

Interim Assessment HRS4R



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ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
<i>Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research</i>	249
<i>Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)</i>	21
<i>Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)</i>	1
<i>Of whom are women</i>	98
<i>Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.</i>	68
<i>Of whom are stage R2</i>	86
<i>Of whom are stage R1</i>	95
<i>Total number of students (if relevant) with Ph.D. students</i>	3004
<i>Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)</i>	326
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
<i>Total annual organisational budget</i>	18 087 240
<i>Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)</i>	7 651 196
<i>Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)</i>	7 518 313
<i>Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research</i>	132 883

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

The Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University (hereinafter referred to as FSS MU) currently has 3,004 students, 7 departments and 3 institutes. Those interested in studying can choose from a wide range of Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degree programmes offered in both Czech and English. The FSS is one of the youngest faculties of Masaryk University, established in 1998. Masaryk University comprises a total of 10 faculties, 2 institutes, 10 departments and 3 special purpose facilities. The FSS MU entered the HRS4R process independently in 2019 with strong support of Masaryk University. In 2020-2022, the FSS was awarded the two-year EU project HR4MUII Human Resource Development and Other Strategic Areas for Research Support at MU, which started changes in HR strategy and process implementation. The content and procedures of the HR Award are mentioned in the Organisational Regulations of the FSS MU (FSS MU Directive 3/2022) and HR management and staff development are anchored in the Masaryk University Strategic Plan 2021-2028.

Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice:

I. Ethical and professional aspects:

STRENGTHS:

Masaryk University (hereinafter referred to as MU) has high goals regarding the reinforcement and perception of the value of ethical behaviour, which forms the basis of MU's internal culture. Fundamental topics such as academic freedom and freedom of research, ethical aspects of scientific work, non-discrimination, good research practices, dissemination and use of results are anchored and treated in university and faculty documents. The documents are regularly reviewed and updated by relevant working groups of experts from across the University.

Respect for the principles of academic ethics is promoted at MU through various platforms and public statements by the Rector.

MU supports projects aimed at facilitating research activities for young researchers at the beginning of their careers.

The Masaryk University Code of Ethics was commented on by the University management, the MU Ethics Committee, the MU Research Ethics Committee and the Academic Senate in the period 2021-2022. The Code of Ethics will be published in Q4/2023 and is fully in line with [MU's Strategic Plan 2021-2028](#). It includes the entire university community (i.e. students, academic and non-academic MU employees), is declarative in nature and contains the basic moral values to which MU subscribes and complements other MU legal regulations such as the Disciplinary Regulations for Students or the Work Regulations for Employees. All documents currently issued by the University are in both Czech and English. All comments on the Code of Ethics have already been processed and approved, so we list them in the strengths section.

As of 4/2023, MU has established [an ombudsperson](#). With the institute of the so-called ombudsman, who should, for example, investigate complaints for the protection of rights, provide assistance and advice to parties in conflict, etc., the protection of rights will become a new and special area of methodological management of the University.

MU has issued a [Gender Equality Plan for 2022-2024](#) and the FSS fully respects it. A gender audit was conducted at the faculty 07/2021 and the data forwarded to the university level for evaluation.

MU is active and has received a number of prestigious awards, e.g. Award for Excellence in Internationalisation, is a member of the European Network for Academic Integrity, has established the [MUNI HELPS](#) volunteer centre (e.g. in times of covid or refugees from Ukraine), MU Students' Advisory Services and others.

MU offers the possibility to place children in private kindergartens [„Elanek“](#) near the workplace of MU parents.

The University offers those who publish with selected Open Access publishers the possibility of a discount or publishing for free.

[The MU Centre for Technology Transfer](#) is preparing an educational video for the MU staff.

Action plan at the faculty level:

The FSS MU is one of the well-established institutions in the Czech Republic and in the region of Central Europe. All departments of the Faculty are staffed by renowned scientists in their respective fields with high potential in research and publication. International mobility is an important goal and priority, as is international cooperation across disciplines.

Within the framework of the HR4MUII project, several management courses for senior staff have been implemented at the FSS, essential faculty documents have been translated into English and a number of policies, methodological sheets and other supporting documents have been produced.

Since 2020, all information has been gradually communicated to employees in both Czech and English, and essential internal regulations are bilingual.

The Faculty's communication department is constantly improving its activities. It regularly informs employees, including reports on the dissemination and use of research results, has a communication strategy for all target groups and uses a uniform visual style. The faculty runs a series of expert debates, designed across disciplines, which are open to the public, including the possibility of online access, and enjoy a high level of interest.

During the academic year, staff are informed weekly about current events at the faculty by means of an entry in both Czech and English. Once a month, a faculty newsletter with a nice graphic design is published for the staff, which contains important information, offers various training courses, informs about successful projects, introduces the staff, etc. Formal events of a personal nature are prepared for the staff, e.g. Faculty Day, Tea with the Dean and other less formal events such as Semesterend, Advent staff meeting, etc.

Staff are regularly trained through an on-line application in OSH and fire safety, completed by a test.

In the period 2020-2022, 14 management courses were implemented for faculty staff and other management courses organised by the University are regularly offered to all staff in cooperation with the [Competence Development Centre](#) (hereinafter referred to as CERPEK).

Training in areas such as GDPR, financial control, control systems, cyber security, the Management Information System and more is available to employees in the format of online training or a recording published on the Employee Portal.

The Faculty has its own [Grant Strategy 2025](#) to attract national and international grant funding and to support the building of new research teams. Service units actively provide high quality services and the

collaboration between researchers and staff in the Research and Project Support Unit, the Economics Unit and the Human Resources Unit is well set up to allow academic staff to focus on their research activities.

The [Methodology Sheet 3/2022 Guide to the Ethical Approval of Research Activities at FSS MU](#) has been issued and updated.

A training course "I have GA ČR and I am not afraid of it" has been prepared for the recipients of GA ČR projects. This training is popular among junior researchers.

[The Central Library](#) organizes regular seminars on [Open Science](#), Open Data, Open Access.

It is set up how to deal with discrimination or misconduct. The [website has information on how to proceed](#) and who to contact in case of inappropriate sexual harassment, an email list has been set up for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Academic Senate and the HR Manager. In the 2023 survey, 7,2% of employees indicated that they did not know who to contact in the event of discrimination or inappropriate behavior.

The faculty financially supported the implementation of a workshop for students, "Respekt až na půdu", on the prevention of sexual coercion and unwanted attention. This workshop was also offered at the university level for faculty members. The associations organize lectures on this topic at the faculty premises and the management supports these preventive activities.

An analysis of the university's 'EVAK' evaluation criteria was conducted. The updated application allows faculty departments to vary and set their own indicators. In general, teaching, research and publication activities and organisational and personal approach are evaluated for academic staff. The evaluation takes place once a year.

The Faculty has issued a new [Guideline for the evaluation of non-academic staff](#). The evaluation was implemented in 2023 and will be conducted regularly once a year.

Senior staff have been trained in conducting appraisal interviews.

A bi-annual appraisal of senior staff by their subordinates is undertaken.

The faculty has its own data analyst and collects the necessary data for evaluation and emphasizes on computerization of other processes in collaboration with IT staff.

[Strategic Plan FSS MU 2021-2028](#).

WEAKNESSES:

- Not all published articles are bilingual.

- The FSS does not use the application in the MU Information System called Regulations Agreement. Staff have little awareness of the regulations repository and potential document retrieval. Current Regulations Agreement is done via emails to staff.
- Little promotion of the Staff Portal, which offers well-arranged information on the functioning of the University with a FSS link.
- The evaluation system is not linked to staff development and training and proactively offer required training to staff as part of individual development.
- The new role of ombudsperson has not been established yet. Lack of promotion of her competences.
- Few formal and informal gatherings of the faculty community as a whole (alumni, former employees, family members, etc.).
- High administrative burden on researchers and educators and offer expert assistance from administrative staff.

II. Recruitment and selection:

STRENGTHS:

Two working groups, composed of representatives of faculties and other units of the University, have been established at the University level to develop a new Selection Procedure Code so that the new Code is fully in line with the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTMR).

As of 2023, the University has an updated [Selection Procedure Code](#) in force, which the Faculty supplements with its Faculty Measure [Implementing Regulations to the MU Selection Procedure Code](#) and the [OTM-R booklet](#), which describes in detail how selection procedures are conducted at the Faculty. Information on the selection procedure is available to anyone interested in a vacant position. All documents are published on the Faculty's website.

At the university level, the JOBS.MU application has been adapted, which offers simple management of selection procedures as well as clear data on the tracking of outputs for objective and transparent selection procedures (number of external and internal candidates, number of candidates from abroad, number of female candidates, number of women on selection committees, advertising portals).

A [PostDoc Policy](#) has been developed and a university methodological sheet Principles and Recommendations for PostDoc Management at MU has been issued, which sets out procedures and criteria for the employment of staff working in postdoctoral positions in accordance with the principles of The European Charter & Code for Researchers.

The faculty's system of advertising vacancies has been expanded, especially to include foreign portals such as Euraxess. Advertising is managed centrally through the Faculty's Personnel Department and according to the individual needs of the departments.

The Personnel Department sends an on-line feedback questionnaire to candidates who have advanced to the second round and analyses the data.

In 2022, the faculty implemented four training sessions for academic staff from all departments to participate competently in the selection committees. The faculty meets a balanced representation of trained men and women.

WEAKNESSES:

- There is no feedback checklist at the FSS when employees leave.
- The faculty does not have a Career Code for R1-R4 researchers.
- Advertising of vacancies on international portals should be expanded.
- Not all administrative managers are trained for professional participation in the selection committee.

III. Working Conditions and Social Security

STRENGTHS:

The Higher Education Act and the Labour Code are currently undergoing legislative amendments. The Labour Code is being fundamentally changed to benefit employees in line with EU directives and should be finalised in 2023/2024.

At the university level, the [Collective Agreement](#) was updated, which secured a 10% increase in the tariff wage for employees last year and commits the university to increase the tariff wage again in the next two years.

A handbook for parents from the Czech Republic, „Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave in a Nutshell“, has been prepared, which aims to outline the steps and procedures that occur when the life situation changes with the birth of a child.

MU has issued a [Gender Equality Plan for 2022-2024](#), and this gender policy is fully respected at faculty level.

In 2023, the MU Counselling Centre will begin to expand its scope. Previously, the centre was primarily for students and their affairs. The centre will offer career and psychological counselling for employees, with expanded prevention content such as mental health and psychohygiene.

The MU [International Cooperation Centre](#) looks after staff coming to work at MU and offers help with practical matters such as accommodation, kindergarten, school etc.

MU has published a guidance sheet, [Career System at MU](#), which provides information and guidance for staff on career development and career growth. It offers motivational elements, counselling and consultancy support and self-assessment tools for career development and growth.

MU Directive 3/2008 Handling and Registration of Complaints, Suggestions and Petitions was updated in 2020 and the process of filing complaints at MU, and hence at the Faculty, is strengthened by the new position of the University Ombudsperson.

Tenure in senior positions (dean, head of department or research unit) is limited in time and period by the FSS Statutes.

At the faculty level, a [guide for new employees](#) has been developed to facilitate the onboarding of new employees. The Faculty has also developed an electronic application that facilitates procedures for onboarding a new employee and identifies a mentor to train the newcomer.

The Faculty newsletter regularly offers staff the opportunity to take advantage of CERPEK to enhance their teaching skills. The intensive development of modern teaching, as well as the development of distance and online learning, is anchored in the FSS MU Strategic Plan.

Parents can now place their children in a [private kindergarten](#), which is located in the university building and is 40 metres away from the faculty.

The Stress Management course was opened twice to all faculty members.

In the 2023 survey, when asked if I would "recommend employment at FSS to my friends and acquaintances", respondents answered in the affirmative

92% of senior researchers and academics

78% of junior researchers and academics

95% of administrative staff

75% of international researchers

and 86% of Ph.D. students would recommend Ph.D. studies at the FSS.

Administrative staff are now also included in the nomination of award-winning excellence.

The faculty website lists specific steps to ensure [safety in the event of sexual harassment](#).

WEAKNESSES:

- There is no Career and Staff Development Manual and career development and workload amounts at the faculty level is not set.
- The faculty has not established Welcome days for new faculty employees.
- The faculty has not developed the Faculty Benefits Methodology Sheet.
- Few informal gatherings of the staff.
- A lack of greater support to caring staff in both junior and senior positions.
- Low support of work culture and care of employees.

IV. Training and development

STRENGTHS:

As part of the two-year HR4MUII project, 14 management skills support courses (Management Style, Communication and Interviewing, Emotional Leadership, Time Management, Stress Management, Presentation Skills, and others) were delivered at the faculty level, with 74 employees participating across selected topics. Training courses were offered both targeted and in general to all employees. Other professional courses were also implemented within the project, e.g. in the field of IT (network security management, network monitoring etc.), or in the field of Human Resources or project management and administration. The training was carried out both online and face-to-face, always in line with the current situation around the covid.

[Faculty Methodology Sheet 2/2022 Professional and Career Development at FSS MU](#) was issued.

The faculty issued [Measure 8/2021 Principles of providing personal development](#) allowance for academic and non-academic staff.

In cooperation with [CERPEK](#), a working group was established. In the working group, the faculty has a coordinator who disseminates further education offer to the faculty staff. The training coordinator also identifies the needs and demand of employees for further training and development on the basis of regular annual staff appraisals. The Faculty Coordinator also assists the academic and administrative staff with the administration and organization of development and training. Demand for training is increasing amongst faculty staff. (From the data available, the greatest demand for development is in the areas of language training, mentoring, supervision and wellbeing).

Nationally, legislative changes are occurring in the area of Ph.D. studies. The faculty wants to focus on successful completion of Ph.D. studies and is looking for ways to achieve this. The scholarship for Ph.D. students was increased by 25% in 2022.

In addition, project resources are being sought at the faculty level to engage Ph.D. students so that they can focus fully on their studies. Regular meetings are held with supervisors to ensure functional and regular quality assessment of Ph.D. programmes.

At the faculty level a Doctoral Studies Handbook: [Ph.D Study](#) has been developed in collaboration with the working group, which gives a concise description of what doctoral studies entail and is intended for both doctoral students and their supervisors.

Ph.D. students were involved in both the 2020 survey with a 10% return rate, and the 2023 survey with a 29% return rate.

Within the internal projects of the University (2022-2025), funds are offered for the implementation of lectures for foreign experts and lecturers.

In order to increase pedagogical competences in teaching, CERPEK publishes a newsletter. At the same time, employees and Ph.D. students are informed about planned training programmes by email or faculty newsletter.

Statistics are kept on training events that take place on the faculty or university platform.

WEAKNESSES:

- The position and the role of the trainer and mentor is not specified.
- Little motivation of Ph.D. students to successful and early graduation.
- Continue to set quality standards for the work of supervisors and strengthen communication between supervisors and PhD students.
- Expand training and development offerings to employees, including English language training.

OTMR

The implementation of the OTM-R principles was an important part of the project. The University has managed to amend the [Selection Procedure Code with effect from 1 January 2023](#). This University Selection Procedure Code is complemented by the [MU FSS Faculty Measure 10 2022 Implementing Regulation of the Selection Procedure Code](#) and the Faculty booklet [Principles of OTM-R](#) for Recruitment, which clearly defines the methods and procedures for faculty selection procedures.

A working group of HR and IT experts worked together to develop the JOBS.MU application, which offers clear data and simple administration of selection procedures.

All the documents mentioned above are published here in bilingual form: [HR Award/HRS4R/Implementation/ Recruitment and Selection](#).

Four full-time training sessions (4 hours in length) were implemented at the Faculty in 2022 for academic staff from all departments to improve their qualifications for serving on selection committees. The faculty meets a balanced representation of trained men and women, a list of trained persons is available in the booklet [Principles of OTM-R](#) on page 14, which also defines how to advertise positions on page 12. All administration of selection procedures at the FSS is managed by the Human Resources Department in collaboration with the specific department where the selection procedure is being prepared.

The Personnel Department collects [feedback on the implemented selection procedures](#) from candidates who have attended the interview (in person or online).

As part of the HR strategy improvement, the HR Manager attended the HR Managers Academy (66 hours with an external training supplier and other training). The Head of HR attended a set of training courses to strengthen the HR strategy, totalling 63 hours with external suppliers.

The PostDoc position has been defined at the university level in the [Guideline POST DOC](#).

The Career Code that the faculty committed to develop as part of the OTM-R strategy has been pushed back in time to 1Q/2026.

In the coming period, the Faculty will train new members for the selection committees (non-academic staff) and will work with and continuously improve the outputs of the feedback on the selection process.

ACTION PLAN HRS4R 2023 - 2026

	<i>Proposed ACTIONS</i>	<i>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</i>	<i>Responsible Unit</i>	<i>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</i>
1.	<p>Internationalization - bilingual environment of the FSS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the FSS website so that all information is also in English. • Promote the language skills of staff (contribution to language course) • Offer development programmes also in English • Expand advertising of vacancies on foreign portals • Encourage international mobility for academic and administrative staff • More intensive support for employees from abroad <p>IN PROGRESS <i>Following the activity No. 1</i></p>	Q3/2025	Vice Dean for Communication and Vice Dean for Internationalisation and Student Affairs	Web link, data on staff participation in courses, data on programmes and advertisements, workshops on international mobility
2.	<p>Improve the staff training system (face-to-face and online) and further expand the training offer among staff in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual property • Updated MU Code of Ethics • I have a project and I'm not afraid of it • GDPR 	Q4/2024	Education Coordinator, HR manager, in cooperation with CERPEK	Number of training courses and employees trained

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management skills for new managers • Continuing education for Ph.D. students • Well-being • Stress management <p>IN PROGRESS <i>Following the activity No. 2</i></p>			
3.	<p>Centralize the system of trainings promotion and event data collection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the offer and data available at faculty level (cooperation with CERPEK) <p>NEW</p>	Q1/2024	Training Coordinator, HR Manager, CERPEK	Number of employees trained, promotion of the Training Portal and other platforms
4.	<p>Develop a "Package of regulations":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile all legal anchors and workflow systems into one clear map on the faculty website that clearly links to up-to-date information to address specific issues <p>EXTENDED <i>Following the activity No. 4</i></p>	Q1/2024	Bursar in cooperation with HR Manager	App or other platform for easy employee familiarisation with regulations
5.	<p>Preventing inappropriate behaviour - discrimination:</p>	Q1/2024	Vice Dean for Communication and HR Manager	Flyers, information in the faculty newsletter, informing employees by email, workshop

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote at the faculty level the new position of University Ombudsperson and its competencies Systematically support researchers and staff with family and caring responsibilities Strengthen and develop conditions for equal opportunities for women and their inclusion in senior research positions <p>IN PROGRESS <i>Following the activity No. 5</i></p>			
6.	<p>Care for new employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and organise a Welcome Day for new employees <p>NEW</p>	Q4/2023	HR Manager in cooperation with the Personnel Department	Number of implemented Welcome days, structure of Welcome day, presentations and number of participants
7.	<p>Improve internal communication strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop faculty communication on social media (Twitter and LinkedIn) Strengthen academic and administrative staff belonging based on shared values Promote the Staff Portal among faculty members Compile a Method Sheet with benefits offered at the Faculty (specifying Home Office options, etc.) 	Q2/2024	Vice Dean for Communication in cooperation with HR manager and faculty management	Number of formal and informal events, published articles, methodological sheet, contributions

	IN PROGRESS <i>Following the activity No. 9</i>			
8.	Development of interdisciplinary cooperation at the FSS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek interdisciplinary research topics across disciplines in international and domestic grant competitions NEW	Q3/2025	Faculty management in cooperation with heads of departments	Off-site meetings, number of grants submitted
9.	Define the amount of work per full-time equivalent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define, name, and specify work activities (research, scholarly, and teaching) for R1-R4 researchers and Ph.D. students. EXTENDED <i>Following the activity No. 11</i>	Q1/2026	Faculty management in cooperation with heads of departments	The document and its presentation to staff at selected workplaces
10.	Establish a mentoring system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name and define the position of mentor and supervisor to provide support and guidance in the professional development of researchers, to motivate and contribute to professional security IN PROGRESS <i>Following the activity No. 12</i>	Q4/2025	Faculty management in cooperation with the HR manager	Document and introduction to employees

11.	Improve conditions for Ph.D. students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set standards for the quality of mentors' work and communication between mentors and PhD students • Involve doctoral students in research projects NEW	Q2/2025	Vice Dean for Research and Doctoral Studies	Document, presentation to students and supervisors at a joint meeting
12.	Develop a talent management system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a functional support system for junior researchers with potential for research excellence NEW	Q3/2025	Vice Dean for Research and Doctoral Studies	Number of trainings, persons supported
13.	Promoting work-life balance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee contribution to improving the working environment • Offer workshops and work-life balance training • Offer psychological consultancy for staff within the MU Students' Advisory Services NEW	Q4/2024	Bursar, HR Manager in collaboration with RMU Department of Personnel Management	Document, number of trainings, number of trained persons and web
14.	A benefit for junior and senior employees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option to choose to use the benefit for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Nursery allowance 	Q1/2025	HR Manager in collaboration with RMU Department of Personnel Management	Modification of the document, promotion among employees.

	b) Supplementary pension insurance NEW			
15.	OTM-R: Develop a manual - Career Regulations for researchers at the FSS in collaboration with university-wide measures EXTENDED <i>Following the activity No. 17</i>	Q4/2025	Faculty management in collaboration with the HR Manager and the RMU Department of Personnel Management	Manual Career Regulations
16.	OTM-R: Implement in-person training for administrative leaders for participation in the selection committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified participation of administrative leaders in search committees NEW	Q1/2024	HR manager	Number of persons trained
17.	OTM-R: Develop a checklist to obtain feedback when an employee is leaving NEW	Q2/2024	HR manager	Feedback and subsequent search for process improvements