HEI'25
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ORCA
organizata për rritjen e cilësisë në arsim

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FERIZAJ



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"Our Father, who art in heaven, give us the power to keep our mouths shut when we have nothing to say. And forgive us the patience to think before we write! Inspire us with a sharp sense of justice to speak not only without bias, but to also act thus! Save us from the traps of grammar, distortions of language and errors of typing.
Amen!"

Faik Konica

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Executive Summary

[Summary generated by ChatGPT]

"Generate an executive summary of the attached research report, based on the data presented. (max. 350 words)"

This report analyzes the state of academic integrity and scientific publication at the University of Ferizaj, offering a detailed evaluation of academic staff composition, the justification of academic titles, the quality of publications, and their compliance with standards for academic promotion.

The university has a total of 36 academic staff members, of whom 28 hold professorial titles and 8 are lecturers. The Faculty of Applied Arts is excluded from this analysis due to its field-specific nature that does not align with conventional criteria for scientific publishing in indexed journals.

Women make up only 25% of the staff, yet 86% of them justify their academic titles, compared to 52% of men—reflecting stricter enforcement of criteria toward women. Overall, 61% of staff holding professorial titles justify their titles through eligible publications in journals indexed in Scopus or Web of Science.

In total, the staff has published 82 papers in Scopus-indexed journals, of which 25 are also indexed in Web of Science. Of these, 66 are eligible for academic promotion, based on the standard that recognizes first or corresponding authorship.

30% of the papers are published in first or second quartile journals, while 39% appear in fourth-quartile journals. A substantial portion of publications is concentrated in a single fourth-quartile journal, raising concerns about internal coordination and weak peer-review standards. Furthermore, 39% of staff members have published at least once in journals with dubious publishers.

The average number of publications per professor is 2.4. The Faculties of Engineering & Informatics and Tourism & Environment show the highest publication performance per professor.

This report aims to provide a clear, data-driven overview to support the improvement of academic promotion and publication practices at the University of Ferizaj, contributing to enhanced integrity and quality in higher education in Kosovo.



University Data

The University of Ferizaj has a total of 36 academic staff members (excluding the Faculty of Applied Arts). Of these, 28 hold professorial titles: assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor. Unlike other public universities, Ferizaj has no teaching assistants, only lecturers.

The university has only 2 staff members holding the highest academic title of full professor, 12 holding the title of associate professor, and 14 assistant professors. Additionally, 8 academic staff members are lecturers.

Number of academic staff by faculty

	Assistant Professors	Associate Professors	Full Professors	Lecturers
Faculty of Architecture, Design, and Wood Technology	2	2	1	4
Faculty of Engineering and Informatics	3	2	1	2
Faculty of Management	6	6	0	0
Faculty of Tourism and Environment	3	2	0	2
All faculties	**14**	**14**	**2**	**8**

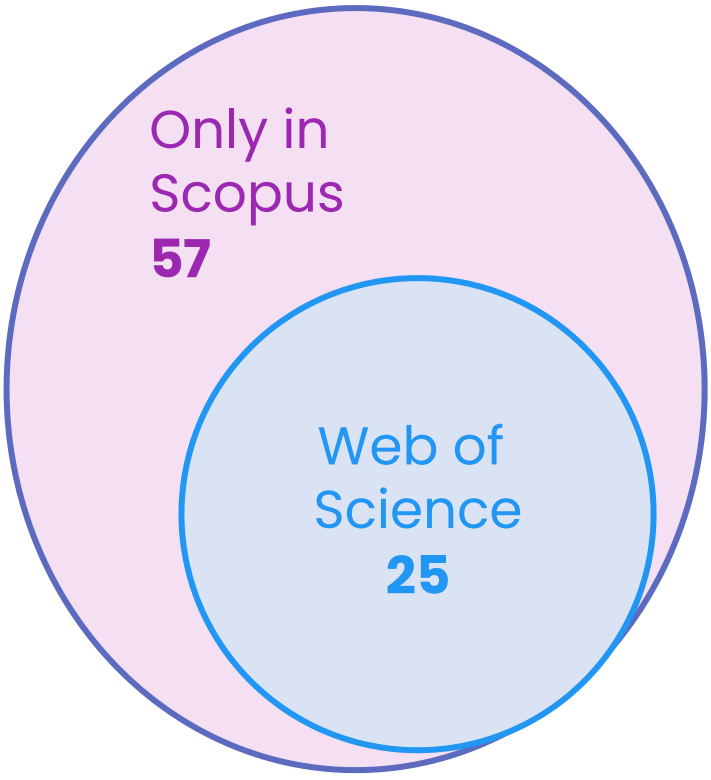
Among the 2 full professors, both are men. Of the 12 associate professors, 10 are men and 2 are women. Of the 14 assistant professors, 9 are men and 5 are women. Similarly, among the 8 lecturers, 6 are men and 2 are women. In total, only 25% of the academic staff at the University of Ferizaj are women.

Number of academic staff by gender

	Full Professors	Associate Professors	Assistant Professors	Lecturers	**Total**	
Women	0	2	5	2	**9**	**25%**
Men	2	10	9	6	**27**	**75%**
Total	**14**	**14**	**2**	**8**	**36**	**100%**

Scientific Publication

The academic staff (professors and lecturers) at the University of Ferizaj have published 82 scientific papers in journals indexed in Scopus. Of these, 25 are also indexed in Web of Science, while 57 are found only in Scopus. This count excludes papers published in journals or by publishers considered dubious.



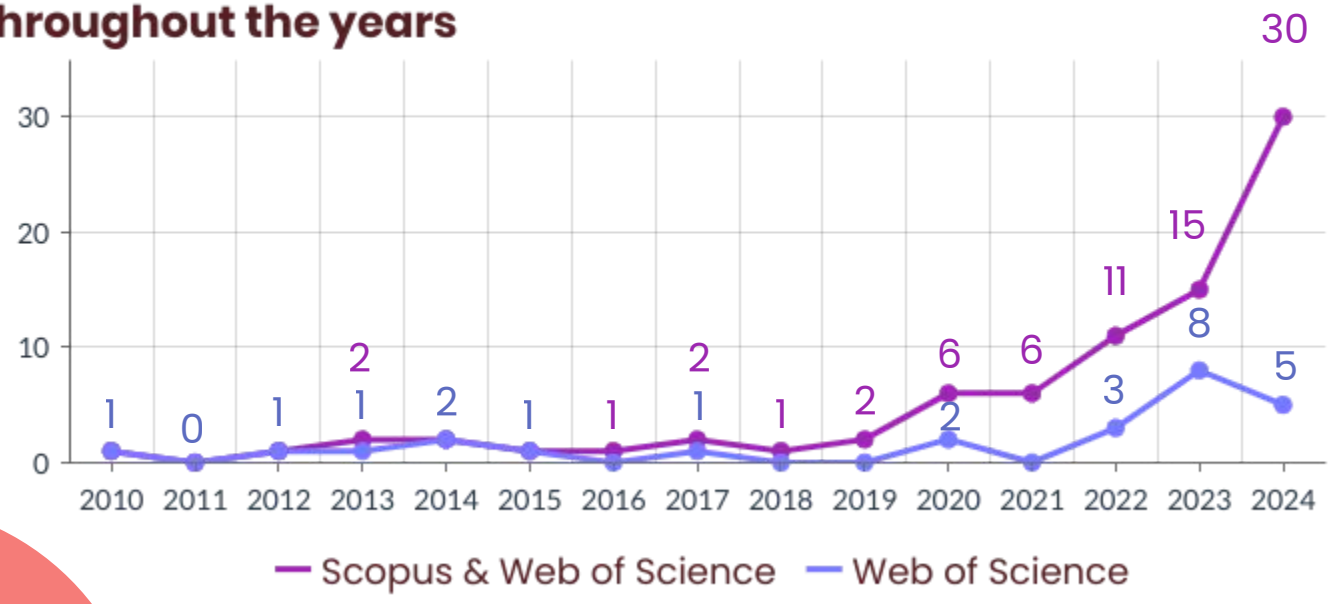
Total (Scopus + Web of Science)
82

The first recorded paper dates back to 2010 and is published in a journal indexed in both Scopus and Web of Science.

A noticeable exponential increase in publications occurred between 2023 and 2024. While in 2023, 15 papers were published by university staff, in 2024 this number doubled—or tripled compared to the average of previous years.

The public pressure caused by periodic reporting, which had placed the University of Ferizaj at the bottom of the national university ranking, appears to have had its intended effect, improving the university's publication performance.

Scientific publication in Scopus and Web of Science throughout the years



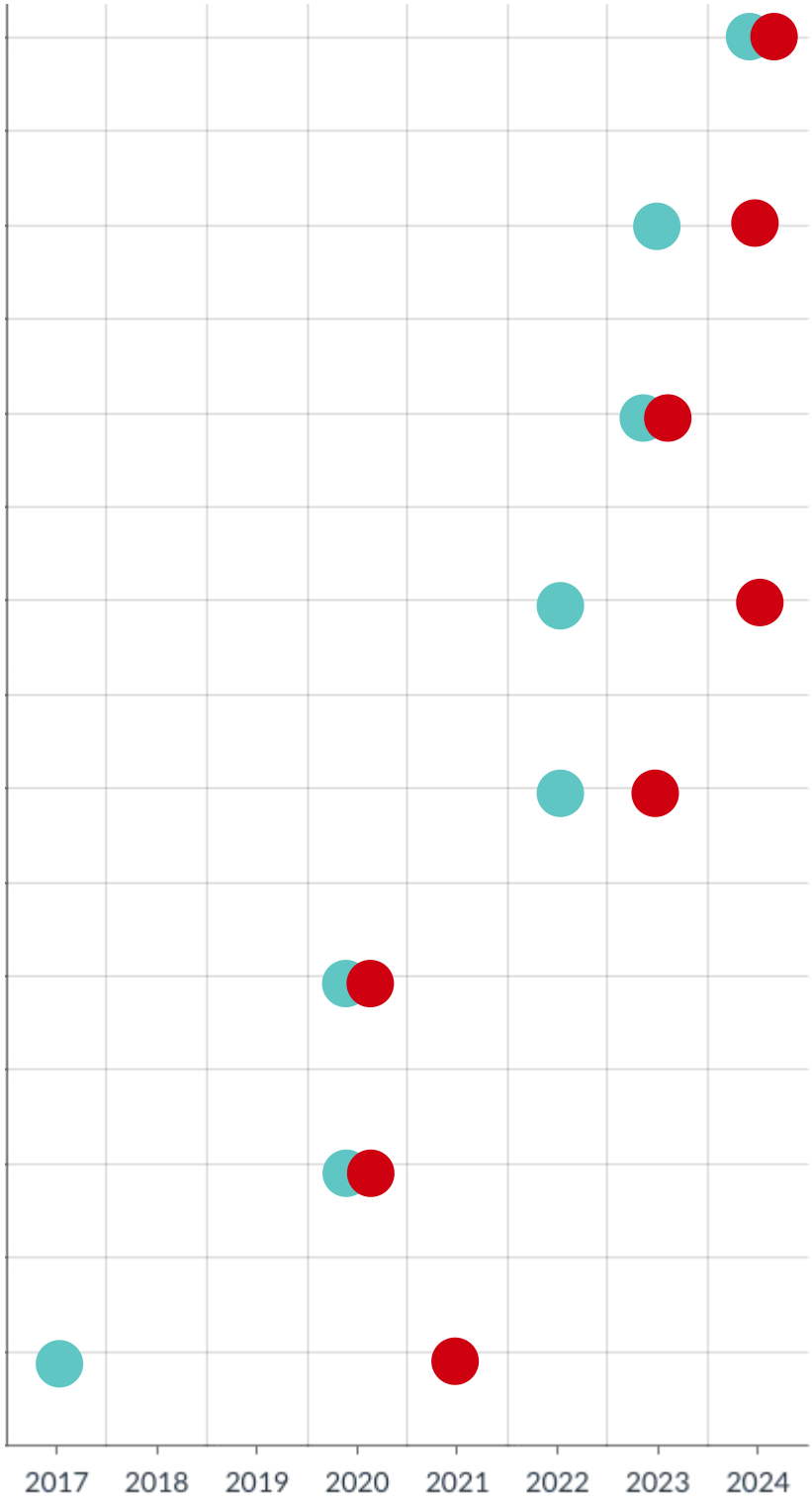
Out of the 82 papers, 9 were published in journals that were later removed from Scopus for quality-related reasons. These 9 papers were authored by 9 professors. Journals are delisted from Scopus following periodic re-evaluations, usually due to issues with content quality, lack of reliable editorial practices, or violations of ethical publishing standards.

It is worth noting that the years in which academic staff members published in these journals were close to the years when those journals were delisted from Scopus. This raises suspicions of staff taking advantage of publishing opportunities in these journals before their delisting due to dubious practices.

Papers Published in Journals Removed from Scopus Due to Quality Issues

Journal Name	Year of Publication	Last Indexed Year in Scopus
Fresenius Environmental Bulletin	2017	2021
International Journal of Economics and Business Administration	2020	2020
International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology	2020	2020
Journal of Liberty and International Affairs (2 punime)	2022	2023
Corporate Governance and Organizational Behavior Review	2022	2024
International Journal of Applied Economics, Finance and Accounting	2023	2023
Review of Economics and Finance	2023	2024
Nurture	2024	2024

Papers Published in Journals Removed from Scopus Due to Quality Issues - University of Ferizaj



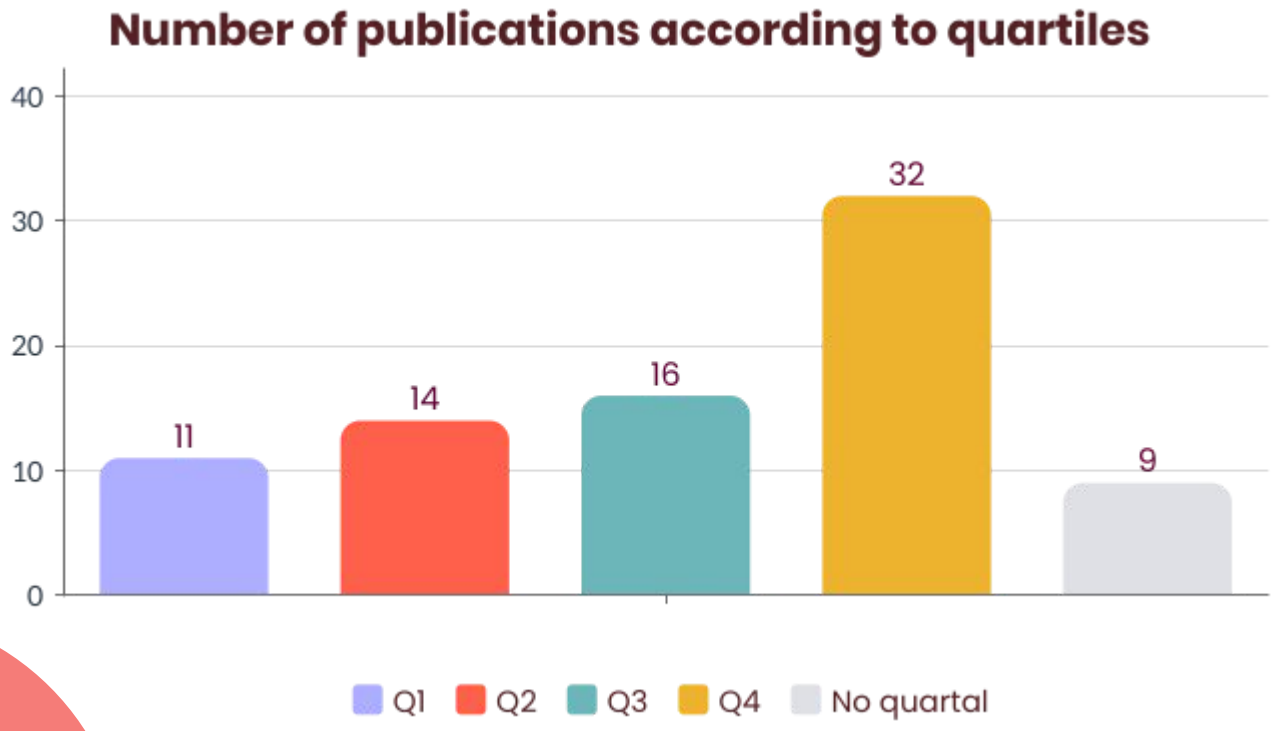
- Nurture
- Review of Economics and Finance
- International Journal of Applied Economics, Finance and Accounting
- Corporate Governance and Organizational Behavior Review
- Journal of Liberty and International Affairs (2 papers)
- International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology
- International Journal of Economics and Business Administration
- Fresenius Environmental Bulletin

Year of Publication

Last Indexed Year in Scopus

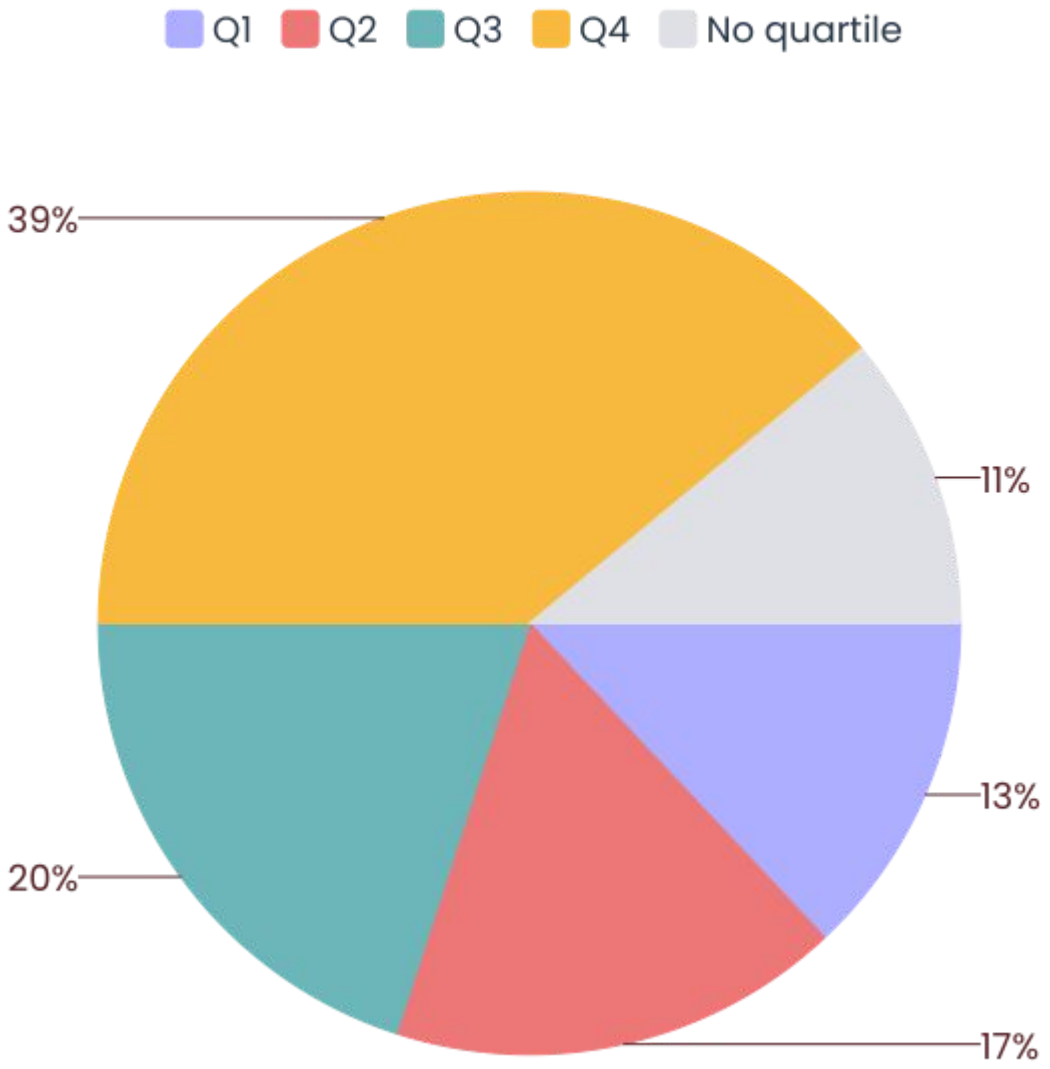
In Which SCOPUS Quartiles Did the Staff Publish?

The quality of Scopus-indexed journals where academic staff at public universities publish is indicated through their ranking in indexing quartiles. First and second quartile journals (Q1 and Q2) generally ensure high quality, while third and fourth quartile journals (Q3 and Q4) do not guarantee the same level of scientific rigor. In the past, ORCA has identified and reported suspicious practices among certain Scopus-indexed journals, many of which were subsequently delisted from Scopus or blacklisted by public universities.



30% of the papers published by the University of Ferizaj staff in Scopus-indexed journals belong to Q1 and Q2, offering a relatively satisfactory scientific publishing landscape at the university.

Percentage of publications according to Scopus quartiles



Quartiles and Their Link to Web of Science

Typically, Scopus journals in Q1 and Q2 are also indexed in Web of Science, which increases the reliability of their peer-review process.

It is possible (though less common) for Q3 journals to be indexed in Web of Science, while it is very rare—or nearly impossible—for Q4 journals to be indexed there. Consequently, Scopus delisting usually affects Q4 journals.

According to the data, 39% of all Scopus-indexed papers by academic staff at the University of Ferizaj belong to the fourth quartile (Q4).

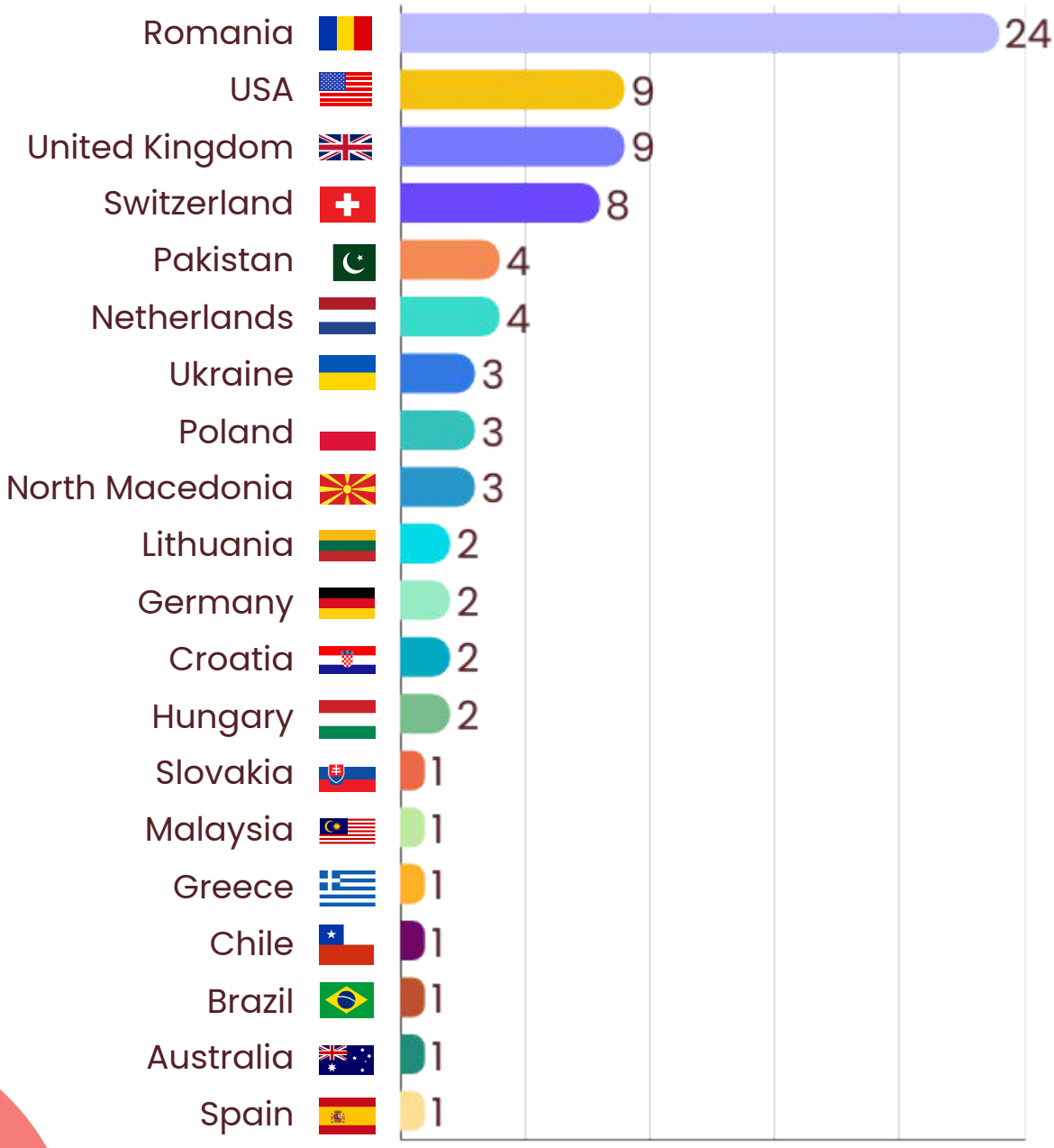
Q1	11	7
Q2	14	12
Q3	16	6
Q4	32	0
No quartile*		

*Papers published in journals that were removed from Scopus are not assigned a quartile

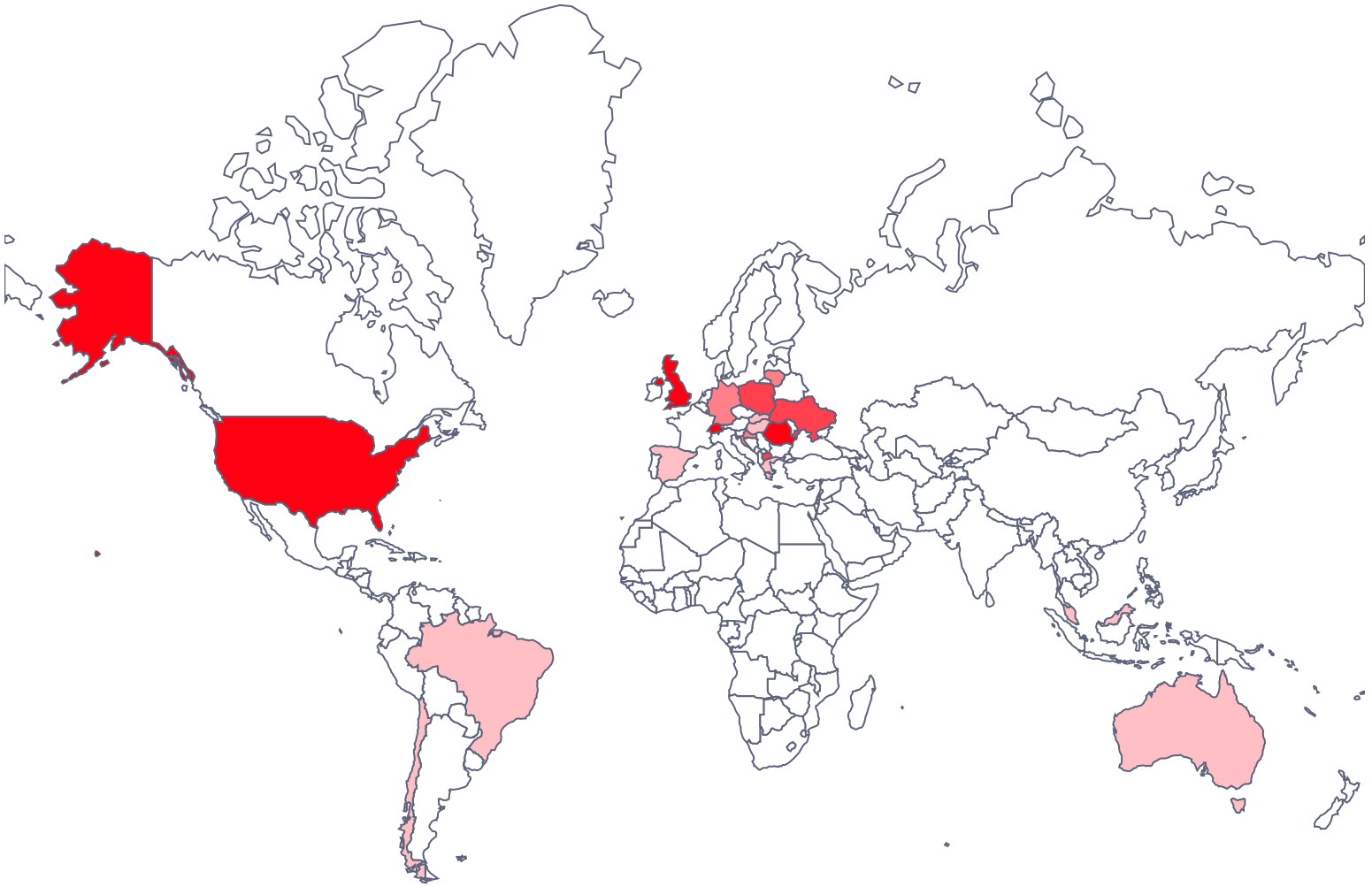
Countries of Journal Publishers

The academic staff of this university has published in journals from 21 different countries.

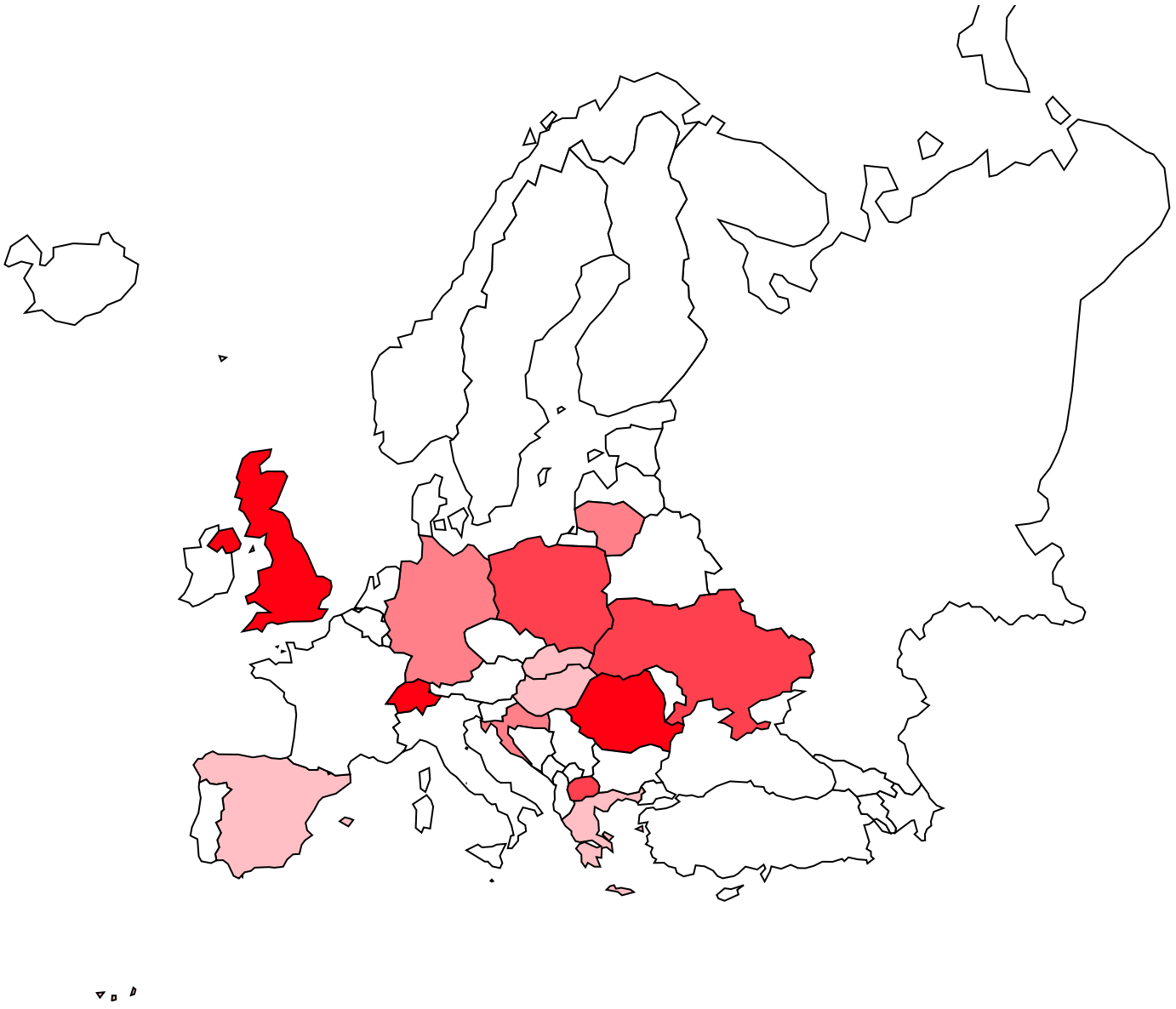
More than a quarter of all publications (29%) appear in journals published in Romania.



Countries of Journal Publishers where academic staff of University of Ferizaj have published



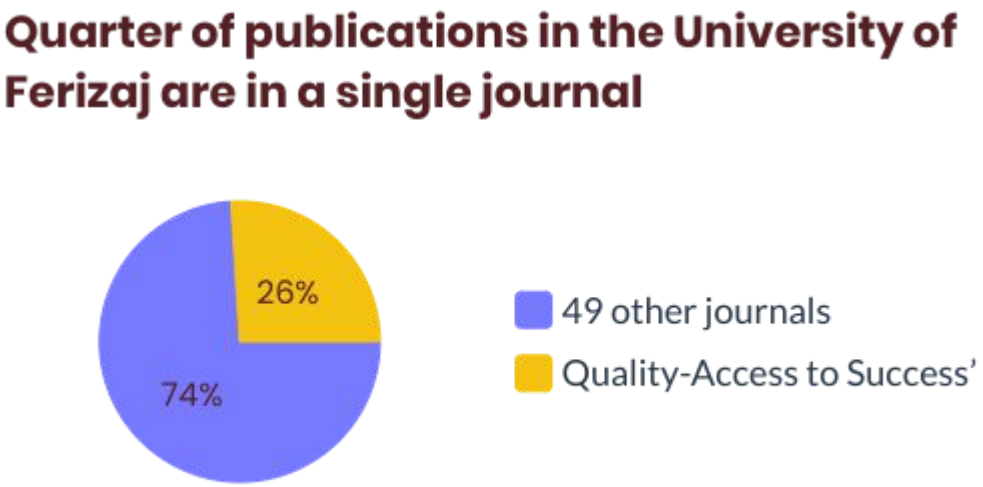
European countries of Journal Publishers where academic staff of University of Ferizaj have published



26% of all published papers (21 in total) by academic staff at this university are found in the journal Quality – Access to Success, published by the Romanian Society for Quality Assurance (SRAC). These papers were authored by 12 professors, 8 of whom are listed as first or corresponding authors.

One associate professor stands out with a particularly high number of publications in this journal—he is listed as an author in 17 of the papers, and in 9 of them as first or corresponding author.

These data raise suspicions of coordinated group publishing among academic staff in this Scopus-indexed, fourth-quartile journal, which may not be strictly adhering to a rigorous peer-review process or may be compromising quality standards.

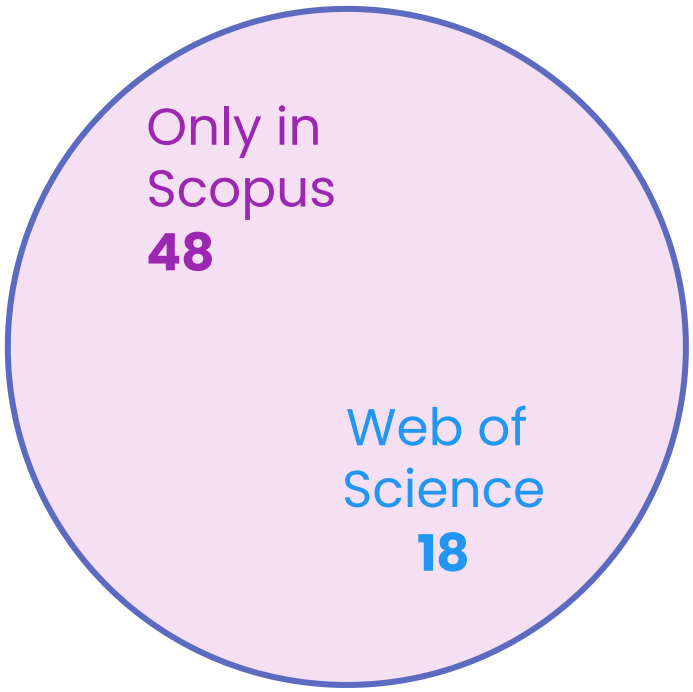


Papers Eligible for Academic Promotion

Out of the 82 papers, 66 are considered eligible for academic promotion, meaning that the academic staff at the university can use them in promotion processes.

All of these are indexed in Scopus; among them, 48 are indexed only in Scopus, and 18 in both Scopus and Web of Science.

In all statistical analyses, papers published in journals or by publishers classified as dubious were excluded.



Total eligible papers
66

Of these, 8 papers (12%) can potentially be used by two staff members for academic promotion—one as first author and the other as corresponding author.
In a hypothetical scenario, 16 academic staff members could be promoted in one of Kosovo's public universities based on these publications.

However, the internal regulations of the University of Ferizaj uniquely recognize only the first author for promotion purposes. Papers listing a staff member in any other author position are not valid for academic promotion at this university.

The average number of publications per academic staff member is 1.8. This average includes lecturers, even though scientific publications are not required for their appointment.
If lecturers are excluded from the calculation, the average number of publications per professor is 2.4.

The Faculty of Engineering and Informatics leads with 24 total publications (4 per professor), followed by the Faculty of Tourism and Environment with 20 total publications (also 4 per professor).
The Faculty of Architecture ranks lowest with 6 total publications (1.2 per professor).

Publication per faculty and professor

	Number of Professors	Number of Papers	Avg. Papers per Professor
Faculty of Architecture, Design and Wood Tech.	5	24	4
Faculty of Management	12	20	4
Faculty of Engineering and Informatics	6	17	1.4
Faculty of Tourism and Environment	5	6	1.2
University Total	**28**	**66***	**2.4**

* One paper includes one professor from the Faculty of Tourism and Environment as first author and one from the Faculty of Management as corresponding author.

6 professors (around 17%) have no valid paper for academic promotion—meaning they are not listed as either first or corresponding author. Of these, 3 professors are not listed as authors in any scientific publication at all, regardless of author order.

Distribution of the 28 Professors by Number of Papers Eligible for Promotion

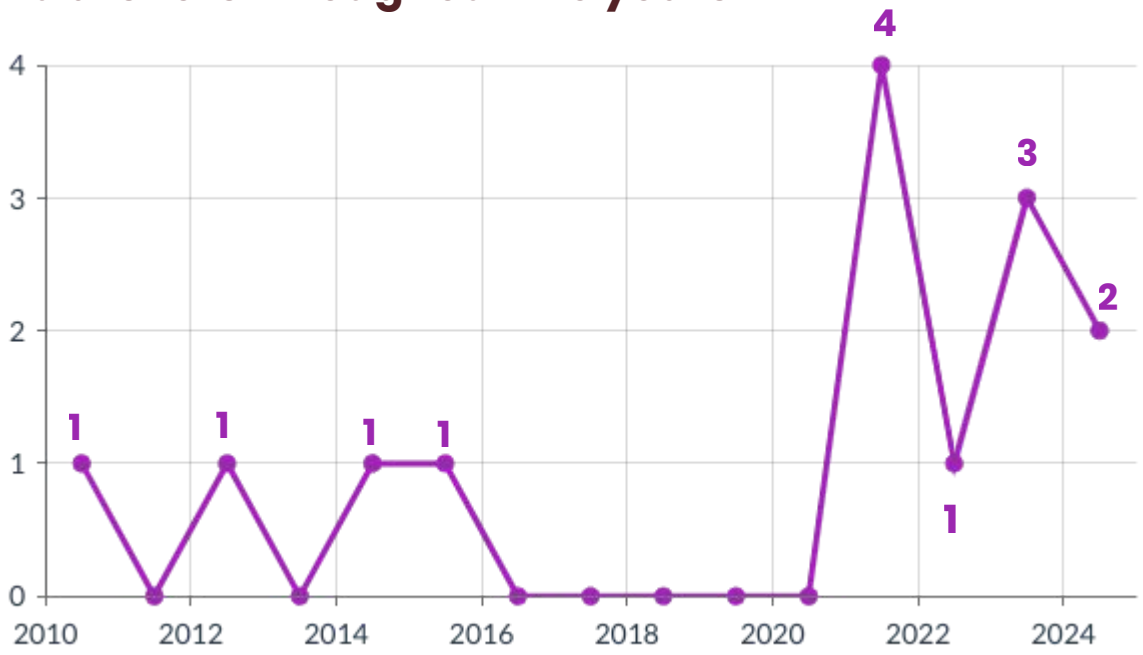


Publication in Dubious Journals and Dubious Publishers

14 papers from 10 different journals have been published in 7 journals that are associated with dubious publishers. These journals were indexed in Scopus at the time of publication, but 3 of them (a total of 6 papers) have since been removed due to quality concerns, in the years 2016, 2023, and 2024.

No paper published in a journal indexed in Web of Science appears on the dubious list.

Publication in Dubious Journals and Dubious Publishers throughout the years



13 professors and 1 lecturer, or 39% of the academic staff, have published at least once in a journal by a dubious publisher. Among staff holding professorial titles, this percentage rises to 46%.



Justification of Academic Titles

The justification of titles, based on the methodology that recognizes only first or corresponding author publications in international scientific journals indexed in Web of Science or Scopus, is partially satisfactory, with 61% of academic staff holding professorial titles justifying their titles through such publications.

With the exception of the Faculty of Architecture—where 60% of professors do not justify their titles—the other faculties show either a balanced result or a majority who justify their academic titles. The strongest case is found in the Faculty of Tourism and Environment, where all five professors justify their academic titles.

79% of assistant professors justify their titles, 50% of associate professors justify their titles, and none of the full professors justify their titles.

Justification of Academic Titles by Faculty and Rank

	Assistant Professors		Associate Professors		Full Professors		Total Professors	
	✅	❌	✅	❌	✅	❌	✅	❌
Faculty of Architecture, Design and Wood Tech.	1	1	1	1	0	1	2 40%	3 60%
Faculty of Engineering and Informatics	3	0	1	1	0	1	4 67%	2 33%
Faculty of Management	4	2	2	4	0	0	6 50%	6 50%
Faculty of Tourism and Environment	3	0	2	0	0	0	5 100%	0 0%
All Faculties	**11 79%**	**3 21%**	**6 50%**	**6 50%**	**0 0%**	**2 100%**	**17 61%**	**11 39%**

The trend of discrimination against women in academia continues at this university. The collected data shows that 86% of women justify their academic titles, compared to 52% of men.

This indicates that systemic discrimination against women results in rules being applied more strictly to women in academia than to men. Although at first glance this may seem discriminatory, over time it may lead to greater academic competence among women and, in a context where rules are enforced consistently, women could lead higher education in Kosovo.

Nonetheless, it remains concerning that around 40% of academic staff with professorial titles at the University of Ferizaj do not justify their academic ranks.

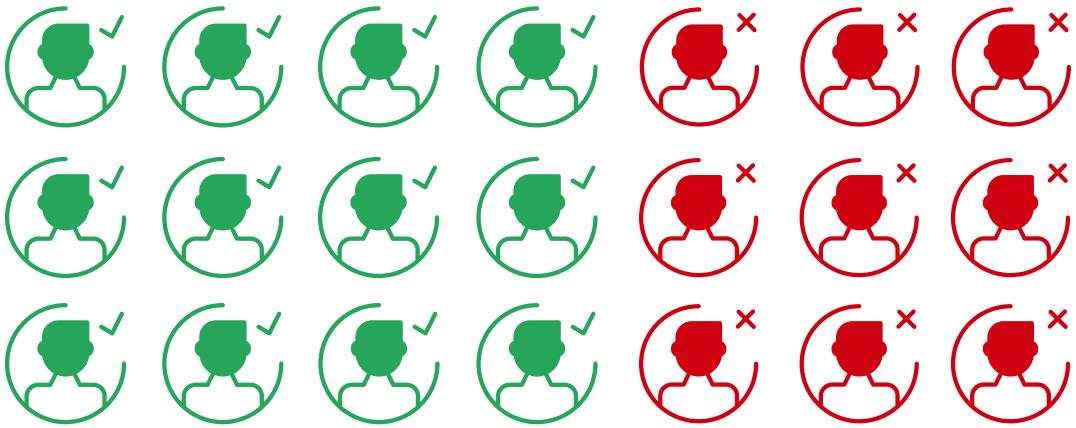
Justification of academic titles by gender and academic titles

	Assistant Professors		Associate Professors		Full Professors		Total Professors	
	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗
Women	4	1	2	0	0	0	6 86%	1 14%
Men	7	2	4	6	0	2	11 52%	10 48%
Total	**11**	**3**	**6**	**6**	**0**	**2**	**17 61%**	**11 39%**

Women



Men





Methodology

Selection of Academic Staff

In December 2024, the list of academic staff for each faculty was generated from the official website of the University of Ferizaj. Due to the specific nature of the Faculty of Applied Arts, it was excluded from the analysis.

Collection of Scientific Publications

During January 2025, for each academic staff member (full, associate, assistant professors, and lecturers), a database of scientific publications was created:

- If the staff member had a Google Scholar profile, all publications were extracted from that profile.
- If not, a name-based search was performed on Google Scholar, and the first 50 papers were selected for each individual.

Processing of Bibliographic Data

For each paper, the following data were identified and analyzed:

- Title of the paper, list of authors, year of publication, journal name, unique identifier (DOI), publisher, and author order.
- ISSN numbers of the journal and type of publication.
- The journal or publisher was cross-checked against lists of dubious sources (Beall's List).

Indexing Verification

- It was verified whether the journal was indexed in Scopus in the year the article was published.
- It was also checked whether the journal belonged to one of the three core collections of Web of Science:
  - Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE)
  - Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)
  - Arts & Humanities Citation Index (AHCI)
- Cases in which journals had been delisted from Scopus for quality issues were marked.

Selection of Papers Eligible for Promotion

Only papers that met the following criteria were considered eligible:

- Scientific articles published in journals indexed in Scopus or Web of Science at the time of publication
- Not published in dubious journals or by dubious publishers
- Not published in local journals
- Not categorized as short communications

Analysis and Categorization

Statistical analysis was conducted based on:

- Faculty, academic title, and gender
- The average number of publications per staff member, and separately per professor
- Eligibility of papers for academic promotion was assessed based on:
  - Author role (first or corresponding author)
  - Indexing status in Web of Science or Scopus at the time of publication

Analysis of Academic Title Justification

Although the University of Ferizaj's internal regulations recognize only the first author for academic promotion, the following broader standards were used for analysis:

- **Full professor**: at least 5 papers as first or corresponding author
- **Associate professor**: at least 3 papers as first or corresponding author
- **Assistant professor**: at least 1 paper as first or corresponding author

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