

RANKING THE WEB VISIBILITY OF ROMANIAN STATE UNIVERSITIES

Case studies

Keywords

Web ranking
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JEL Classification

I20

Abstract

New technologies based on the Internet offer to scientists the possibility of finding scientific information faster, allowing academic institutions to provide more resources to improve their presence on the Internet. We believe that the Internet offers the possibility of publishing but also it represents a support in scientific communication, making the performance of the universities or research centers to be better reflected. The Internet enables collaboration and dissemination of scientific information very quickly, in large areas, managing penetration of education and research in developing countries at very low cost, also enhancing the social role of scientists. Publication of scientific information through traditional methods (books, magazines, collections of articles, etc.) is far surpassed by electronic publishing since online offers the most cost effective way to boost academic missions of teaching, research or technology transfer.

1. Introduction

The Internet is today the most important communication tool because through its use scientific information is more accessible. Publication of information on the Internet is cheap, quick and allows the information to be read by a worldwide audience. Usually web environment is not only used for publishing books or articles in electronic journals but also for describing the structure, activities or results of academic research institutions. [7]

The current article relies on the assumption that the current rankings related to the web presence for universities reflect on their performance, service quality and prestige at international expansion.

In their article [7], I. and NG Labajos Aguillo mentions that statistics from January 2010 showed the distribution of Universities in the Ranking Web by region:

In the Top 100 group, North America was 76, Europe 17, Asia 3, Oceania 2, Latin America 2.

In the Top 200 group, North America 114, Europe 60, Asia 15, Oceania 6, Latin America 4, Arab World 1.

In the Top 500 group, North America 200, Europe 223, Asia 45, Oceania 14, Latin America 14, Arab world 3, Africa 1.

In the Top 1000 group, North America 370, Europe 408, Asia 134, Oceania 35, Latin America 44, Arab world 4, Africa 5.

In the Top 8000 group, North America 2577, Europe 2424, Asia 2009, Oceania 80, Latin America 744, Arab world 115, Africa 51.

This study demonstrated that in the Top 100 and Top 200 there is a great discrepancy between universities in North America and Europe. These measures suggested universities in Europe and Asia to increase their web publishing and quality level by developing Open Access repositories.

The purpose of the present paper Internet ranking for universities is to promote Romania web publishing, supporting initiatives such as Open Access, creating electronic access to scientific publications and other academic materials. [9] The accomplished analysis and ranking in this paper offers only an overview related to the visibility of Romanian state universities.

2. Existing web ranking analysis

Previous studies [7], [9] talk about the introduction in 2003 of ARWU Ranking and especially composite index developed by the Shanghai Jiao Tong University who conducted a webometric data mining model.

In 2004 appeared Web Ranking (www.webometrics.info), also known as the Webometrics Ranking (WR), whose purpose is to promote the public dissemination of scientific knowledge through Open Access.

Webometrics Ranking methodology has been

enhanced continuously. The main factors used by the Webometrics Ranking methodology were approved and adopted in 2006. [7] The Ranking model is based on the following essential principle: Web Ranking is accomplished by ordering universities using a composite indicator that combines several quantitative variables intending, thus, trying to provide an overall description, not detailed about the global performance of universities. [7]

Qualitative analyses are usually realized on small groups. Quantitative analyzes are successfully used in the case of closed universes, well defined, as in the case of the academic research.

However, the Internet environment is difficult to be analyse because it involves a large amount of different types of data, to which very many people with different backgrounds have access. For example, the motivations for accessing certain links may be varied. The citations also may be spread very quickly and can be viewed by interested persons.

From a historical perspective, we see that over the years, there were several groups of researchers who have worked in the development of web indicators. The first studies in this direction dates to the mid-1990s. An important step was represented by the European Commission funding of two projects, EICSTES (www.eicstes.org, www.wiserWeb.org) and www.Webindicators.org [9].

New indicators have been created by [2], [4], [6], [9], [10] who intended to clarify the problems derived by the instability of results from search engine and the importance of web impact factor.

A first version of the global university ranking was achieved within the project EICSTES, being published in 2004. Basically quantitative methods were used in the analysis of scientific and scholarly communication. Some bibliometric indicators such as the number and distribution of publications and citations, are easy to obtain, but the problem arises due to the limited number of activities of researchers or institutions that are considered (only official publications are considered). Moed suggested in his article [8] that, in order to obtain better results, several variables on several issues must be taken into analysis.

The information published on the Internet is often questionable in terms of quality content. It is difficult to countdown if a research is published in prestigious journals and that the same authors have also other activities where they disseminate the same information as educational materials, projects, presentations, videos, software, bibliographic lists or links.

It is considered that all the administrative information provided by the university is very valuable, while publishing this information on the Internet enhances the academic level of university. Also, a further enhancement may be obtained

because the Web offers many facilities, where scientific publications are just one of the components that can be found on a website [3].

Recently, most sites of institutions contained little relevant information. Today, public universities publish millions of pages produced by dozens of departments and services, research teams and hundreds of thousands of scientists. Although there is a category of information belonging to academic world which is not academic, we believe that the obtained models are significant enough given the large number of webometric analysis. By promoting online publishing, academic researchers will be aware of scientific results, more students will be studying the possibility to go to a certain university, companies will be able to find suitable partners for industrial projects and organizations can easily access experts from academia.

The main benefits of using social media in academia are: increased brand recognition (The brand becomes more affordable and can be more easily identified. Also increases the brand loyalty), higher conversion rates (Brands become more humane on social media channels. Social media is the meeting place of those visitors are therefore created a sense of affiliation with the brand contacted), increased inbound traffic (Each social media profile is a new channel added to the site. Each syndicated information provides the possibility of winning new visitors), decreased marketing costs, better search engine ranking, richer customer experiences (Social media is a communication channel that allows a close relationship with customers or potential customers), improved customer insights (With social media gaining valuable information and can be seen customer preferences and behaviour). [13]

3. Building the Ranking

Collecting data from a large number of web domains with a large number of pages can be done only automatically. We can use available commercial or free crawlers. Sometimes, the use of these robots can be very difficult and requires more human resources and information as mentioned by [9], [5].

Another way is to use search engines that already have well-designed and tested robots, because they are updated more often. Most of these have automated tools that can be customized for data mining.

Commercial search engines also have limitations, including some inconsistent results due to language differences or frequent changes in their working procedures.

Methodology for analysis consisted of two steps: collecting data from year 2013 and analyzing them. The collection was made with the Zelist Monitor tool, where we configured keywords for each

university by means of which the university can be identified by the search engine. Because the application does not support declinations, we had to try to identify all combinations of words for identification. For example, for the Transylvania University of Brasov were defined following keyword combinations (relevant only in Romanian): Transylvania University, University Transylvania, University of Brasov, Brasov University (in romanian: Universitatea Transilvania, Universitatii Transilvania, Universitatea din Brasov, Universitatii din Brasov). For each university data we collected data related to sightings and views in: news, blogs, Twitter, comments in press and in blogs, discussion forums, linked, YouTube, Instagram, Foursquare and G+. Let's not forget that any mention of a brand, in any context, is a positive thing in the marketing context. The collection of data related to Facebook pages belonging to universities was made by the same application, but we gathered specific data: number of likes, number of comments and shared links, the total number of posts, number of shared links, photos and videos, with the total number of fans for the page and the number of active fans.

For analysis we divided the data collected in two categories, according to the number of users in Romania: data related to the usage of Facebook pages and appearances on other social media used in Romania. Data analysis consisted of identifying and developing relevant indicators for each category. For each subcategory we ranked the universities and the final rank for the category was created by multi-criteria analysis.

The final classification took into account the number of users in Romania in the two categories, by which we weighted intermediate results.

For example, we consider:

$$\text{Facebook Engagement} = \frac{\text{Active fans (users engaged in Page)}}{\text{Fan base (Users that liked the page)}}$$

$$\text{Feedback for University posts (Facebook)} = \frac{\text{Total posts}}{\text{Likes} + \text{Comments} + \text{Shares}} \cdot 100$$

$$\text{Final score} = \text{Weight Other Media} \cdot 0.2 + \text{Weight Facebook} \cdot 0.8$$

So, web obtained the next final score for web visibility of Romanian State Universities – Table 4.

Conclusion

Today, the Internet is the main source of information and is a virtual showcase for each organization (institutions, enterprises, universities, etc.) that help identify the best from the "real world".

In academia, university-level communication is particularly important providing scientific and cultural information transfer. Publication of research information on the Internet is both a tool for scientific communication, but also a means to reach a wider audience and generally allows the creation of an image or brand for a certain institution.

Historically, we can identify several types of indicators that measure activity in the online environment that allows the development of ranks between universities.

This paper attempts to create a model of hierarchy of state universities from Romania based on data on sightings and views in: news, blogs, Twitter, comments in the press and in blogs, discussion forums, linked, Youtube, Instagram, Goursquare and Google+.

Regarding the Facebook pages belonging to universities, the data collection involved collecting specific data: the number of likes, comments and share links, the total number of posts, number of links, photos and videos shared with the total number of fans of the page and the number of active fans.

By creating a ranking, we wish a boost of online publishing, for a better dissemination of scientific results obtained, to create a broader picture of the academic environment among high school students, prospective faculty candidates and to facilitate finding suitable partners for industrial projects.

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Appendices

Table No. 1

Ranking on other social media of Romanian State University (for 2013)

University	Press	Blogs	Twitter	Press comments	Blog comments	Forums	LinkedIn	Youtube	Foursquare	Rank
"Gheorghe Dima" Music Academy	32	2 4	41	41	33	46	17	27	17	32
"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Police Academy	36	4 9	32	37	46	14	17	41	50	36
Bucharest University of Economic Studies	4	4	4	3	4	2	1	12	6	4
"Henri Coand " Air Force Academy	50	5 2	35	41	46	26	17	36	50	50
"Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy	44	5 2	41	41	46	25	17	41	50	45
National University of Physical Education and Sports	37	2 5	16	41	27	13	11	21	29	37
"Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Academy	34	2 3	41	9	18	21	17	41	42	34
"Mircea cel Batran" Naval Academy	42	4 5	39	30	46	39	17	41	22	42
Military Technical Academy	24	3 2	32	26	12	11	17	27	42	24
National School of Political Science and Public Administration	10	6	3	2	2	3	5	9	4	10
"1 Decembrie 1918" University	8	8	8	7	7	5	2	5	9	8
"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University	33	3 4	17	41	8	35	17	21	37	33
"Aurel Vlaicu" University	3	2	6	4	5	10	3	7	3	3
"Babe -Bolyai" University	41	3 8	31	37	33	46	17	36	42	41
"Constantin Brâncu i" University	52	3 9	39	37	33	35	17	51	42	52
"Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urbanism	51	5 1	48	12	46	22	17	32	42	51
University of Art and Design	27	3 0	32	41	33	46	17	36	37	27
University of Arts	22	3 6	18	17	16	11	17	21	22	22
"George Enescu" University of Arts	28	2 7	21	17	10	8	17	14	42	28
"Carol Davila" University	42	4 5	48	33	33	50	17	48	26	43
University of Medicine and Pharmacy Craiova	26	2 9	30	30	27	39	17	32	25	26
University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Tirgu Mure	39	4 4	37	23	27	30	17	36	42	39
"Grigore T. Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy	38	4 2	52	28	33	22	17	16	29	38
"Iuliu Hațieganu" University of Medicine and Pharmacy	2	5	2	6	3	7	8	3	2	2
Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Timi oara	29	1 3	44	41	23	30	17	41	26	29
University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca	48	5 0	48	41	46	50	17	48	50	48
"Ionescu de la Brad" University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Ia i	21	2 6	27	41	33	39	17	19	34	21
University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest	25	4 0	23	19	19	16	17	36	26	25
West University of Timisoara	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1
University of Bucharest	7	1 0	19	5	6	4	17	11	11	7
University of Craiova	14	9	7	21	11	32	17	15	5	14

University of Oradea	46	$\frac{4}{3}$	35	28	23	39	17	32	37	46
University of Petrosani	16	$\frac{2}{1}$	24	14	12	22	17	10	29	16
University of Pitesti	35	$\frac{3}{4}$	27	30	27	26	11	25	32	35
"Dunrea de Jos" University of Galati	49	$\frac{4}{7}$	48	41	19	50	17	51	16	49
"Eftimie Murgu" University	17	$\frac{1}{8}$	12	14	27	18	17	41	32	17
"Lucian Blaga" University	23	$\frac{1}{9}$	25	8	15	35	6	19	34	23
Carol I National Defence University	6	$\frac{3}{9}$	9	12	8	6	11	4	8	6
National University of Theatre and Film "I.L. Caragiale"	40	$\frac{1}{5}$	47	41	33	35	17	32	37	40
National University of Arts Bucharest	11	$\frac{7}{37}$	37	37	33	39	17	2	14	11
National University of Music	5	$\frac{1}{4}$	5	10	19	15	17	6	9	5
Ovidius University	30	$\frac{3}{7}$	44	33	46	32	17	21	20	30
Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti	47	$\frac{3}{2}$	25	41	33	39	11	48	42	47
"Petru Maior" University	12	$\frac{1}{1}$	27	14	19	19	8	27	18	12
University Politehnica of Bucharest	18	$\frac{2}{2}$	14	19	16	28	11	17	12	18
Politehnica University Timisoara	9	$\frac{1}{7}$	10	23	27	20	17	17	18	9
tefan cel Mare University of Suceava	19	$\frac{4}{1}$	44	33	46	53	17	27	7	19
Technical University of Cluj-Napoca	15	$\frac{1}{6}$	13	23	23	17	6	25	12	15
Technical University of Civil Engineering of Bucharest	44	$\frac{4}{7}$	53	33	33	46	17	51	37	44
"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iasi	20	$\frac{2}{0}$	15	26	33	28	11	41	22	20
Transilvania University of Brasov	13	$\frac{1}{2}$	11	10	14	8	10	13	14	13
Valahia University of Targoviste	31	$\frac{3}{0}$	22	21	23	34	17	8	20	31
"Vasile Alecsandri" University of Bacau	53	$\frac{2}{8}$	20	41	33	45	17	27	34	53

Table No. 2
Ranking on Facebook usage of Romanian State University (for 2013)

University	Ranking based on active fans and fan base	%users who interacted with the university page	Active fans (users engaged in Page)	Fan base (Users that liked the page)	Engagement	Feedback received for University posts
"1 Decembrie 1918" University	38					
"Aurel Vlaicu" University	16	1.157	207	2664	7.77	7.60
"Vasile Alecsandri" University of Bacau	13	1.451	0	3343	0	0.00
Transilvania University of Brasov	5	4.829	452	11123	4.08	11.49
Bucharest University of Economic Studies	11	1.795	270	4135	6.53	6.46
National University of Physical Education and Sports	38					0.00
National School of Political Science and Public Administration	6	1.729	1581	3982	40.64	8.29
"Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urbanism	4	2.840	3342	6541	51.12	6.71

"Carol Davila" University	38					
University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest	26	0.683	0	1572	0	0.00
University of Bucharest	1	18.912	11549	43558	26.53	1.42
National University of Theatre and Film "I.L. Caragiale"	38					
National University of Arts Bucharest	34	0.315	27	725	3.74	15.63
National University of Music	38					
University Politehnica of Bucharest	5	2.608	1613	6008	26.85	8.91
Technical University of Civil Engineering of Bucharest	15	0.971	295	2236	13.19	41.96
"Gheorghe Dima" Music Academy	22	0.605	256	1394	18.36	15.26
"Babe -Bolyai" University	3	6.061	1466	13961	10.53	4.40
University of Art and Design	21	0.960	56	2211	2.53	6.33
"Iuliu Hațieganu" University of Medicine and Pharmacy	37	0.125	0	288	0	0.00
University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca	38					
Technical University of Cluj-Napoca	7	2.588	702	5960	11.78	2.42
Ovidius University	9	2.762	0	6361		0.00
University of Craiova	17	0.631	341	1453	23.81	14.41
University of Medicine and Pharmacy Craiova	28	0.469	93	1081	8.6	11.63
"Dunrea de Jos" University of Galati	29	0.430	103	990	10.4	10.70
"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Police Academy	2	15.977	8619	36800	23.42	2.10
"George Enescu" University of Arts	17	1.122	218	2585	8.43	14.23
"Grigore T. Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy	38	0.000				0.00
"Ionescu de la Brad" University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Iași	9	1.319	1176	3037	38.79	4.68
"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iași	11	0.866	637	1994	31.95	10.80
Valahia University of Targoviste	32	0.280	70	645	10.85	27.01
University of Oradea	13	1.127	343	2596	13.21	29.01
University of Petrosani	17	0.359	430	826	52.06	2.83
University of Pitesti	13	1.313	328	3024	10.85	19.48
Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești	33	0.336	37	775	4.77	25.49
"Eftimie Murgu" University	38					
"Lucian Blaga" University	28	0.444	110	1022	9	24.64
I. C. Brăneanu University of Suceava	3	5.922	7201	13639	52.8	1.54
"Constantin Brâncuși" University	36	0.110	12	254	4.72	16.67
Universitatea de Arte	17	1.123	218	2586	8.43	14.23
University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Tîrgu Mureș	12	0.854	529	1967	26.89	5.76
"Petru Maior" University	38	0.107	0	246	0	0.00
Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Timișoara	21	0.725	255	1669	15.28	11.49
West University of Timisoara	5	5.101	293	11749	2.49	1.70
Politehnica University Timisoara	5	3.531	468	8133	5.75	12.11
"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University	7	3.677	0	8470	0	0.00
"Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy	36	0.178	11	410	2.68	18.18
"Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy	5	1.429	2818	3291	85.63	3.95
"Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Academy	38					
"Mircea cel Batran" Naval Academy	14	0.742	458	1709	26.8	4.45
Military Technical Academy	22	0.952	0	2193	0	0.00

Carol I National Defence University	12	0.485	587	1118	52.5	6.92
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* Empty cells denote there was no official Facebook page when the data was collected

Table No. 3

Final Ranking for web Visibility of Romanian State University (for 2013)

No.	University	Ranking based on other sources	Ranking based on active fans and fan base	Weight Other Media 0,2	Weight Facebook 0,8	FINAL SCORE	Rank
1.	University of Bucharest	2	1	0.4	0.8	1.2	1
2.	"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University	19	2	3.8	1.6	5.4	2
3.	tefan cel Mare University of Suceava	18	3	3.6	2.4	6	3
4.	Politehnica University Timisoara	12	5	2.4	4	6.4	4
5.	Transilvania University of Brasov	13	5	2.6	4	6.6	5
6.	National School of Political Science and Public Administration	10	6	2	4.8	6.8	6
7.	Technical University of Cluj-Napoca	15	7	3	5.6	8.6	7
8.	"Babe -Bolyai" University	33	3	6.6	2.4	9	8
9.	Ovidius University	11	9	2.2	7.2	9.4	9
10.	Bucharest University of Economic Studies	4	11	0.8	8.8	9.6	10
11.	West University of Timisoara	28	5	5.6	4	9.6	10
12.	"Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urbanism	41	4	8.2	3.2	11.4	12
13.	University of Oradea	7	13	1.4	10.4	11.8	13
14.	"Ionescu de la Brad" University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Ia i	27	9	5.4	7.2	12.6	14
15.	"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Police Academy	36	7	7.2	5.6	12.8	15
16.	"Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Ia i	20	11	4	8.8	12.8	15
17.	"Nicolae Balcescu" Land Forces Academy	45	5	9	4	13	17
18.	Carol I National Defence University	17	12	3.4	9.6	13	18
19.	University Politehnica of Bucharest	47	5	9.4	4	13.4	19
20.	University of Craiova	1	17	0.2	13.6	13.8	20
21.	"Aurel Vlaicu" University	8	16	1.6	12.8	14.4	21
22.	University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Tirgu Mure	29	12	5.8	9.6	15.4	22
23.	University of Petrosani	14	17	2.8	13.6	16.4	23
24.	University of Arts	26	17	5.2	13.6	18.8	24
25.	"Mircea cel Batran" Naval Academy	42	14	8.4	11.2	19.6	25
26.	University of Pitesti	46	13	9.2	10.4	19.6	25
27.	Technical University of Civil Engineering of Bucharest	44	15	8.8	12	20.8	27
28.	"Vasile Alecsandri" University of Bac u	53	13	10.6	10.4	21	28
29.	"George Enescu" University of Arts	39	17	7.8	13.6	21.4	29
30.	Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Timi oara	25	21	5	16.8	21.8	30
31.	Military Technical Academy	24	22	4.8	17.6	22.4	31
32.	"Gheorghe Dima" Music Academy	32	22	6.4	17.6	24	32
33.	University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest	22	26	4.4	20.8	25.2	33
34.	University of Art and Design	43	21	8.6	16.8	25.4	34
35.	"Dun rea de Jos" University of Galati	16	29	3.2	23.2	26.4	35
36.	Petroleum-Gas University of Ploie ti	5	33	1	26.4	27.4	36

37.	National University of Arts Bucharest	6	34	1.2	27.2	28.4	37
38.	"Constantin Brâncu i" University	3	36	0.6	28.8	29.4	38
39.	Valahia University of Targoviste	31	32	6.2	25.6	31.8	39
40.	"1 Decembrie 1918" University	9	38	1.8	30.4	32.2	40
41.	"Lucian Blaga" University	49	28	9.8	22.4	32.2	40
42.	University of Medicine and Pharmacy Craiova	52	28	10.4	22.4	32.8	42
43.	"Iuliu Hațieganu" University of Medicine and Pharmacy	21	37	4.2	29.6	33.8	43
44.	National University of Theatre and Film "I.L. Caragiale"	23	38	4.6	30.4	35	44
45.	"Petru Maior" University	30	38	6	30.4	36.4	45
46.	"Mihai Viteazul" National Intelligence Academy	34	38	6.8	30.4	37.2	46
47.	"Eftimie Murgu" University	35	38	7	30.4	37.4	47
48.	National University of Physical Education and Sports	37	38	7.4	30.4	37.8	48
49.	"Carol Davila" University	38	38	7.6	30.4	38	49
50.	National University of Music	40	38	8	30.4	38.4	50
51.	"Henri Coand " Air Force Academy	50	36	10	28.8	38.8	51
52.	"Grigore T. Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy	48	38	9.6	30.4	40	52
53.	University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca	51	38	10.2	30.4	40.6	53

Table 4 - Top 10 of Final Score for web visibility of Romanian State Universities (for 2013)

No.	University	Ranking based on other sources	Ranking based on active fans and fan base	Weight Other Media 0,2	Weight Facebook 0,8	FINAL SCORE	Rank
1.	University of Bucharest	2	1	0.4	0.8	1.2	1
2.	"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University	19	2	3.8	1.6	5.4	2
3.	Itefan cel Mare University of Suceava	18	3	3.6	2.4	6	3
4.	Politehnica University Timisoara	12	5	2.4	4	6.4	4
5.	Transilvania University of Brasov	13	5	2.6	4	6.6	5
6.	National School of Political Science and Public Administration	10	6	2	4.8	6.8	6
7.	Technical University of Cluj-Napoca	15	7	3	5.6	8.6	7
8.	"Babe -Bolyai" University	33	3	6.6	2.4	9	8
9.	Ovidius University	11	9	2.2	7.2	9.4	9
10.	Bucharest University of Economic Studies	4	11	0.8	8.8	9.6	10

