)

5. The Xanthi campuses (Campus A and Campus B) are composed of :

Departments of the School of Engineering:
- Department of Civil Engineering (Campus A)
- Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (Campus A)
- Department of Architectural Engineering (Campus A)
- Department of Production and Management Engineering (Campus B)
- Department of Environmental Engineering (Campus B)

6. The Drama campus is composed of :

Departments of the School of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences:
- Department of Viticulture and Oenology[12]
- Department of Natural Environment & Climate Resilience[13]

7. The Kavala campus is composed of :

Departments of the School of Management Science and Accounting:
- Department of Management Science and Technology
- Department of Accounting and Finance

Departments of the School of Sciences:
- Department of Informatics
- Department of Physics
- Department of Chemistry

[12] the former Department of Agricultural Biotechnology and Oenology
[13] the former Department of Forestry and Natural Environment

7. FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

As DUTH embarks on its strategic transformation, financial sustainability remains at the center of our approach. Our budget principles are designed to ensure the implementation of all actions presented in our roadmap. This implies the efficient allocation of resources, the diversification of income streams, and the alignment of expenditures with institutional priorities.

To achieve these objectives, we will adhere to the following financial principles:

1. BUDGET REASSESSMENT AND STRATEGIC REALLOCATION

All university-supported projects will be evaluated against our strategic objectives. Funding will be directed towards initiatives that align with our mission, benefit the university community, and contribute positively to society at large. Projects that no longer serve these goals will see funding reduced or discontinued, ensuring that resources are directed toward impactful and sustainable initiatives.

This process will identify areas where resources can be reallocated from less strategic initiatives to finance priority actions outlined in our strategic roadmap. Our goal is to optimise financial efficiency while ensuring that key initiatives receive the necessary funding to drive institutional progress.

Our current revenue consists of national funding received directly from the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, and Sports, ERDF funds , strategic projects financed through national calls, and net income generated by our research committee. To ensure the effective implementation of our Strategic Plan, we are committed to reallocating funds from our research committee and strategic project resources to support the activities outlined in this plan.

2. DIVERSIFICATION OF REVENUE STREAMS

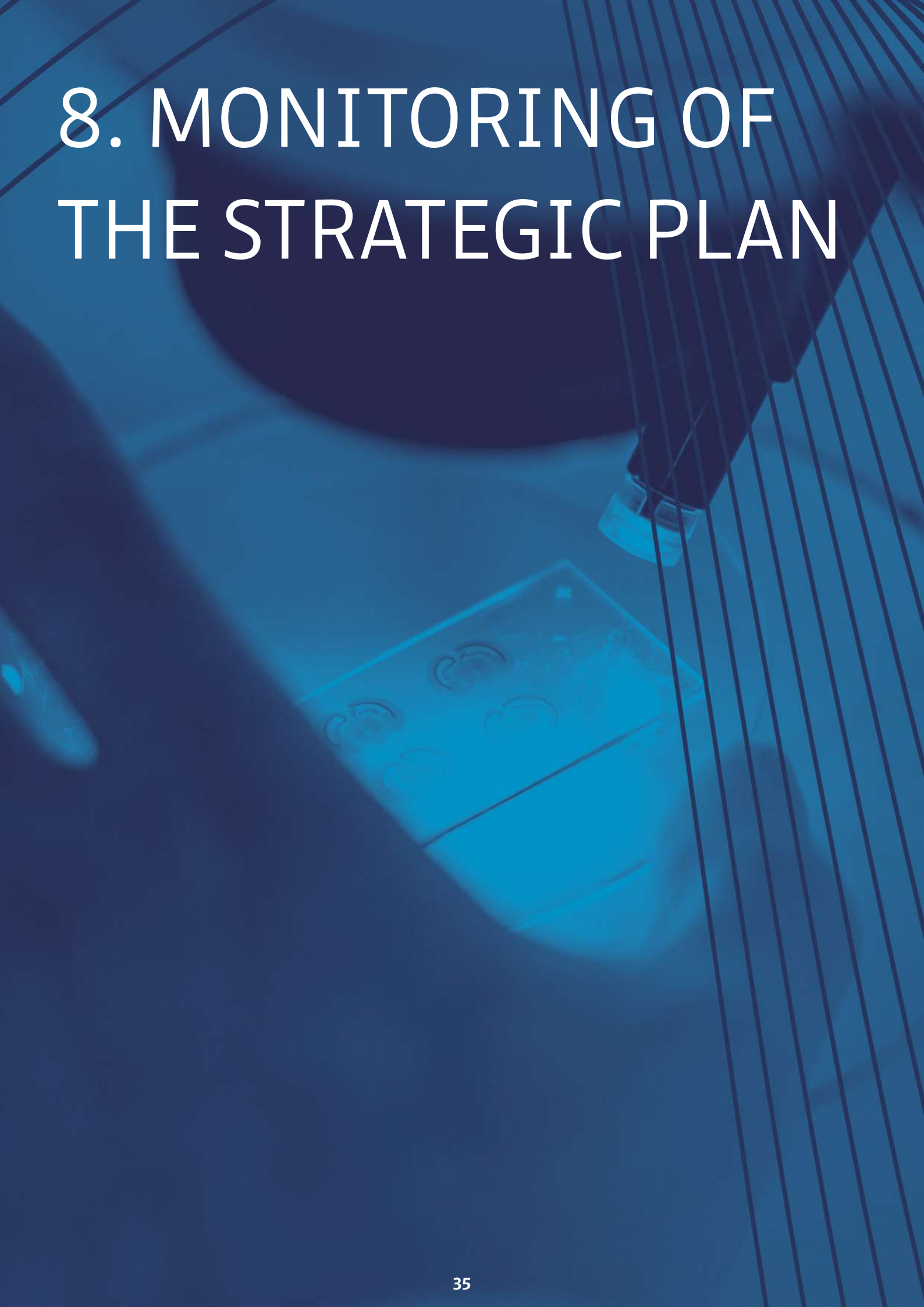
To reduce dependency on the national budget allocation, we will actively seek new revenue streams. This includes expanding partnerships with industry, increasing research grants, enhancing philanthropic contributions, and exploring innovative financial models, such as partnerships with private entities for infrastructure development (e.g., Public-Private Partnerships), and exploiting new business models for operation of academic programmes. By broadening our financial base, we will strengthen the university's capacity to invest in its strategic priorities and long-term growth. This is clearly outlined in our 2nd Enabling Condition and presented in the activities associated with it in our roadmap.

3. OPTIMIZATION THROUGH SERVICE MUTUALISATION

Where feasible and efficient, we will seek to mutualise services to maximise resource utilisation. This approach will enhance operational efficiency and create synergies across departments. By sharing services and infrastructure, we will improve cost-effectiveness while maintaining high-quality academic and administrative support.

In line with our commitment to transparency and accountability, and in compliance with HAHE requirements, we will also publish our Institutional Financial Plan. This comprehensive review of our expenditures, revenues, and strategic ambitions for income diversification and shared services will serve as the next key strategic milestone for DUTH.

8. MONITORING OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN



The Strategic Planning Unit (SPU), composed of the Rector, Vice Rectors and academic representation by four professors, is responsible, in accordance with Article 216 of Law No. 4957/2022, for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of DUTH's Strategic Plan. This includes overseeing the plans outlined in Articles 226, 227, and 228, as well as the institution's annual target setting. The monitoring process ensures that strategic objectives are effectively implemented across all academic and administrative units.

To facilitate this, the institution's annual target setting process translates strategic objectives into concrete actions and assigns responsibilities across units. An integrated information system[14], developed by the SPU in collaboration with the Digital Governance Unit[15], enables real-time tracking of progress and performance.

MONITORING PROCESS

Step 1: Notification of Approved Annual Targets

The Governing council approves the annual targets based on the Strategic Plan. These targets are then communicated to all relevant units. The annual target setting process ensures the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan by:

- Defining annual objectives.
- Outlining actions and required resources for implementation.
- Assigning responsibilities across academic and administrative units, as well as affiliated organizations (Research & Innovation Center, Training and Lifelong Learning Centre).

The SPU develops a proposal for annual target setting for each unit, considering the institution's approved objectives and operational plans. This proposal includes:

- A structured target-setting program.
- A detailed action plan for achieving objectives.
- Identification of necessary resources and instruments.

Step 2: Updating the Information System

The SPU collects, updates and feeds the integrated information system with the approved targets and relevant data, allowing for continuous monitoring of progress.

Step 3: Biannual Review (every 6th months)

Every six-months, the SPU conducts a review of progress on the approved actions and objectives. If any actions have not been implemented or objectives have not been met, the SPU:

- Updates the information system
- Engages with academic and administrative units to address gaps and ensure corrective measures are taken

Step 4: Yearly evaluation

At the end of the calendar year, the SPU assesses the achievement of objectives at the unit level and prepares an Achievement Report. If annual targets have not been met, the SPU:

- Prepares a proposal for revising the Strategic Plan
- Submits the progress report and recommendations for amendments to the Governing council.

Step 5: Approval & Revision

- The Governing council reviews and approves the Achievement Report and decides whether amendments or revisions to the Strategic Plan are necessary.

APPROVAL PROCESS

The proposal is communicated to the Administrative Council, Senate, and Deaneries of Schools.

The Senate and Deaneries review the proposal and provide feedback.

The Governing Council, revise amendments, adapt the Strategic plan, and set updated annual targets.

Approved objectives are communicated to all relevant academic, research, and administrative units.

The SPU updates the information system with the approved objectives and data, ensuring seamless tracking of implementation progress.

[14] This information system, managed by the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU), is utilized to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan across various levels, including institutional, school, and administrative unit levels. All operational plans stemming from the Strategic Plan are documented within this system and are subject to oversight by the SPU.

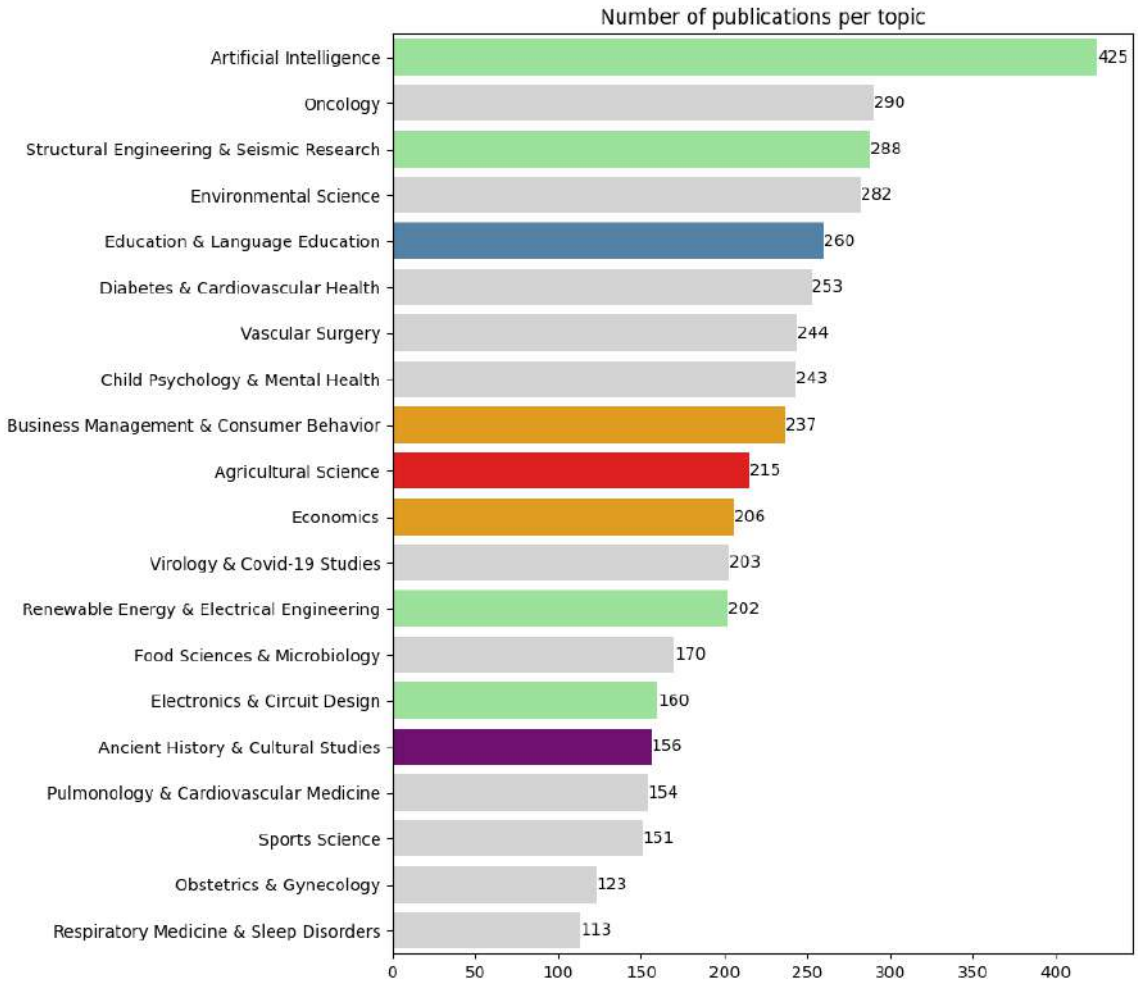
[15] HThe Digital Governance Unit is entrusted with the design, implementation, and coordination of the University's digital transformation, encompassing both academic domains (e.g., e-class) and administrative functions.

ANNEXES

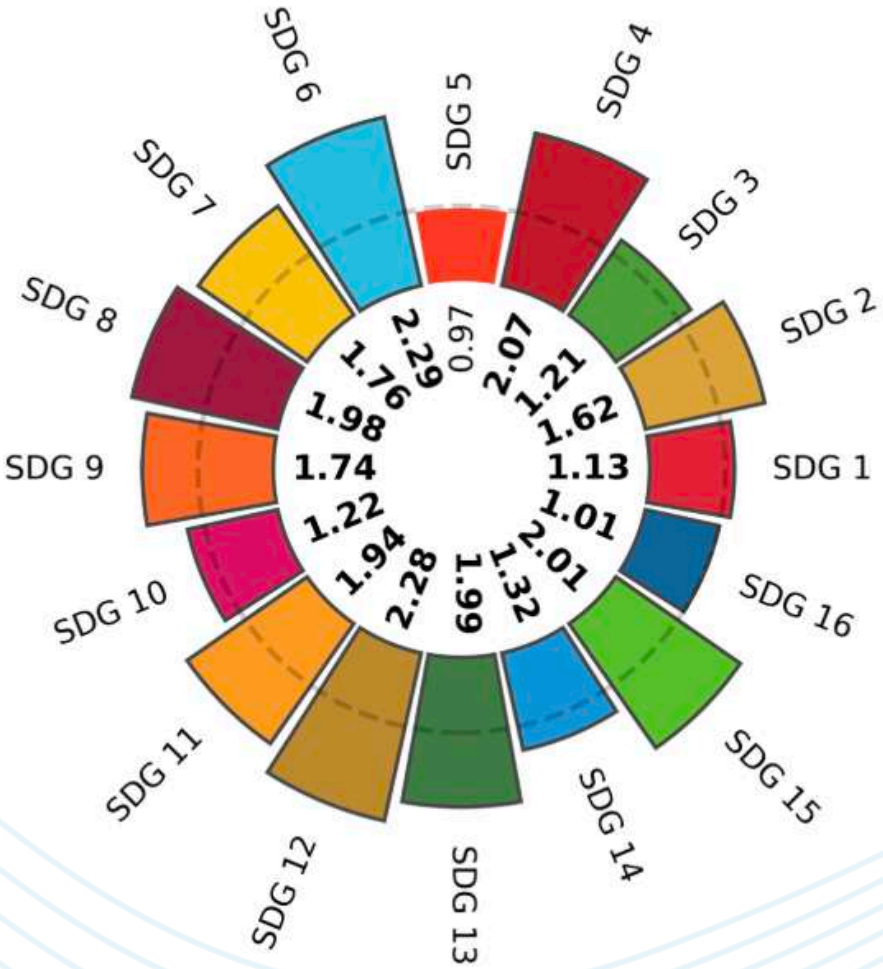
DUTH'S RESEARCH ANALYSIS

We complemented our SWOT analysis with a topic modeling analysis to gain deeper insights into DUTH's research strengths. This involved extracting and analysing the university's publications (articles, books, and book chapters) from 2019 to 2023, totaling 4,375 publications.

Using K-Means clustering, we transformed publication abstracts and titles into vector representations, allowing us to categorise them into thematic groups. This method identified 20 distinct research topics, visualized in the graph below. These insights play a key role in our strategic planning, helping us strengthen and further develop research areas where DUTH already holds a competitive advantage.



Finally, we performed an additional analysis to assess our research specialization in relation to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This in-depth scientific evaluation of DUTH's research clusters aimed to measure their potential impact on our territories and communities. The analysis revealed that our research demonstrates a higher degree of specialisation across all SDGs compared to the European average—with the exception of SDG 5. In the Figure below, the EU mean is denoted by the broken line, showing the SDGs in which the university is relatively more specialised.



SDG 1 - No Poverty

SDG 2 - Zero Hunger

SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being

SDG 4 - Quality Education

SDG 5 - Gender Equality

SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation

SDG 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy

SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth

SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

SDG 10 - Reducing Inequality

SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production

SDG 13 - Climate Action

SDG 14 - Life Below Water

SDG 15 - Life On Land

SDG 16 - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

INITIAL ROADMAP

Mission : Research

P1 : Anchoring the university to its territory by boosting community engagement

Objective :

Support research initiatives that directly address regional socio-economic and environmental challenges. This implies broadening and strengthening the university's relationship with society at large, fostering community impact and inclusivity.

Activities :

1. Structure societal engagement activities institutionally - research focus

a. Analyse and implement best practice engagement initiatives from EMERGE partners and structure moments and places of exchange

b. Mobilise the local engagement coordinator recruited in the context of EMERGE project to structure DUTH places and hybrid tools to collect needs, feedback and data from local communities to serve research projects

c. Establish a community engagement office where researchers, professors and students can easily mobilise the different communities of the university (Student, staff, private sector, regional authorities, and local populations).

d. Structure the alumni network in order to mobilise them strategically in research projects (if industrial expertise is required or as a direct link to industries)

2. Provide the right conditions for impactful research

a. Establish a DUTH Research Fund to finance projects addressing priority topics such economic growth, digital transformation, sustainable agriculture, in the form of a call for project addressing regional socio-economic priorities

b. Encourage partnerships between faculties to develop holistic solutions

c. Allocate funding that supports community engagement and collaboration with NGOs Erasmus Youth Sport ect cerv, placements.

d. Support faculty to apply for EU funding programs (e.g., Horizon Europe, Interreg, LIFE) and national grants supporting regional development by strengthening the support services

i. Set-up a workshop on grant writing for new faculty

e. Establish an internal think tank mechanism to encourage faculty to reconsider research questions that tackle societal challenges, enhance interdisciplinary impact, and maintain academic freedom while avoiding prescriptive research directions or imposed priorities.

3. Encourage participatory research and open research practices

a. Adapt curriculum to integrate more students and young researchers into projects focusing on real-world regional challenges through research projects

b. Open access research infrastructure

P2 : Enhancing the student experience and campus environment	**Objective :** Motivate undergraduate students to stay on to carry out research at DUTH by enhancing their research experience and promoting the university's research facilities. Attract new students both at undergraduate and graduate level. **Activities :** **1.** Communicate largely on the university's excellent research facilities **2.** Improve campus infrastructure to support modern learning environments, including state-of-the-art research facilities and student services. **3.** Increase collaborations with national and international universities, providing our researchers and students a large range of opportunities **4.** Reintroduce the support and co-fund student-led research projects that address societal needs, fostering early engagement with participatory and applied research practices. a. See previous initiatives supported : https://www.snf.org/en/work/priorities/education/ b. https://www.onassis.org/el/
P3 : Structuring institutional relationships with key regional to global actors	**Objective :** DUTH already counts a number of collaborations involving regional actors whether through research projects, educational programmes and lifelong learning demands and curricula adaptations. These collaborations currently depend on inter personal relations, limiting their long-term impact and potential for broader institutional engagement. Our objective is thus to structure the links with regional actors at the level of the faculty, department or governance, depending on needs. **Activities :** **1.** Involve the regional research and innovation council in the community engagement activities of the university ensuring a strong link to the regional administration **2.** Enhance effectiveness of the TTO and the Innovation Hub to facilitate joint research projects, funding applications, and knowledge transfer between faculty and businesses. a. Encourage private companies to sponsor research chairs in fields relevant to their industries (e.g., renewable energy, biotechnology, digital transformation). b. Expand collaborations with businesses to provide researchers with industry-driven projects and joint projects c. Facilitate industrial PhDs and postdoc programs co-supervised by local industries or industries working on challenges linked to those of the territory d. Position DUTH as a consul to regional authorities on pressing economic and societal issues (Policy Briefs & White Papers) **3.** Leverage DUTH's entrepreneurial structures to strengthen external research a. Strengthen and communicate internally and externally on DUTH's initiatives from entrepreneurial structures (incubator, research and innovation, community engagement office) b. Highlight and communicate about the interdisciplinary research hub and living labs in Alexandroupolis to address issues faced by the region **4.** Structure relations with national and international institutions with whom we have existing collaborations a. Conduct an in-depth analysis within the EMERGE framework to map existing research collaborations, identify key thematic areas, and uncover opportunities for strengthening interdisciplinary and cross-institutional cooperation. b. Actively support and encourage research projects that involve national or international partnerships by providing guidance, funding opportunities, and strategic networking initiatives.

E1 : Leveraging internationalisation to advance research	**Objective :** Leverage internationalisation to bring innovative research practices to the university and expand the reach of research outputs **Activities :** **1.** Form and expand (the participation within DUTH) to joint international research consortia focused on applied learning in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), social sciences, and humanities **2.** Strengthen DUTH's thematic research clusters with EMERGE partner institutions in key areas **3.** Facilitate joint PhD and postdoc programs co-supervised by researchers across EMERGE universities **4.** Internationalise our grant writing support for funding applications **5.** Organize annual research summits on strategic themes **6.** Support our researchers to attend English trainings **7.** Promote mobility opportunities for faculty and administrative staff a. Erasmus+ mobility opportunities for faculty and administrative staff b. Target Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) for researcher mobility and PhD training networks c. Set up institutional recognition & reward mobility participation
E2 : Diversifying funding sources	**Objective :** Scale DUTH's approach to research funding **Activities :** **1.** Identify good practices in supporting large research projects at DUTH and share across the campuses (ie: success story from our ERC) a. Target Horizon Europe, ERC, and National R&D Grants **2.** Develop multi-partner applications across diverse funding programmes a. PRIMA, Erasmus+, LIFE, EIC, EIT, Horizon Europe, COST Actions, DIGITAL Europe, EU4Health and INTERREG funding, notably with EMERGE partners. **3.** Offer contract research services where companies fund DUTH research on specific challenges **4.** Collaborate with Startups & SMEs for Innovation Funding **5.** Establish an Alumni Giving Fund with tiered sponsorship levels **6.** Seek philanthropic donations from foundations supporting research[16] **7.** Enhance support services for incoming researchers through EURAXESS, providing tailored guidance on funding, mobility, career development, and integration, ensuring a smooth and productive research experience.

[16] At ETH Zurich,the Schmidt Family Foundation has contributed to funding research on AI and climate change, and the Nomis Foundation has supported interdisciplinary scientific research.

E3 : Improving University Communication	**Objective :** Reinforcing our research communication internally and externally. Internally, improved communication will facilitate knowledge sharing, interdisciplinary cooperation, and better resource utilisation across departments. Externally, it will increase the university's recognition, attract funding opportunities, engage industry and society, and reinforce DUTH's role as a key player in regional and global research networks. **Activities :** **1.** Enhance internal and external communication services to facilitate information flow. a. Internally - (research focus) i. Consolidate the DUTH Open Access Registry centralising information on the institution's equipment ensuring all members of staff have an easy access to our internal listing i. Communicate about our public engagement & outreach activities i. Communicate on our research output, focusing on research with high societal impact i. Centralise and share information about internal attendance to conferences **2.** Externally - (research focus) a. Develop digital & media outreach ensuring visibility of relevant research output (notably those with high impact on society) amongst populations outside of DUTH b. Promote existing research projects that align with regional development priorities to increase visibility and attract funding. c. Publicize university initiatives, research successes, and academic achievements at national and international levels. d. Communicate about our public engagement & outreach activities e. Communicate on our research output, focusing on research with high societal impact

P1 : Anchoring the university to its territory by boosting community engagement

Objective :

Align educational offering with high-demand skills and workforce shortage forecasts.

Activities :

1. Structure societal engagement activities institutionally - education focus

a. Establish a community engagement office where DUTH, mobilising the community engagement officer recruited in the context of EMERGE. The aim of the office is to easily mobilise the different communities of the university (Student, staff, private sector, regional authorities, and local populations) in order to collect needs from the region and enrich curricula

i. Analyse and implement best practice engagement initiatives from EMERGE partners and structure moments and places of exchange in order to adapt education programmes

i. Collaborate with local industries, chambers of commerce, and government agencies to identify emerging job market trends and skill shortages.

1. Design new degree programs and specializations in high-demand fields like renewable energy, artificial intelligence, digital marketing and agribusiness

2. Design industry-led and community-based learning courses

b. Regularly conduct skills gap analysis by mobilising local industries, chambers of commerce, and government agencies through the innovation and research council and the community engagement office, to identify high-demand skills and workforce shortages

2. Using available studies and data available to adAdapt educational programmes to the needs of our communities

a. Develop attractive flexible, interdisciplinary programs that address emerging global challenges

b. Offer hybrid, online courses and programmes to accommodate diverse student needs

c. Strengthen our student's orientation and minimise student drop outs through high-school open days and through structured career information services linking study programmes to professional bodies and updated market needs.

i. Consider to provide financial support for local students and create mentorship programs to encourage high school graduates to pursue higher education

d. Develop short-term certificates and micro-credentials for all of our students, notably in the context of EMERGE

3. Develop lifelong learning programmes adapted to the needs of adult learners of the territory

a. Develop education programs and short-term certificates, micro-credentials, and professional diplomas that allow workers to upskill without committing to full degrees and adapting to the profile of students / adult learners

b. Develop e-learning courses that allow students to access programmes remotely

c. Incorporate training partnerships where companies sponsor employee upskilling programs in lifelong learning offerings

P2 : Enhancing the Student Experience and Campus Environment

Objective :

Enhance the quality and satisfaction of the student educational experience

Activities :

1. Adapt the curricula

a. Adopt new pedagogies, teaching technologies such as digital resources, VR environments, challenge-based learning (CBL) and solution-based learning (SBL) to incorporate global perspectives in the curricula

b. Design and implement minor/ major degrees with minors focusing on key transversal skills such as: digital literacy & AI applications; entrepreneurship & innovation; leadership & critical thinking; sustainability & social responsibility; intercultural communication & global perspectives

c. Allow students to take elective courses from departments outside their major

d. Create a portfolio of hybrid (online and in-person) courses across all faculties to promote transversal skills e.g. innovation, entrepreneurial mindsets etc

2. Propose programmes in distinctive fields where DUTH has identified strengths (See diagnosis section and topic modelling)

3. Propose extra curricular activities in line with skill development (conferences, cultural events, volunteering etc..)

4. Expand the adoption of internship opportunities within the degrees offered

5. Promote a culture of digital transformation

a. Upgrading IT infrastructure, cloud services, and cybersecurity measures, ensures a robust foundation for digital activities

b. Providing training programs for staff and students to improve digital literacy and competencies is essential. This includes workshops, certifications, and integrating digital skills into the curriculum.

c. Adopting Learning Management Systems (LMS), virtual classrooms, and other educational technologies facilitates interactive and flexible learning environments.

d. Encouraging an institutional culture that embraces change, innovation, and continuous learning supports the successful adoption of digital transformation initiatives through communication tools and faculty engagement.

e. Support the development of digital skills (both at basic and advanced level) by SMEs and public sector services as recommended by the EU

f. Create a “DUTH Talks” series where successful alumni share insights and experiences.

P3 : Structuring institutional relationships with key regional to global actors

Objective :

Enhance the relevance of educational programmes by improving their quality and alignment with real-world needs. Strengthening ties with regional to global actors will provide DUTH with valuable insights into essential skill development and help identify and address existing gaps between education and workforce demands.

Activities :

1. Build formal, strategic alliances with key regional actors for academic collaborations

a. Include regional stakeholders in the Advisory Committees of undergraduate and graduate programs of study.

b. Enhance experiential learning opportunities, such as internships, industry projects, and applied research, to better prepare students for real-world challenges

2. Build strategic alliances with key global actors in a few thematic fields in which DUTH is visible internationally

a. Establish targeted alliances with key international institutions, industries, and organizations in thematic fields where DUTH has strong global visibility and academic excellence

b. Conduct a comprehensive analysis to pinpoint academic disciplines where DUTH's programs are in high demand among students and where employment opportunities are not adequately addressed by local actors

c. Engage global academic and industry leaders in the restructuring of curricula to align with evolving job market expectations and essential future competencies

d. Ensure that educational programs are continuously updated to meet the demands of high-growth and high-opportunity industries, equipping graduates with relevant skills and competitive advantages

i. Put in place frequent processes in which the university will continuously collect information from its key actors through the community engagement office and global forecasts and adapt curricula to meet the ever evolving needs of its students

3. Develop strategic lifelong learning programmes

a. Partner with the regional council to propose professional certifications in key areas for civil servants (community engagement, digital transformation, ..)

b. Develop policy training for local government officials in urban planning, smart cities, and e-governance.

c. Enhance the operations of the DUTH Innovation Hub and idea generation initiatives for students and staff members

E1 : Leverage internationalisation to advance education

Objective :

Equip our students to thrive in an increasingly globalized world by enhancing the attractiveness, and opportunities associated with our educational programs by providing high-quality learning experiences that develop essential skills for both Greek and international students.

Activities :

1. Internationalise our undergraduate, masters and doctoral programmes

a. Launch English-language undergraduate and postgraduate programs to promote internationalisation at home and attract international students.

i. Set up undergraduate and master degrees in English

1. Expand internationalisation efforts aimed at attracting a global student base

b. Develop joint and double degree programmes with EMERGE partners and other international partners specializing in problem-solving methodologies. DUTH is already in the process of developing five new postgraduate joint degree programmes in Chemistry, Physical Education, and Medicine, in collaboration with prestigious international universities (Columbia University, Sorbonne University, York University, University of Zurich, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania), to enhance academic excellence and global research impact.

2. Expand the new Sports Science program launched in collaboration with Helwan University in Cairo, Egypt, by extending similar academic initiatives to other disciplines, with the medium-term goal of establishing a full branch campus in Cairo.

3. Broaden the scope of developing academic programs with partners in China and Cyprus to deepen institutional collaboration and expand DUTH's global academic footprint.

4. Encourage and support faculty members in teaching in English to enhance academic offerings and global appeal.

5. Develop interdepartmental undergraduate courses/summer - winter schools in English to attract ERASMUS+/international students

a. Develop online collaborative courses where DUTH students and international peers tackle global problems.

6. Prepare for the European Degree / Badge initiative to ensure the university remains aligned with European higher education trends.

7. Promote at home and abroad activities in the EMERGE context

8. Promoting Student and Faculty Mobility

a. Strengthening exchange agreements with partner universities

b. Encouraging faculty participation in international conferences, research projects, and global academic networks

c. Enhancing support services for incoming and outgoing exchange students

d. Integrate short term student mobilities within EMERGE

E2 : Diversifying funding sources	**Objective :** Optimise revenue from our educational activities **Activities :** **1.** Mutualise services across campuses, optimise the university's spending **2.** Scale existing graduate programmes **3.** Secure funding for industry-endowed professorships in high-demand fields (e.g., AI, green energy, medtech). **4.** Offer lifelong learning paid courses, bootcamps, and microcredentials targeted at professionals. **5.** Centralise information on the alumni, their careers and companies in order to mobilise them strategically for fundraising **6.** Expand internationalisation efforts through specialized Master's Programs aimed at attracting a global student base. **7.** Leverage Activate - Engage the Alumni and University Friends Society **8.** Propose scholarships from the MSc for funding doctoral studies. E.g. The best student of the MSc or BScto be selected for continuation in funded PhD studies.
E3: Improving University Communication and Outreach	**Objective :** Improving internal and external communication to better highlight our educational offerings, engage diverse stakeholders, and strengthen our reputation as a leading institution in a few fields and through our teaching approaches. **Activities :** **1.** Enhance digital presence by expanding the university's online platforms (website, social media, webinars, and virtual events) to better communicate programs, research, achievements, and student opportunities to both Greek and international audiences. **2.** Strengthen partnerships with regional and international actors through targeted communication initiatives, fostering collaboration in research, industry partnerships, and community engagement. **3.** Promote DUTH's educational success stories through case studies, testimonials, and success metrics, highlighting the quality of teaching, learning outcomes, and student achievements. a. Create a "DUTH Talks" series where successful alumni share insights and experiences **4.** Launch outreach programs and marketing campaigns to attract potential students, with tailored messaging for different audiences (domestic, international, and professional development learners). **5.** Facilitate transparent and regular internal communication among faculty, staff, and students to ensure alignment with institutional goals and improve the flow of information within the university community. **6.** Organize open days and seminars to increase interaction with external stakeholders and to showcase DUTH's academic offerings.

Mission : Improving University operations

P1 : Anchoring the university to its territory by boosting community engagement

Objective :

Establish the University as a dynamic and integral part of the region, fostering a mutually beneficial relationship where it actively serves and is supported by all local communities.

Activities :

1. Se-up open lectures & workshopsin the form of free or low-cost educational events on relevant topics (e.g., digital skills, sustainable agriculture, entrepreneurship) open to all communities of the region
2. Promote local culture and heritage through DUTH's participation in projects that preserve and promote Thrace's cultural identity, history and traditions

   ie : Palikidis, Angelos. "Doing History at the Edge of the Map: The "Digital Thrace" Research Project" International Public History, vol. 7, no. 1, 2024, pp. 53-65. https://doi.org/10.1515/iph-2024-2002
3. Encourage student and staff participation in community service, including tutoring, environmental conservation, and support for vulnerable groups

P2 : Enhancing the Student Experience and Campus Environment

Objective :

Improve the University operations to enhance the student's experience and campus environment

Activities :

1. Communicate on the excellent sporting facilities
2. Foster a vibrant student community through extracurricular activities, international events, and networking opportunities.
3. Organize International Cultural Events
   a. Create an Annual University Festival with concerts, art exhibitions, and talent shows
4. In line with the Expansion of Erasmus+ programs, create buddy systems for international students to connect with local peers.
5. Organise thematic hackathons on key subjects with the objective of addressing regional and/ or global challenges
6. Support the creation of university clubs (sport, hobbies, public speaking, disciplines)
7. Conduct a campus-wide sustainability audit to identify areas for improvement and set clear sustainability goals aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
   a. Promote a culture of sustainability, accessibility, and digital transformation within the university environment
8. Strengthen alumni engagement (mentoring, networking)

P3 : Structuring institutional relationships with key regional to global actors

Objective :

Improve the University operations with a focus on inclusive education and social integration

Activities :

1. In line with the GREEK recovery plan, which aims to provide vocational training to 18 ,000 refugees in Greece for a future integration into the labour market, propose vocational training programmes targeted towards refugees in Greece.
   a. Work closely with our key industries to integrate graduates to enter the job market as smoothly as possible

E1 : Leverage internationalisation to advance University operations	**Objective :** Leverage internationalisation to improve the University's operations **Activities :** **1.** Organize international fairs, cultural exchange events, and global networking opportunities to create a more inclusive campus. **2.** Position DUTH as a hub for international policy dialogues, innovation summits, and sustainability forums.
E2 : Diversifying funding sources	**Objectives :** Improving the university operations by diversifying funding sources **Activities :** **1.** Mobilise new funding streams to provide students with quality housing **2.** Work towards economies of scale and mutualisation of services **3.** Efforts should be made to fund student transportation from the municipalities.
E3: Improving University Communication and Outreach	**Objectives :** Improving University operations through Communication and Outreach **Activities :** **Internal communication** **1.** Consolidate relations between faculties and departments by structuring by-yearly in person strategic meetings **2.** Propose a clear structure of the university governance and administrative services by campus **3.** Communicate on the impact of the university (in all of its operations) to reinforce a sense of purpose within our students and staff. **External communication** **4.** Standardize internal communication protocols to ensure smooth information flow between departments. **5.** Improving External Communication & Branding **6.** Train the current communication team to adopt the university's transformation and to disseminate it effectively **7.** Publicize university initiatives, research successes, and academic achievements at national and international levels. **8.** Promote existing research projects that align with regional development priorities to increase visibility and attract funding **9.** Improve the DUTH website by focusing on user experience & navigation, clarity of DUTH's structure and governance, strengthening research and academic visibility, improve student and faculty portals, and regularly update a section with university announcements, achievements, and upcoming events.

STRUCTURE OF DUTH

Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH) is Greece's first polycentric regional university. Its administrative headquarters are in Komotini, with services operating across the following cities of the Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace: Komotini, Xanthi, Alexandroupolis, Didymoteicho, Orestiada, Drama and Kavala.

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

Democritus University of Thrace operates across multiple campuses:

Facilities in the Regional Unit of Rhodope

University Campus in Komotini A

Location: 5 km from the city center (area: Asomati).

Area: 2,985,000 m^2 with buildings covering 77,028 m^2.

Includes: The Rectorate (all administrative services), the Central Auditorium, the Student Restaurant, Student Halls, Cinema, the Sports Science Center, the Library and Information Center, walking trails with signage and fitness equipment, the School of Law, the School of Humanities[17], the Departments of the School of Physical Education, Sport Science, and Occupational Therapy:

1. Department of Physical Education and Sports Science

2. Department of Occupational Therapy

The Departments of the School of Social, Political and Economic Sciences:

1. Department of Economics

2. Department of Political Science

University Campus in Komotini B

Area: 29,592 m^2 with buildings covering 8,914 m^2.

Location: In the center of the city

Includes: The Library, Classrooms and Offices of the School of Humanitites, the Departments of the School of Social, Political, and Economic Sciences:

1. Department of Social Policy

2. Department of Social Work

[17] This is a single-department School that resulted from the merger of the three Departments (Department of Greek Philology, Department of History and Ethnology & Department of Language, Literature and Culture of Black Sea Countries) of the School of Classics and Humanities and includes 2 Undergraduate Study Programs (USP in Philology, History and Anthropology and USP in Digital Applications in Arts and Culture).

Facilities in the Regional Unit of Xanthi

University Campus in Xanthi A

Location: 3 km from the city center (area: Kimmeria).

Area: 1,354,340 m^2 with buildings covering 38,791 m^2.

Includes: Student Halls, Student Restaurant, the Auditorium for Ceremonies and Events, Energy Center, Greenhouse (demonstration field), and the Departments of the Polytechnic School:

1. Department of Civil Engineering

2. Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

3. Department of Architectural Engineering

Laboratories of the Department of Environmental Engineering.

University Campus in Xanthi B

Location: In the center of the city

Area: 22,275 m^2 with buildings covering 18,409 m^2.

Includes: The Polytechnic School Library, Central Auditorium, buildings with administrative services of DUTH, Student Halls for ERASMUS students - Phd candidates and invited Professors, Student Restaurant and the Departments of the Polytechnic School:

1. Department of Production and Management Engineering

2. Department of Environmental Engineering

Facilities in the Regional Unit of Evros

University Campus in Alexandroupolis A

Location: 6 km from the center of Alexandroupolis (area: Dragana).

Area: 773,000 m^2 with buildings covering 27,700 m^2.

Includes: University Hospital, Health Sciences School Library, Administration Building, Indoor Gymnasium, Sports Field, Auditorium, and the Departments of the Health Sciences School:

1. Department of Medicine

2. Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics

3. Department of Nursing

University Campus in Alexandroupolis B

Location: 2 km from the center of Alexandroupolis (area: N. Chili).

Area: 30.757 τ.μ. με κτίρια που καλύπτουν έκταση 6.213 τ.μ.

Includes: Student Restaurant, Auditorium and the Departments of the School of Education Sciences:

1. Department of Primary Education

2. Department of Education Sciences in Early Childhood

Facilities in the center of Alexandroupolis

Includes: Teaching School - Part of the facilities of the Departments of the School of Education Sciences.

University Campus in Didymoteicho

Area: 2,121 m^2.

Includes: Library, The Department of the School of Education Sciences:

1. Department of Psychology

University Campus in Orestiada

Location: 1 km from the center of Orestiada.

Area: 7,786.64 m^2 with buildings covering 4,768.63 m^2.

Includes: The Library, the Greenhouses, the Departments of the School of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences:

1. Department of Forestry and Management of the Environment and Natural Resources

2. Department of Agricultural Development

Facilities in Orestiada

Area: 3,094.23 m^2 with buildings covering 2,474 m^2.

Includes: Student Halls and Student Restaurant.

Facilities granted to DUTH for use (former ELGO-DIMITRA)

Location: 1 km from the center of Orestiada.

Area: 9,809.00 m^2 with buildings covering 791.66 m^2.

Includes: Laboratory and teaching building for the Departments of the School of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, the Department of Veterinary Medicine of the Health Sciences School.

Facilities in the Regional Unit of Kavala

University Campus in Kavala

Location: 4 km from the center of Kavala (area: Ag. Loukas).

Area: 132,000 m^2 with buildings covering 36,680.27 m^2.

Includes: Library building, Offices for administrative services of DUTH, Student Halls, Student Restaurant, and the Departments of the School of Management Science and Accounting:

1. Department of Management Science and Technology

2. Department of Accounting and Finance

And the Departments of the School of Sciences:

1. Department of Informatics

2. Department of Physics

3. Department of Chemistry

Facilities in the Regional Unit of Drama

University Campus in Drama

Location: 3 km from the center of Drama (area: Proastio).

Area: 100,776 m^2 with buildings covering 6,303 m^2.

Includes: Offices with administrative services of DUTH and the Departments of the School of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences:

1. Department of Viticulture and Oenology[18]

2. Department of Natural Environment & Climate Resilience[19]

[18] The former Department of Agricultural Biotechnology and Oenology
[19] The former Department of Forestry and Natural Environment

Also operating at DUTH:

- The **Centre for Teaching & Learning** in the city of Alexandroupolis which provides a range of training activities for teachers,
- The **Centre for Counselling and Psychological Support** which provides relevant work in all the cities where the DUTH is based,
- The **Training and Lifelong Learning Centre** which provides relevant work in all the cities where the DUTH is based,
- The **Europe Direct points** in Xanthi, Komotini, Alexandroupolis and Drama.
- The **Career Office** in Xanthi,
- The **Innovation Hub** in Xanthi,
- The **Start-up Incubators** in Xanthi and Kavala,
- The **Manea Gallery** in Komotini.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The human resources of DUTH are presented in Table 1.

Category	Number
Faculty Members	577
Special Teaching Staff	34
Laboratory Teaching Staff	66
Laboratory Technical Staff	62
Administrative Staff	247

Category	Number
Undergraduate Students	39.936
Active undergraduate Students	20.919
Postgraduate Students	5.216
Phd Candidates	1.772
Postdoctoral Researchers	160

Table 1: The major categories of DUTH's human resources in numbers (Source: QAU's Information System - academic year 2023-2024)

RESEARCH ACTIVITY

DUTH supports research through the appropriate structures outlined below.

The DUTH Innovation Hub aims to foster entrepreneurial activity and innovation at Democritus University of Thrace by promoting and leveraging research, and supporting innovative ideas, plans, and teams until they enter the market.

THINC, located at the Engineering School of Democritus University of Thrace in Xanthi, is a Greek-based incubator that supports young entrepreneurs and start-ups. It provides the necessary infrastructure and services to help them achieve their business goals in the region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace.

THEKLA, located at the School of Sciences of Democritus University of Thrace in Kavala, is an iincubator that facilitates the establishment and growth of new businesses, as well as the development of the local entrepreneurial innovation ecosystem.

The Special Account for Research Funds of DUTH has a department of Programming, Project Monitoring, and Research Results that include:

- Proposal Submission Office
- Research Results Utilization Office
- Project Monitoring Office

Table 2 presents data regarding research funding at DUTH.

Category of Funding	Amount (€)
Funding of national active projects from European funds and initiatives	4.049.866,91
Funding of active European projects (HORIZON etc.)	3.457.879,06
Funding of active projects by international companies and organizations	1.763.789,62

Table 2: *Major categories of DUTH's funding for research (Source: QAU's Information System - year 2024)*

Title	Number
Publications[20]	1.269
Funding per faculty member[21]	141.172,30 €
Citations per faculty member[22]	60,62

Table 3: *Major research indicators of DUTH (2024)*

[20] Publications under DUTH's affiliation during 2024 (source: SCOPUS)
[21] Source: QAU's Information System - year 2024
[22] Source: QAU's Information System - year 2024