

**ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY**

*EVALUATION REPORT*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. The history of the Institutional Evaluation Programme

The Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) was launched in 1994 by CRE<sup>1</sup> (Association of the European Universities, the predecessor of the European University Association) as a service to member institutions. In 1996 CRE offered evaluated institutions a Follow-Up of the IEP evaluation. IEP offers evaluations to support the participating institutions in the continuing development of their strategic quality management and internal quality culture. Today more than 250 IEP's *supportive peer reviews* (Trow, 1994) have been conducted, mainly in Europe but also in South America, Africa (Amaral, et al., 2008), and, more recently, Asia.

The distinctive features of the Institutional Evaluation Programme are: (1) a strong emphasis on the self-evaluation phase, (2) a peer-review approach, (3) a European and international perspective, (4) a support to improvement, and (5) a focus on the institution as a unit.

The focus of the IEP is the institution as a whole and not the individual study programmes or units. It focuses for instance upon (1) decision-making processes and institutional structures and effectiveness of strategic management and (2) relevance of internal quality processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision making and strategic management as well as perceived gaps in these internal mechanisms.

The evaluation is guided by four key questions, which are based on a 'fitness for (and of) purpose' approach:

- 1) What is the institution trying to do?
- 2) How is the institution trying to do it?
- 3) How does it know it works?
- 4) How does the institution change in order to improve?

The aim of the IEP evaluation is to contribute to the dynamics of development and evaluation of the university's capacity for change.

### 1.2. The IEP Team

The IEP Team consisted of:

- Professor Kenneth Edwards, former Chair of CRE and former Rector of University of Leicester, United Kingdom, Chair of the Team
- Professor Airi Rovio-Johansson, Copenhagen Business School, Learning Lab, Denmark, and Gothenburg Research Institute at University of Gothenburg, Sweden, Team Coordinator

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<sup>1</sup> CRE (*Conférence Permanente des Recteurs, des Présidents et Vice-Chanceliers des Universités*), known as The Association of European Universities (in English) was founded 1957. In 2001/2002 CRE merged with the Confederation of European Rectors' Conferences and established the European University Association (EUA).

- Professor Bertrand Weil, former Vice-President of Université Paris 12, France
- Professor Noel Whelan, former Vice President and Dean Emeritus of the University of Limerick, Ireland
- Student representative Bartłomiej Banaszak, University of Warsaw, Poland.

### **1.3. The Self-Evaluation Process**

The Self-Evaluation Report (SER, 2010) gave an excellent overview of Istanbul University (IU). It was comprehensive in its analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the University. It was sent to the Team members in good time before the Team's *First Visit*, 21 to 23 February 2010.

During the First visit at IU, the Team met representatives of the following four faculties: Faculty of Science, Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Business Administration, and Faculty of Law. The Team also meet the Rector and Vice rectors, representatives of the Rectorate, the Self-Evaluation Group, representatives of external partners, and representatives of: academics, graduate and undergraduate students and administrative staff.

At the end of the First Visit the IEP Team asked for supplementary information for the Second Visit, regarding:

- figures of total income and total expenditures;
- revolving funds and its criteria for obtaining money;
- the administrative decision structure;
- job descriptions of the Vice Rectors, Deans, Heads of department, Heads of and Institutes;
- indicators used to assess research programmes and performances of each faculty member;
- the average time to graduation on undergraduate programmes;
- drop out and failure rates on all undergraduate programmes;
- the document clarifying the Guidelines for implementing the Bologna reform, particularly referring to application of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System).

The Team's *Second Visit* at IU took place 18 to 21 May, 2010. The Team visited and met representatives of the Faculty of Letters and the Faculty of Economics. The Team also had the possibility to meet Rector and Vice Rectors, Secretary General, and representatives of: the Senate, deans, academics, international researchers and international students, central office staff, student delegation and outside partners.

### **1.4. The international, national, and institutional context of Istanbul University**

#### *International context*

The adoption and implementation of the *Bologna Declaration* (1999) aimed at making European Higher Education *comparable* and *transparent* in order to enhance student *mobility* and *employability* in Western European countries (EUA, 2001). The reorganised European Higher Education Area (EHEA) promoted a wave of change among European universities. The transformation of public institutions and higher education systems, favoured the emergence of structures of institutional self-regulation,

which were influenced and dependant on a number of factors. Universities put stronger focus on mission and results as well as on quality enhancement and the development of a quality culture in the EHEA. This changes activities and favours diversity and creativity in universities (EUA, 2001, 2003, 2005; ENQA, 2005). The effects of the “*global knowledge economy*” (Gúrúz, 2008) for universities are: “(1) increasing demands; (2) demographic shift and non-traditional students; (3) the rise of market forces; (4) impact of technology; (5) new providers and increasing competition, and (6) globalization/internationalization”.

The essential points of higher education changes are: (i) that higher education has become global in that comparisons are made on an international scale and changes, such as those resulting from the Bologna Declaration, impact directly on individual universities; while (ii) in a knowledge based economy the expectations which societies have of the contributions universities can make have become stronger and more sharply focussed (for example creating graduates with good employability skills and research of relevance to the needs of the society).

The Team is pleased to note IU’s awareness of this new situation by asking for an evaluation of its activities by the *Institutional Evaluation Programme*.

#### *National context*

The Turkish higher education system is a centrally directed one, comprising mainly universities. According to *Higher Education in Turkey* (2009), there are currently 130 universities in Turkey, of which 94 are state institutions and 36 are non-profit foundation (private) universities. In the academic year 2008/09, the total number of students enrolled in higher education institutions in Turkey below doctoral level was 1.720.031 (excluding students from vocational higher schools which are in the short cycle) (*Higher Education in Turkey*, 2009). Out of those 1.676.312 (97 %) were enrolled in the three cycle degree programme excluding students enrolled in Dentistry, Medicine and Veterinary Medicine programmes (*Higher Education in Turkey*, 2009).

The Turkish higher education system is centralised, with five upper bodies, controlling, regulating, supervising, and coordinating the system (*Higher Education in Turkey*, 2009): (1) The *Higher Education Council* (YÖK) established in 1981 is the central regulatory body; (2) The *Inter-University Council* (UAK), acts as an academic advisory body and in some cases as a decision-making body; (3) The *Turkish University Rector’s Committee* (TURC), which is equivalent to the Rectors’ Conference; (4) The *Higher Education Supervisory Board*, which is attached to YÖK and which supervises and controls the universities. It should be noted furthermore that there is also another upper body at national level, (5) the *Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey* (TÜBİTAK), which coordinates basic and applied research and development, affecting the situation of the Turkish universities in the related activities. The Minister of National Education represents higher education in Parliament and can chair the meetings of the YÖK, but has no vote (*Higher Education in Turkey*, 2009).

The decisions of the YÖK and the universities are not subject to ratification except for the establishment of a new university or a new faculty within an existing university. However, a hidden or indirect governance of the state universities by the government stems from the *public finance laws*, which stipulate in detail the procedures to be followed in the preparation of annual budgets,

procurement (including construction contracts), and auditing of expenditures, to which all public agencies are subject. This indirect governance also covers the allocation of both academic and administrative staff positions to state universities. Hence, unlike private universities, state universities, being dependent on the governmental decisions on those two issues, do not have financial and administrative autonomy,.

In 2005, a YÖK regulation set up YÖDEK, a body responsible for implementing university quality assurance in Turkey, mainly by setting quality criteria together with YÖK, and by approving quality assurance agencies. “While the system is still in its early stages, YÖK’s involvement in quality oversight and its link to both universities and government through its membership, could be a potential cause for concern with regard to the independence of quality judgements, as called for in the ‘Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area’” (ENQA, 2005; EUA, 2008, p. 6).

Between 1998 and early 2007, seventeen Turkish universities were evaluated by EUA’s Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP). These seventeen universities had voluntarily applied for an IEP evaluation and borne the cost. In 2007 EUA was invited by the Turkish Association of Industrialists and Businessmen (TÜSIAD) to take part in an analysis of these seventeen evaluation reports of Turkish universities (EUA, 2008).

As members of IEP’s pool of experts, three of the present IEP Team took part in this general IEP evaluation.

The Report (EUA, 2008) concluded by pointing out the wave of change in European universities during the last two decades, which has changed the relation between the universities and the State in many countries. The Panel strongly recommended much greater university autonomy for the Turkish universities, “but it must be all-embracing”. Therefore the following actions were prioritised and recommended (EUA 2008, p. 31):

Recommended Actions 1:

- Transform YÖK into a national body that represents higher education before government, proposes higher education policies, coordinates and directs higher education institutions at the system level.
- Revise legislation and YÖK regulations to minimise intrusion into the internal management, structure and other functions of universities.
- Consider the possibility of establishing a Rectors’ Conference with an operational-size membership to replace the current dual structure of the Inter-University Council and the existing Rectors’ Conference.
- Establish a national strategy to reach Turkey’s aims as set down in the Bologna process.
- Strike a balance between consultation time and decision making. A thorough discussion of proposed changes should take place in the higher education community and society at large. At the same time, once changes are decided, these should follow a set time-plan.

The IU Evaluation Team acknowledges that the institutions of higher education in Turkey are in a development process towards a more open, modern and responsive system based on traditional European values and on an international context and strongly supports the recommendations in the TÜSIAD report.

#### *Local context of Istanbul University*

Higher education institutions in Turkey share the political pressures and challenges of many European institutions, namely to provide studies and programmes to a constantly increasing student population, without matching increases in state financial support. The Team acknowledge that after YÖK was founded, there have been many structural, financial, administrative and academic reforms resulting in the ongoing development process of Turkish higher education institutions, but believes that much more needs to be done in improving university autonomy so that maximum benefit can be obtained from the creativity which will thrive with such autonomy.

Istanbul University, founded in 1453, is the oldest and the largest university in Turkey. “One of the main characteristics of Istanbul University is its leadership in higher education for centuries. It has played a guiding and influential role in the social and cultural life of our country. We can clearly see this when we trace the line of historical development of the University” (SER, 2010, p. 5). – “In addition to its scientific impact, Istanbul University has also been a leader in the movement towards enlightenment and modernization that began with the Republic by acting as a bridge between science and life. It is aware of its role in the perpetuation of Atatürk's principles and reforms. Istanbul University will “protect in line with this in all issues pertaining to public life with no concessions from its decisive stand” (SER, 2010, p. 5).

In the academic year 2009/10, IU offered undergraduate programmes (mostly 4 years), master programmes (2 years with thesis) and graduate (4 years with thesis) and medical education (6 years with thesis). A total of 69,712 students are enrolled at Istanbul University. Each year about 18,000 new students are enrolled. The IU has 19 faculties, 13 Schools and Vocational Schools (2 year programmes), 16 Institutes, 29 Research Centres and 3 Departments (SER, p. 6). The Faculty of Business Administration, the Cerrahpasa Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Economics offer undergraduate programmes in English. IU has a central library, but each faculty and the 11 campuses have their own libraries.

A Centre for Continuing Education and a Centre for Distance Education were founded in 2009 and IU has established 320 Lifelong Learning Programmes (Erasmus agreements), with 24 countries for the academic years 2009/2010 to 2013/2014. IU also takes part in Socrates/Erasmus student exchange programmes.

The numbers of academic staff in 2009 was 5124 (SER, p. 25), out of which 1499 were professors, 396 associate professors, 686 assistant professors, 2211 research assistants and 332 assistants. The selection and appointment of academic staff are made according to the Higher Education Law. However, Government's approval is needed. Non-academic staff/administrative staff is recruited according to the State Employee Law. Non-academic staff is selected through a centralised examination called “Examination of State Employee Selection” (SER, 2010, p. 10).

The Team identified areas at IU where constraints are apparent. We acknowledge that many of these are externally imposed, but they all need the attention of the management of IU. Actions have to be taken to overcome these constraints (see Recommendations).



## 2. CONSTRAINTS AND INSTITUTIONAL NORMS

As has been mentioned, higher education institutions have to face continuously growing demands from society for social and economic benefits. IU has shown signs of strategic leadership and awareness of these challenges by asking for an IEP review.

### 2.1. In terms of governance and management

IU is aiming for a decentralised system within the constraints of the Turkish Higher Education Law (SER, 2010, p. 10). However, the Turkish higher education system is a centralised one. The pressure from YÖK and the Turkish Government to deliver more and more diplomas/degrees, the Team argues, has an adverse effect on the very quality of these diplomas/degrees.

The Team found that IU needs to review the structure for organisational management and for the decision making processes. The Strategic Plan for 2009-2013 (SER, 2010, pp. 41-75; set up by YÖK) needs to be scrutinised. It appears to be a response to the formal requirements of YÖK rather than expressing the plans of IU for implementation of its Mission. We strongly believe that a new *Development Plan* for IU with set priorities and complementary *Action Plans* must be created. The process should involve all sections of the University at various levels so that the resulting plan is accepted by the University as a whole. Then, objectives need to be set and achieved.

The Team also encourages IU to develop further the Management Information System, and introduce an Electronic Newsletter to make all in IU aware of what is happening across the university and to develop and strengthen the motivation of staff and create a *corporate identity*. Together these activities can change the image of IU from a foundation of units to a united entity in itself.

The Team met stakeholders who were interested in having a more organised exchange of information and knowledge with IU, but so far no formal processes or a formal body have been established for such activities. The Team would like to suggest that IU creates an Advisory Board of Stakeholders in order to establish continuous information exchanges, and strengthen the relations. Such an Advisory Board should also have an input into the creation of the new *Development Plan*.

### 2.1. In terms of teaching

It is essential that IU continues to implement the Bologna Declaration (EUA, 2001). It is also essential that IU uses the *European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)* and not the national credit system, which is based on number of hours students spend in classrooms (contact hours). The Team urges IU to use the *ECTS* system for all educational programmes at all levels, not only for international students and Turkish students taking part in Erasmus exchange programmes. Erasmus programmes should be considerably expanded with more partner universities.

The Team was greatly encouraged by signs of wide involvement among teachers across a range of Faculties in developing learning outcomes. These “nodes of development” should get further support

in their work on learning outcomes, according to the Bologna Declaration. Furthermore, they provide models for future Action Plan developments over all aspects of activities of the University through involvement of staff at various levels and across Faculties.

The drop-out and failure rates in some subjects are surprisingly high, but the accuracy of figures provided seemed questionable. More attention is needed from several organisational levels in order to solve this problem by producing reliable data as a basis for action.

IU has good students. Students in general seemed to be very satisfied to be studying at IU. They claimed that this was the best university in the country. However, students from one faculty told the Team that, although they had chosen a student to represent them in the faculty board, this student had never been called to take part in a meeting. Students seemed to be ignored in the decision making processes at least at this particular faculty which flies in the face of recommendations made in various EUA Fora, e.g., EUA Prague Communiqué, 2001, EUA Berlin Communiqué, 2003 and EUA Lisbon Declaration, 2007 (2010). Students must be regarded as full members of decision making bodies and in governance of IU (see recommendations).

From the students' perspective, IU needs to involve them in various educational activities such as course designs, course development and course evaluations. Students have valuable experience from different areas and different levels of IU's educational programmes to bring to bear on these.

The Team was told by the students that they have difficulties in moving between faculties, if they wanted to take a course in another faculty. From the students perspective IU needs to improve student mobility internationally, nationally and within IU and to expand the Erasmus exchange initiatives with more links.

Students were very satisfied to study at IU, but they need access to libraries in their studies. For instance, the students need to borrow books, but this practice seems to vary among faculties. IU needs to introduce good practices in all libraries such as long opening hours and generous borrowing systems.

The students need scholarships, since it is not possible for all of them to count on economic support from their families. Students also need both new and renovated accommodation, since not all of them can count on staying with their families.

Teachers whom the Team met seemed to have difficulties in balancing teaching and other obligations as academics, recounting the number of hours they taught each week and how few hours each week are left for research and student counselling. This might be a question of difficulty in balancing these two demanding activities or a question of very high teaching loads and the needs for administrative back-up services (which currently must be provided by faculty members). This stops academics from taking part in developing doctoral programmes or new undergraduate programmes, from student consulting and from research. The problem is the need to increase the non-academic staff. The Team appeals to IU to solve these problems since that would mean a lot for the teachers by bringing down the teaching loads and enhancing their motivation.

The Team met academics from various faculties, but not all of them seemed to be familiar with efforts and contribution to the development of a Quality Assurance system in IU. It must be a priority in IU to develop a coherent Quality Assurance system for all educational programmes. Stakeholders the Team met were not satisfied with the employability skill levels they have found among graduate students. These problems need great attention from the Rector, Vice Rectors and the Faculties.

To support students' learning and teachers' teaching, IU needs to introduce Web-Based Learning facilities. Furthermore, E-based learning tools can be useful for IU in Lifelong Learning courses/programmes/activities to attract non-traditional student groups and strengthen the relations with the society outside IU.

### **2.3. In terms of research**

Since 2009/2010, 20% of the overall budget is now free for IU to use as it sees fit and therefore it is highly desirable to take advantage of this *new freedom* fully in order to enhance research in faculties. Issues relating to the Revolving Funds and the paucity of funding sources from outside the Turkish Government sector must be given high priority by IU. The team recognises that the university operates under significant external constraints but believes that IU could take fuller advantage of the flexibility it has. The provision of small grants to allow researchers to initiate projects so that they may become eligible for external support should be considered.

We met researchers who confirmed that there was a constant need to exchange and net-work with national and international researchers in order to be included in the larger international community of researchers. The Team suggests that IU seeks to increase Post-Doc researcher numbers to stimulate research and give support to publication. As many universities in European countries, IU could use international experts to review major research proposals and also in significant appointments and promotions, in order to make use of their expertise and to enhance external credibility.

IU has a Techno Park (Incubator), and the Istanbul University Technological Development Centre (I. TEKMER), which was founded in 2001 in cooperation with the Istanbul Chamber of Industry and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organisation (SER 2010, p.11). The Team suggests that IU make efforts to strengthen the relationship between the faculties and these institutions and their graduate programmes in order to enhance students' employability skills.

There is a need for resources for research according to the researchers the Team met. IU needs to support ongoing research projects in various ways, for instance by introducing generous "sabbaticals" for researchers, expanding the possibilities for taking part in research exchange projects and in research conferences and supporting publications and expanding existing research networks/links. IU knows that there are external restrictions, but IU should make maximum use of the *new freedom* and of flexibility to support good initiatives, especially in research.

The Team noted that a very high proportion of the academic staff were themselves products of an IU education. There is a danger that the university staff are unaware of developments elsewhere – in both teaching and research – and we recommend that the University appoints more staff from outside whenever the opportunity for making a high quality appointment arises.

#### **2.4. In terms of resources**

As has been mentioned, the Strategic Plan developed by YÖK has to be reviewed and complemented by a *Development Plan* and various *Action Plans* for IU.

IU must consider whether self-funding activities, such as evening courses and Lifelong Learning activities for specific target groups, could make enough of a financial surplus to support research activities. IU must have many graduates in well-paid and important positions and therefore it would be incumbent upon it to find out whether possibilities exist to appeal to these for donations and to ask them to act as ambassadors for their university in developing research funding and fund raising activities.

### 3. THE CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

#### 3.1. The mission

##### *Mission statement of IU*

“Being the bridge between both the East and West and the past and future, Istanbul University is the leading university which creates valuable knowledge both for Turkey and the world, and bring-up competent individuals” (SER, 2010, p. 10).

Within the frame of this mission IU’s principles are:

- Protecting and extending the principles of Atatürk and the achievements of the Republic
- Participation
- Respect to nature and people
- Compliance with ethical values

##### *Vision of Istanbul IU*

“Istanbul University establishes (*sic*) itself to be one of the world’s leading universities” (SER, 2010, p. 10).

To fulfil the mission and the vision, IU needs a general competency to manage change and continually adjust to new prerequisites. A clear mission statement is a valuable tool in a process of development. The Team found that YÖK is central to most of what is relevant to the development of IU but feel that IU should define a mission statement which clearly reflects its own ambitions and objectives.

#### 3.2. Constraints

The Team are aware of various goals set out by the Rector, but these goals do not seem to be widely debated or shared throughout the organisation. The Team could not find any Action Plan development discussions or consensus on these issues among the academics. The Team was worried to find that the Senate and the Executive Committee seemed to be very operational; that the Deans, lacking a Deans’ Council, seemed to be more like “individual officers” without any group coherence; that the roles and job specification of Vice Rectors could be dysfunctional. The Team got the impression that most of the decision areas of IU are outside the control of IU. Even so, the Team believe that it is important for the University to behave more as an institution and less as a mere collection of more-or-less independent units, and that a greater involvement of Senate and Executive Committee – and of the Deans as a collective body – would enhance this development.

The Team strongly recommends much greater university autonomy in order to find solutions to such problems, and therefore the Team urges IU to press for more autonomy, such as exists in much of Europe. And again, there is a great need to establish a *Development Plan* and several *Action Plans* for IU. Additionally, this activity would itself further the creation and development of an institutional ethos.

### 3.3. Strengths and opportunities

IU is a strong university with a high national reputation, but it cannot rest on this. The overriding concern of the Team is how to manage the quality enhancement in all IU's activities, i.e., education, research, and out-reach to the society in transferring knowledge. The Team acknowledge the efforts done by IU to introduce and implement the Bologna process. The Team noted the absence of the implementation of the three cycle-system in Higher Education in the Bologna Declaration and the absence of the *European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)* in all educational programmes.

IU states in SER 2010 (p. 36) under the headline "Strengths" in the SWOT analysis, for instance (the six first points in prioritised order):

1. *Obtaining world-wide recognition as Istanbul University;*
2. *Cooperating with foreign institutions easily through International Academic Relations Unit that provides support for the agreement of students and lecturers exchange programs;*
3. *Being among the top 500 universities in the world;*
4. *Having adequate number of scientists in each discipline educated at national and international levels providing the university with a great power of publication;*
5. *Having units (such as BAP Unit) that can objectively and transparently finance plans which will support national and international projects;*
6. *Being the 'first university' the symbol of university in Turkey enriched by its historical roots.*

The Team considered the SWOT analysis submitted in the SER and concluded that it was not an adequate summary of the characteristics of IU on which an institutional strategy could be based. They believe that a new, comprehensive and self-critical SWOT analysis must be created

IU aims at excellence in all its activities and therefore must act as a cohesive unit. Accordingly, IU has to be selective in making priorities in its *Development Plan* and in choosing set targets in the *Action Plans* in order to reach its goals.

The Team acknowledges and encourages IU's efforts to improve all its activities and is convinced that it can be even better by working as a cohesive institution in, e.g., maximising and spreading the potential synergy and good practices inside IU.

The Team encourages IU to strengthen its internal relations and communication systems in order to bring about a *Corporate Identity* and further strengthen its reputation nationally and internationally. This process should involve staff at all levels.

### 3.4. Weaknesses and challenges

IU states in SER 2010 (p. 37) under the headline "Weaknesses" in the SWOT analysis, for instance (the six first points in prioritised order):

1. *Not having performance measurement criteria for technical and administrative staff;*
2. *Lacking of a staff distribution system;*

3. *Having an unbalanced staff distribution;*
4. *Not using staff effectively in terms of ideal academic and administrative personnel management;*
5. *Insufficient technical personnel (technician, nurse, etc); and*
6. *Lack of motivation in academic and administrative staff”.*

The Teams suggests that in order to overcome these weaknesses, IU needs to develop an *Action Plan for Human Resource Management*. The Team also suggests that IU introduce job descriptions and annual evaluations of staff as well as transparent promotion criteria for all staff. Teaching staff needs to get more administrative and technical support in order to ease their burdens as teachers. They also need study leaves, even short periods, since these are valuable to stimulate research and to allow time to design new education programmes. Even when “inbreeding” occurs, which is understandable in a leading Turkish university, IU must impose activities to bring in staff from outside the university with different experiences and fresh ideas, especially important, this, in research positions.

Establishing itself as “one of the world’s leading universities” (SER 2010, p. 10), IU faces many challenges. The above mentioned mission statement and the core values can be improved and strengthened by further policies relating to IU’s major university activities in its *Development Plan* and its *Action Plans*.

The Team recommends strongly that IU should create Action Plans in the following areas (see expanded Recommendations below):

1. *Action Plan on Governance*
2. *Action Plan on Students’ Involvement in Governance*
3. *Action Plan on Strategic Management*
4. *Action Plan on Bench-Marking and Peer Review*
5. *Action Plan on Financial Management*
6. *Action Plan on Fund Raising*
7. *Action Plan on Excellence in Teaching*
8. *Action Plan on Scholarships*
9. *Action Plan on Students’ interfaculty mobility*
10. *Action Plan on Investment in Student Facilities and Accommodation*
11. *Action Plan on Excellence in Research*
12. *Action Plan on Human Resource Management*
13. *Action Plan on Internationalisation*
14. *Action Plan on Corporate Communication*
15. *Action Plan on External Communication.*

The Team’s opinion is that IU has to balance the challenges of the Government’s regulation of the cooperation between universities and industry. In spite of having the Istanbul University Technological Development Centre (I. TEKMER; SER 2010, p.11), the Team’s impression from meeting the representatives of external partners, companies and industry is that this cooperation and connection to industry is still weak and needs to be strengthened. Therefore, the number of links to these external partners need to increase as well as the number of external funds for supporting research. Another

possibility is to increase the proportion of revolving funds to the maximum possible level for allocations to support research on the basis of quality of proposals.



## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following capacity requirements for Governance, Strategic Management, leadership and planning, for Excellence in Teaching/Learning, Research and Outreach, as well as Corporate Communication and Corporate Identity building are needed to face the increasing demands from the Turkish Society and to maintain the ambition to be “one of the world’s leading universities” (SER, p. 10). The IEP Team acknowledges IU’s actions and efforts to meet the challenges of a continuously changing society. We hope that our report and the specific recommendations, which are listed below, will help Istanbul University towards future successful development building on its present achievements.

### ***In terms of Governance***

The Team recommends that IU involve all staff in the preparation of the *Development Plan* with a specified monitoring time schedule of progress in various *Action Plans* and to press for more autonomy such as exists elsewhere in Europe. The Team recommends that IU review the organisation and its decision making processes. The core responsibilities of each level of IU should be reviewed as well as their relations to the Rector, Rectorate and the Board. The responsibilities of the Vice Rectors, Rector’s advisors, the Secretary General, the Deans, Department heads and Managers of Administration should also be reviewed. The academics in these positions have a responsibility to take part in decision making processes as well as long term strategic planning. IU should encourage students’ involvement in the review of the Governance. The Team recommends IU develop an (1) *Action Plan on Governance* and an (2) *Action Plan on Students’ Involvement in Governance*, which includes students as full members in the decision making processes as well as in long term strategic planning.

### ***In terms of Strategic Leadership and Planning***

The Team recommends IU review the structure of the organisation to ensure transparency in strategic/institutional planning, decision making and follow up of prioritised activities in the *Development Plan* and in various *Action Plans* and to exploit fully and proactively the areas of “freedom” which IU has at present regarding internal resources. IU should encourage students’ involvement in strategic management. The Team recommends IU develop an (3) *Action Plan on Strategic Management* and an (4) *Action Plan on Bench-Marking and Peer Review*.

### ***In terms of Institutional Management***

The Rector, the Vice Rectors and the Rectorate form the locus of daily decision making. Their responsibilities and functions can be cognate and therefore their functions should be reviewed to ensure that Vice Rectors’ functions do not overlap. Responsibilities for Education, Research and Outreach should be clearly defined. Managerial systems should be designed and installed to foster coherent and integrated management and communications system related to each managerial level.

### ***In terms of Finance and Budget***

The Team recommends IU consider the possibility of introducing a decentralised budgetary process within the organisation related both to the review of responsibilities mentioned above and to the goals and objectives specified in the *Development Plan* and the *Action Plans*. The Team recommends IU develop an (5) *Action Plan on Financial Management* and an (6) *Action Plan on Fund Raising*.

### ***In terms of Quality Management***

The Team recognises that IU has created a structure for a comprehensive, organisation-wide Quality Assurance System, a Quality Culture and a central Quality Management System, but is not convinced that these are being effectively implemented. The Team recommends that the University should now put great emphasis on their full implementation.

### ***In terms of Teaching***

The Team heard from the academics of their heavy teaching loads, which made it impossible for them to take part in research, the counselling of students, the development of new teaching programmes and exchange programmes. The Team recommends IU create an (8) *Action Plan on Excellence in Teaching*. IU should encourage students' involvement in issues concerning their education and in development of existing educational programmes. The Team also recommends IU create an (9) *Action Plan on Scholarships*, an (10) *Action Plan on Students' interfaculty mobility*, e.g., supporting the interest of students to study languages or other subjects inside IU, and an (11) *Action Plan on Investment in Student Facilities and Accommodation*.

### ***In terms of Research***

The Team suggests IU increase resources for research and introduce a number of Post-Docs positions in each faculty in order to increase efforts to obtain more external funds and to increase the proportion of revolving funds to the maximum possible level for allocations to support research on the basis of quality of proposals. Finally, the Team suggests IU improve the reputation of research by using international experts to review major research proposals and also to scrutinise significant appointments and promotions. The Team recommends IU create an (12) *Action Plan on Excellence in Research*.

### ***In terms of Faculty Development***

The professionalisation of academics at IU means that IU has to offer them staff training programmes focusing on quality in teaching, the need for pedagogical improvements of existing educational programmes, and the implementation of Quality Assurance Systems. The academics' possibilities to take part in research projects, nationally and internationally, must be ensured by various staff programmes. The development of faculty members as well as administrative staff members must be continually pursued. The Team recommends IU create an (13) *Action Plan on Human Resource Management*.

### ***In terms of Internationalisation***

The Team suggests that IU must be more active in pursuing international exchange programmes for students and to expand the number of international students; also in supporting academics and researchers in taking part in international conferences and international research networks and research projects. The Team recommends IU develop an (14) *Action Plan on Internationalisation*.

### ***In terms of Corporate Identity, Outreach and Commitment to Local community***

The Team recommends IU develop an (15) *Action Plan on Corporate Communication* and introduce a *Newsletter* in order to strengthen its *Corporate Identity* and to allow employees to get to know all the activities going on in IU. This information should also be shared by external partners in order to strengthen the relationship with them and enhance IU's commitment to the local community, but also to implicate them more fully in IU's activities. In particular, the team recommends that an (15)

*Advisory Board of External Stakeholders* be set up. The Team also recommends IU develop an (16) *Action Plan on External Communication*.

## **5. ENVOI**

The IEP Team wants to extend its thanks for the time and attention given by the representatives of the Board of IU, the Senate, the Deans, the academics, the researchers, the administrative staff and the Students Council, various groups of students as well as external representatives. We extend special thanks to the Rector, Professor Doctor Yunus Söylet and the liaison person Vice Rector Professor Doctor Cigdem Kayacan and her colleagues for their helpful efforts and careful attention to all our logistical arrangements. Finally we thank the Vice Rectors and the Rector's Team.

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