

Babeş-Bolyai University
Summary report on the dynamics
of student numbers and
dropout rates

2025

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This report analyzes the dynamics of the number of students at Babeş-Bolyai University (UBB) over the course of their study years, with the aim of presenting relevant statistical data regarding the issue of dropout from university study programs at the bachelor's and master's levels.

The number of students who have discontinued a bachelor's or master's degree program was estimated based on the difference between the number of students enrolled in a specific program in a given academic year and their number in the previous year. Since the Higher Education Law (LÎS) 199/2023 defines university dropout¹ but does not provide a clear operationalization or the necessary methodological norms for coherent measurement of dropout at the national level, this report presents UBB's conventional approach to estimating program dropout based on the dynamics of the number of students enrolled in that program. Therefore, the numbers presented in this report refer to dropout from bachelor's and master's degree programs, not to university dropout in general. At the bachelor's level, students who started their studies in 2021, 2022, and 2023 were taken into consideration (the year of enrollment will be used further to name the cohorts), and at the master's level, those who started their studies in 2023.

I. BACHELOR'S LEVEL

I.1. DROPOUT RATE THROUGHOUT THE STUDY PROGRAM.

2021 – 2024 (2025) COHORT

At bachelor's level, the data from the previous academic years shows that of the total number of dropouts, more than 75% left during their first year of study in the case of three-year programs, and over 60% in the case of four-year programs.

Figure 1 shows the number of students who have dropped out of a bachelor's degree program, broken down by cohort, year of study, and program duration (3 years or 4 years). The data indicate differences between the 2021 cohort and the previous ones, especially in the case of 4-year programs:

¹ According to the Higher Education Law no. 199/2023, the definition of study dropout is as follows: "University dropout at the level of a study cycle represents the proportion of students from a given cohort who did not manage to graduate within 2 years after the theoretical duration of the study program has ended."

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- ✓ The percentage of students who dropped out in the first year is higher (179 students, 57.2% of the total) compared to the 2020 cohort (197 students, 50% of the total) and the 2019 cohort (approximately 35% of the total);
- ✓ Significantly lower values are recorded from the second to the third year and from the third to the fourth year in terms of the number of students who dropped out: in the second year — 80 students (25.6% of the total), compared to 111 students (28% of the total), and in the third year — 54 students (17.3%), compared to 85 students (22%).

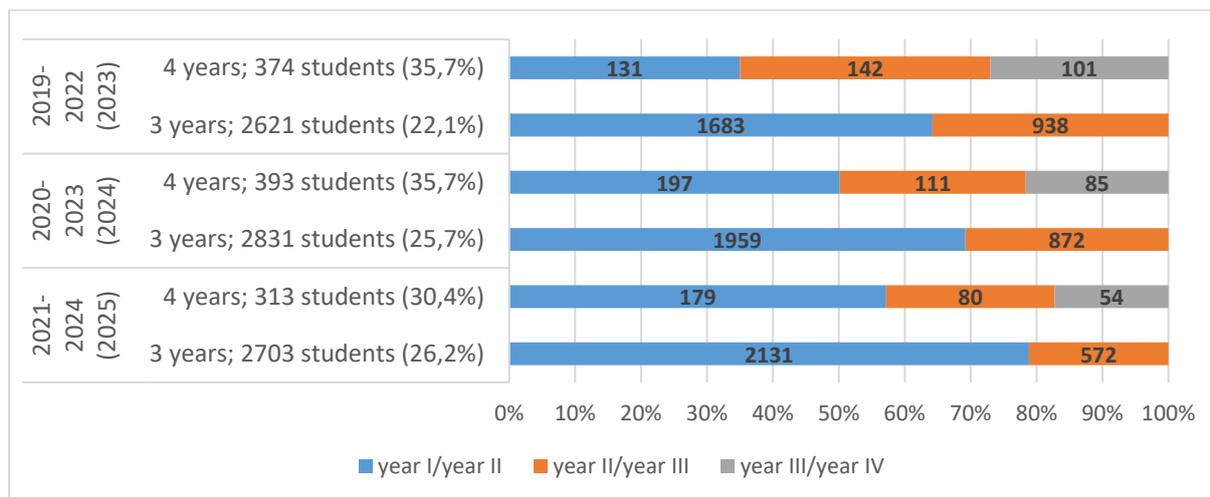


Figure 1. Estimated number of students who dropped out of bachelor's degree programs, cohorts 2019, 2020, 2021

In the case of bachelor's degree programs with a duration of 3 years (the majority of UBB programs), the corresponding numbers (see Figure 1) are as follows:

- The percentage of students who dropped out in the first year is higher (2,131 students, 78% of the total) compared to the 2020 cohort (1,959 students, 69% of the total) and the 2019 cohort (1,683 students, 64% of the total);
- Significantly lower values are recorded from the second to the third year in terms of the number of students who dropped out: in the second year — 572 students (28% of the total), compared to 872 students (31% of the total), and in the third year — 938 students (36% of the total).

Similarly to previous years, the dropout rate is (Figure 2):

- ✓ lower in three-year programs (26.2%) than in four-year programs (30.4%);
- ✓ lower in programs taught in German (18.3%), Hungarian (19,4%), English and French (20,9%), than in Romanian (28.5%);

- ✓ depending on the university extension where the teaching activity takes place, there are no significant differences, with values ranging from 4.0% in Oradea to 37.8% in Bistrița (see Annex 1). The average value is 26.7%, which is close to the value recorded for the programs conducted in Cluj-Napoca, namely 26.6%.
- ✓ lower in full-time programs (25.8%) compared to distance and part-time learning programs (30.0%).

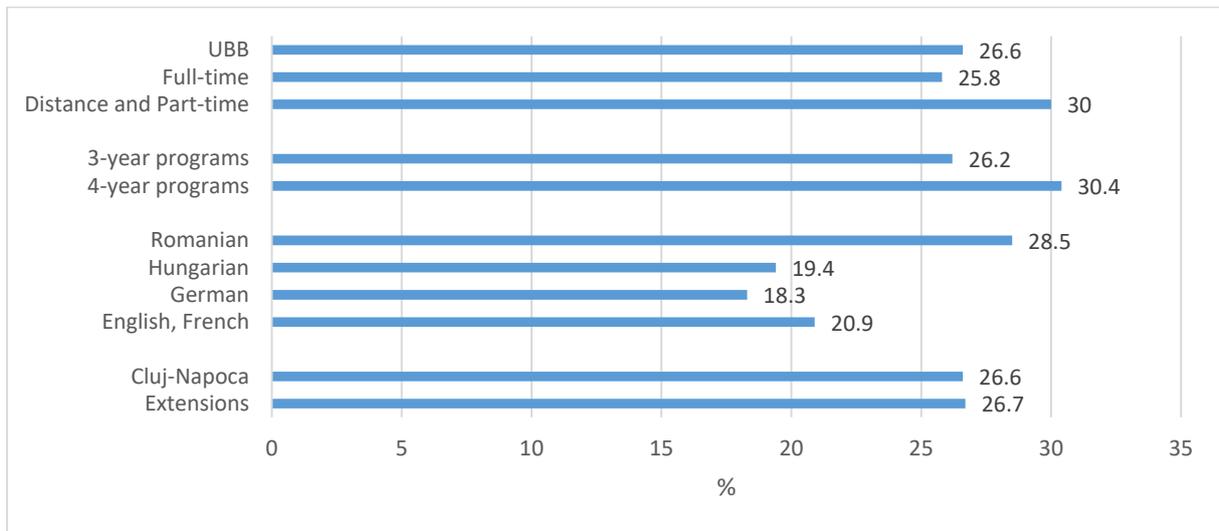


Figure 2. Dropout rate of bachelor's degree programs, throughout the entire academic years, cohort 2021

As in previous years, for most bachelor's level programs, the dropout rate falls between 30% and 50% (31.4% of programs), and between 15% and 30% (30.6% of programs), with only one program having a dropout rate above 75% (Figure 3).

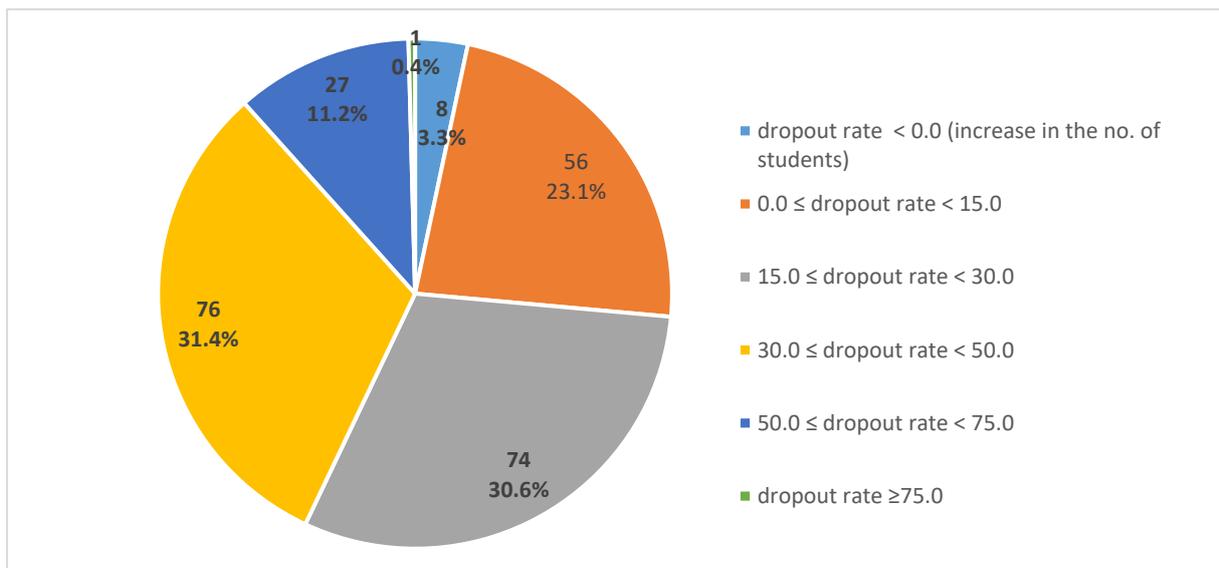


Figure 3. Distribution of bachelor's degree programs according to the dropout rate throughout the academic years, cohort 2021

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The quartile values at BBU level are: Q1 = 14.4%; Q2 = 26.4%; Q3 = 36.9%

	Q1 (%)	Q2 (%)	Q3 (%)
UBB	14.4	26.4	36.9
Three-year programs	14.9	26.9	36.8
Four-year programs	9.3	25.0	37.8
Full-time study programs	13.9	26.3	36.7
Distance and Part-time study programs	19.3	28.5	37.1
Romanian section	17.8	30.2	38.5
Hungarian section	8.8	18.4	31.6
German section	6.3	23.3	37.5
English/French-taught programs	13.1	25.9	34.2

Data on dropout rate by faculty are presented in Anex 2.

I.2. DROPOUT RATE IN THE FIRST YEAR OF STUDY

At the institutional level, the first-year dropout rate shows a slight decrease: from 20.4% for the 2021 cohort to 19.0% for the 2022 cohort, and 16% for the 2023 cohort (Figure 4). The most significant decreases are observed in 4-year programs, where the dropout rate fell from 17.4% to 13.7%. The charts illustrate this downward trend, showing decreases in the dropout rate for both full-time programs and distance/part-time learning programs (ID-IFR), across all lines of study, both at the Cluj-Napoca university center and at the university extensions, on average (Figure 4).

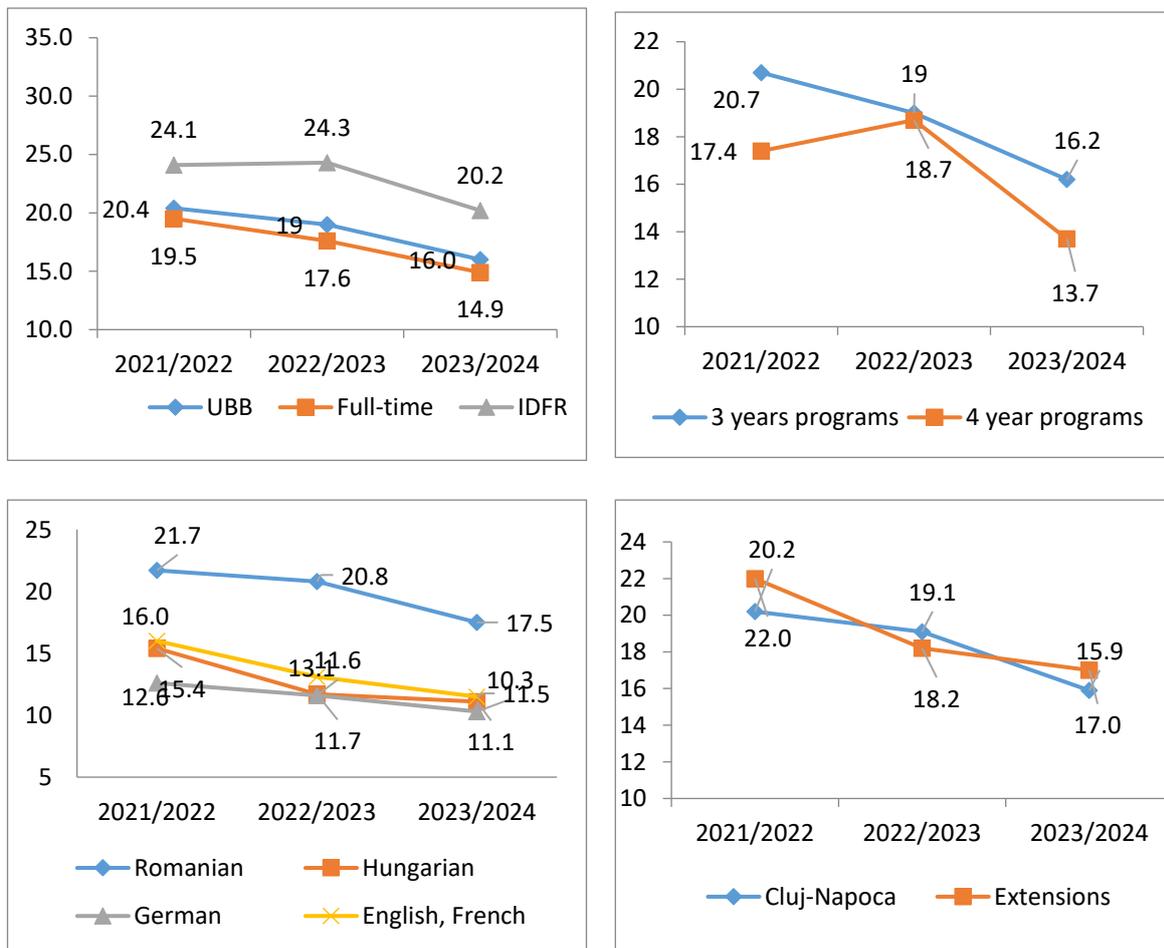


Figure 4. Dropout rates (%) of bachelor's degree programs in the first year, by type of program, cohorts 2021, 2022, 2023

For the majority of programs, in the first year of study, the dropout rate falls between 0% and 15% (45.0% of programs), and between 15% and 30% (33.1% of programs), with only one program having a dropout rate higher than 75%.

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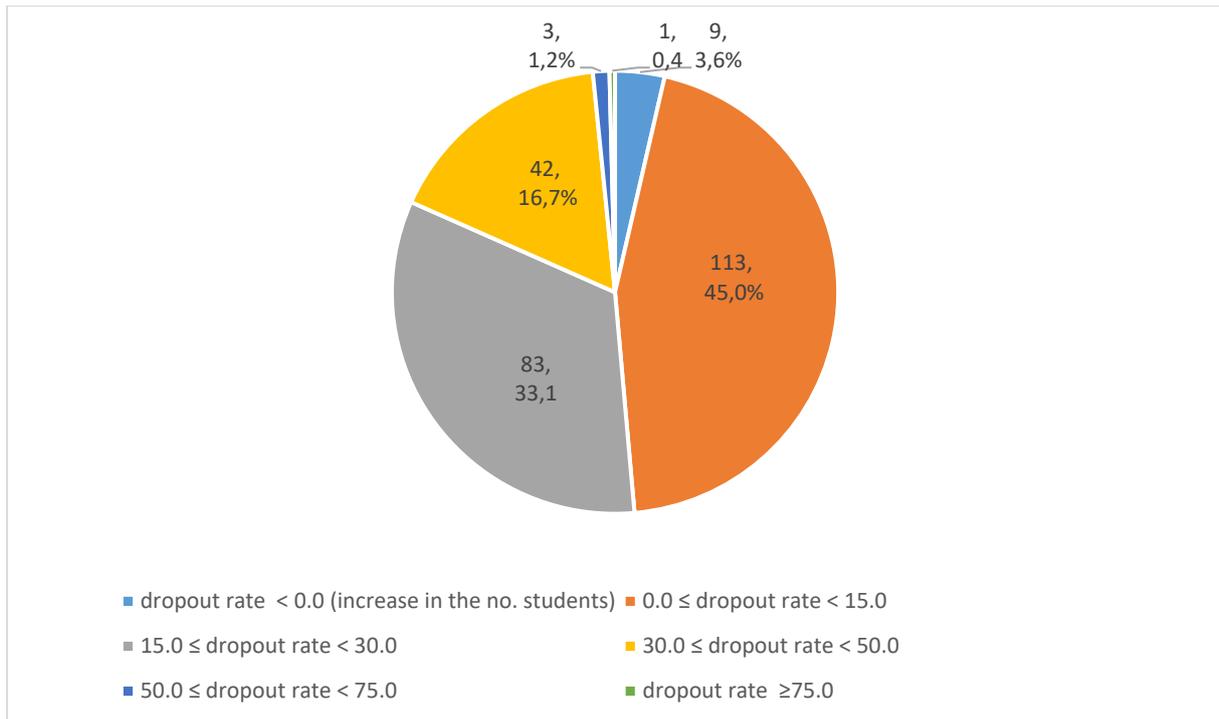


Figure 5. Distribution of bachelor's degree programs according to the dropout rate in the first year of study, cohort 2023

The quartile values are Q1 = 6.7%, Q2 = 15.5%, Q3 = 25.0%

	Q1 (%)	Q2 (%)	Q3 (%)
UBB	6,7	15,5	25,0
3-year programs	6,8	15,9	25,0
4-year programs	0,0	11,6	33,3
Full-time programs	6,3	14,5	24,9
Distance and part-time learning programs	9,4	23,5	31,0
Romanian line of study	9,5	18,8	28,0
Hungarian line of study	4,4	11,4	23,8
German line of study	4,5	6,2	18,2
English/French lines of study	6,5	11,2	18,4

The data on dropout rates at the level of each faculty are presented in Annex 3.

II. MASTER'S LEVEL

At UBB level, the dropout rate data for the cohort 2023-2025 shows the following (Figure 6):

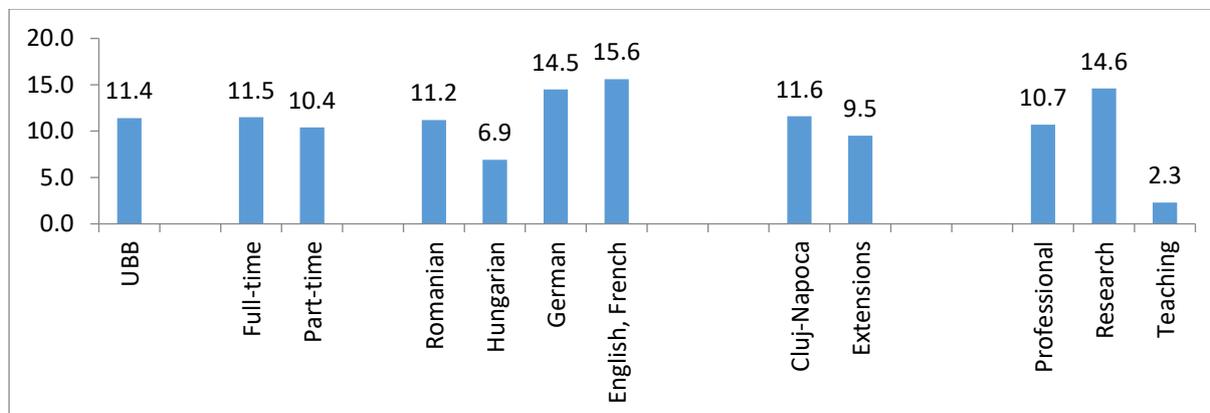


Figure 6. Dropout rates (%) of master's degree programs in the first year, by type of program, cohort 2023

The data show the following (Annex 4):

- ✓ The value is 11.4%, with no significant differences compared to the previous cohort.
- ✓ The average institutional dropout rate in full-time programs (11.5% - 481 fewer students enrolled in the second year) is slightly higher than in part-time and distance learning programs (10.4% - 34 fewer students enrolled in the second year).
- ✓ By language of study, the lowest rate is in Hungarian-language programs (6.9% - 37 fewer students enrolled in the second year), and the highest in English and French programs (15.6% - 109 fewer students enrolled in the second year). The dropout rate has decreased compared to the previous cohort, especially in Romanian-language programs (from 12.8% to 11.2%).
- ✓ By university extension where studies are conducted, the dropout rate for programs run at the Cluj-Napoca university center is 11.6% (480 fewer students enrolled in the second year); the values recorded for master's programs conducted at university extensions vary between 0.0% in Oradea, Odorheiu Secuiesc, and Alba Iulia, and 21.7% in Sighetu Marmăției. The average dropout rate for university extensions is 9.5% (with 35 fewer students enrolled in the second year);
- ✓ By master's program type, the dropout rate is 10.7% in professional master's programs and 14.6% in research master's programs, the latter being higher than in the previous cohort.

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Most programs (133) have a dropout rate below 15%. Only one program, from the Faculty of Business, recorded a dropout rate higher than 75.0% (Figure 7).

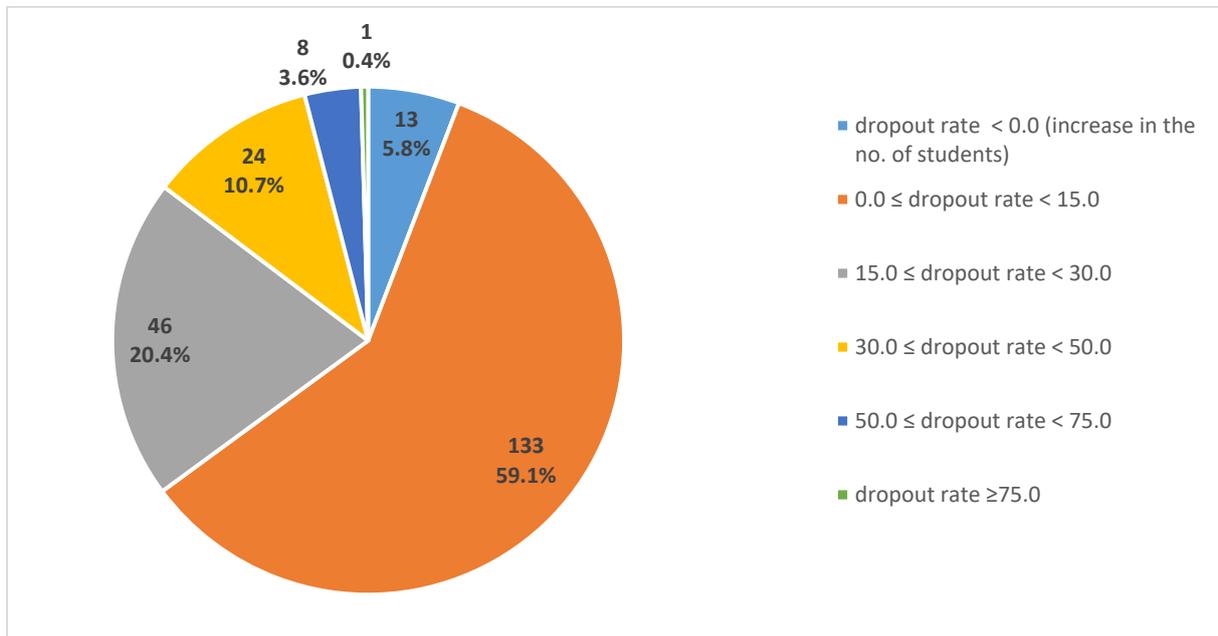


Figure 7. Distribution of master's degree programs according to the dropout rate, cohort 2023

Note: The estimated dropout rate can have negative values if there are more students enrolled in the second year than were enrolled in the previous academic year, in the first year. Due to the calculation method (comparing student numbers), it cannot be ruled out that dropout cases exist even for these programs.

The quartile values are Q1 = 0.0%, Q2 = 10.2% and Q3 = 20.0%.

	Q1 (%)	Q2 (%)	Q3 (%)
UBB	0.0	10.2	20.0
Professional Master's	0.0	9.3	20.0
Research Master's	0.0	12.5	23.5
Teaching Master's	-1.9	0.0	19.3
Full-time programs	0.0	10.2	21.1
Part-time programs	3.9	11.2	17.5
Romanian study line	0.0	10.6	20.0
Hungarian study line	0.0	5.5	13.9
German study line	5.1	20.0	30.0
English/French study languages	0.0	14.3	27.3

Data on dropout rates by faculty are presented in Anex 5.

III. EVOLUTION OF DATA AT THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

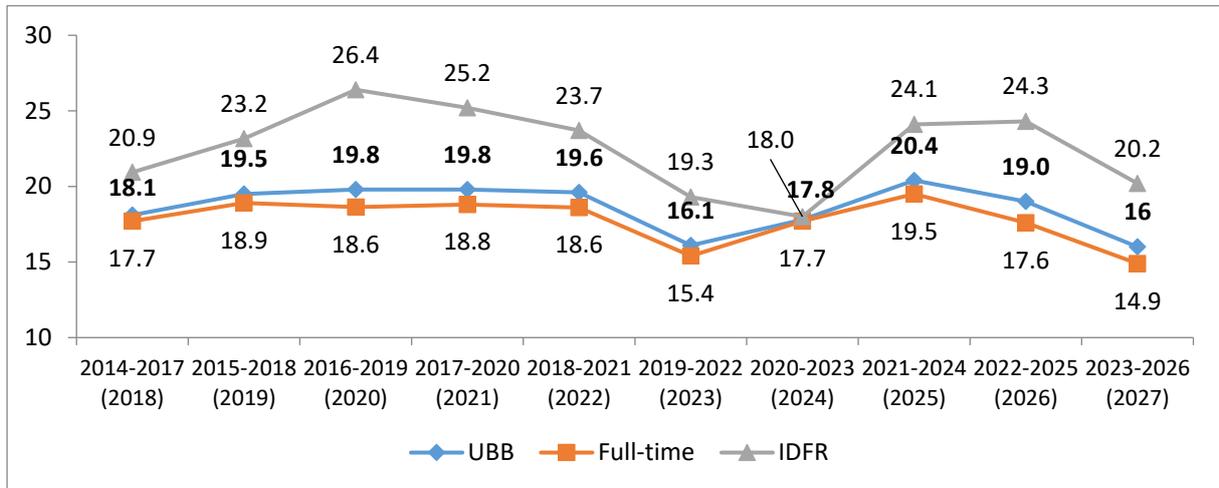


Figure 8. Evolution of the dropout rate of bachelor's degree programs in the first year of study, by form of study

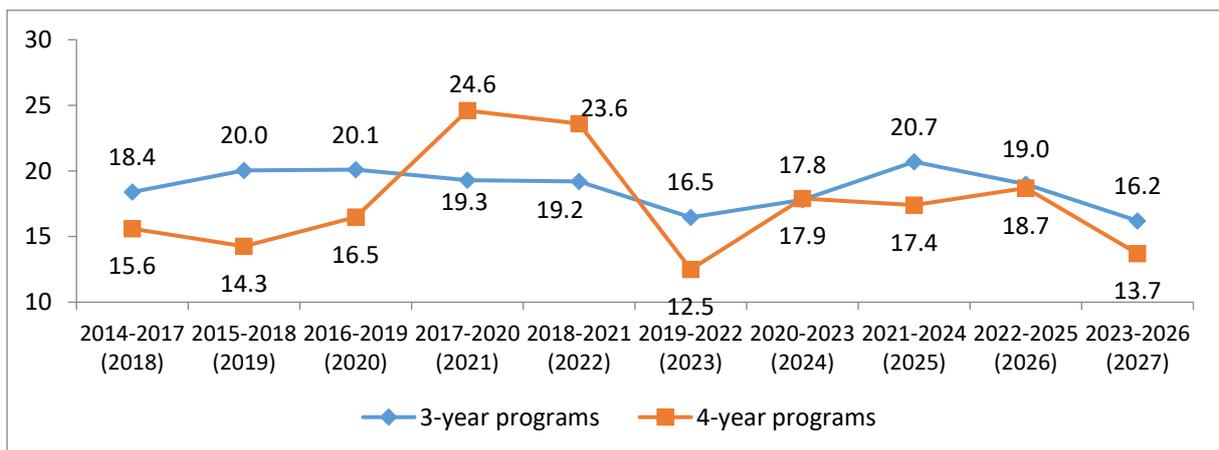


Figure 9. Evolution of the dropout rate of bachelor's degree programs in the first year, by duration of studies

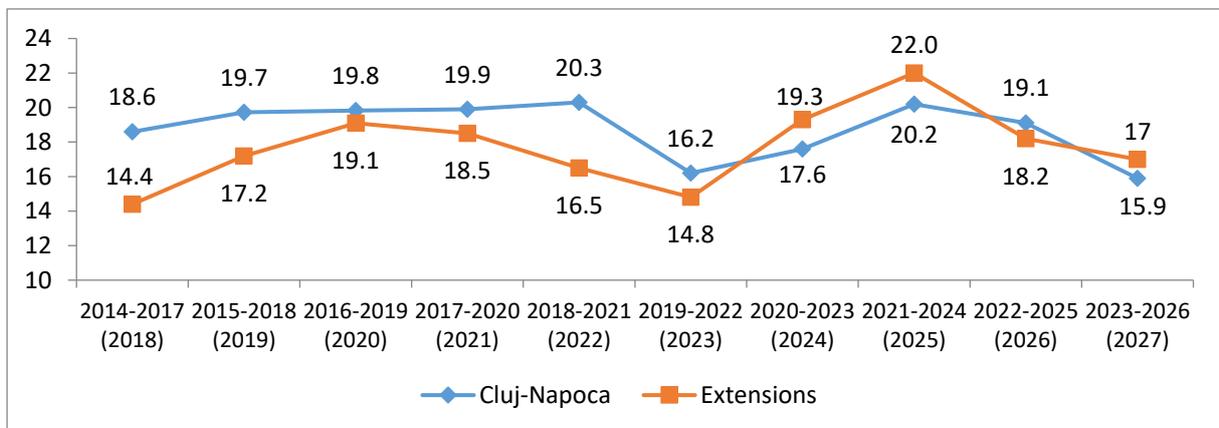


Figure 10. Evolution of the dropout rate of bachelor's degree programs in the first year, by university extension

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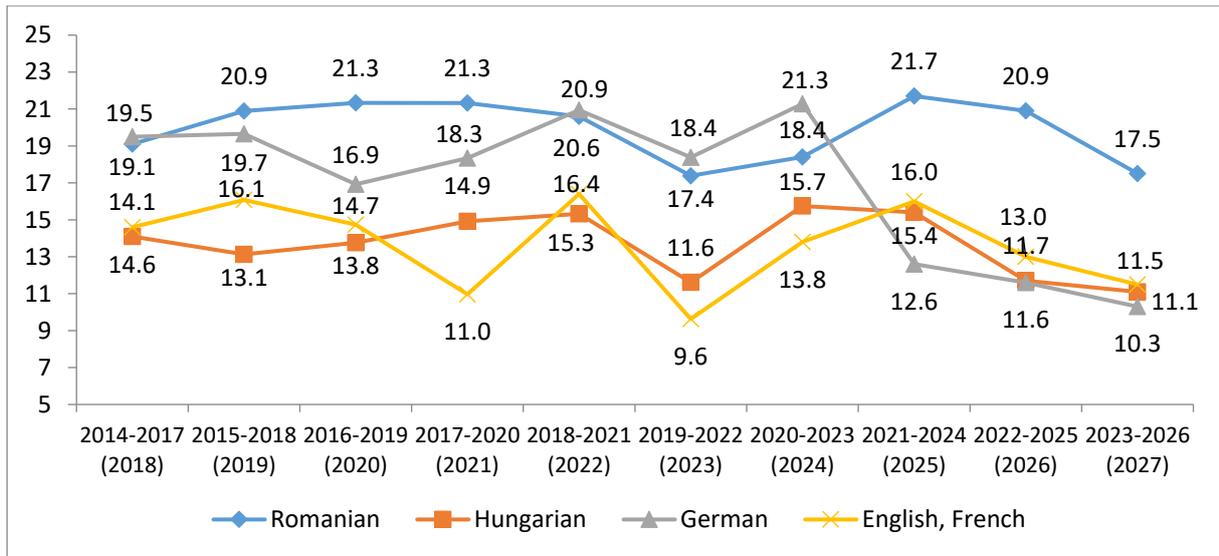


Figure 11. Evolution of the dropout rate of bachelor's degree programs in the first year, by language of study

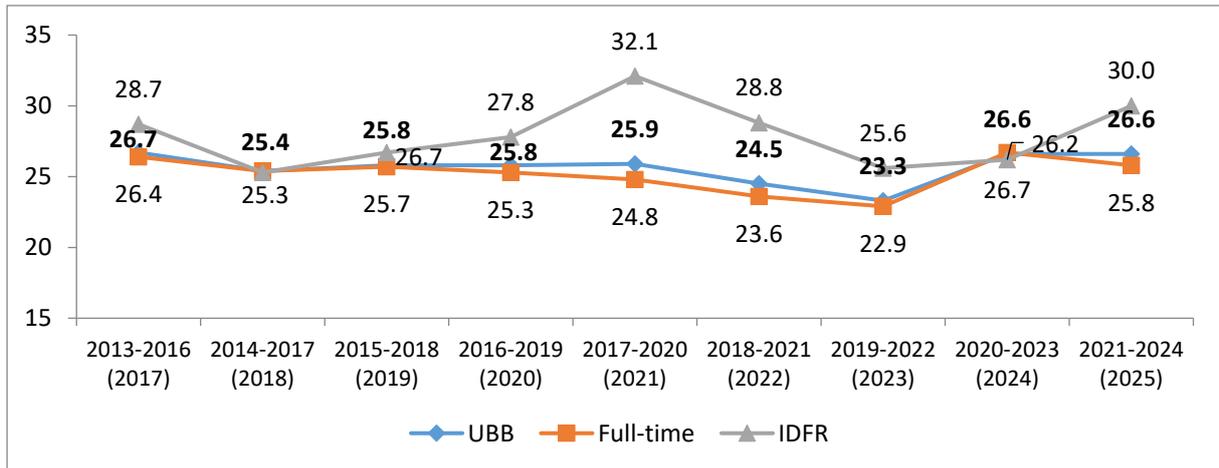


Figure 12. Evolution of the dropout rate of bachelor's degree programs, throughout the entire academic years, by mode of study

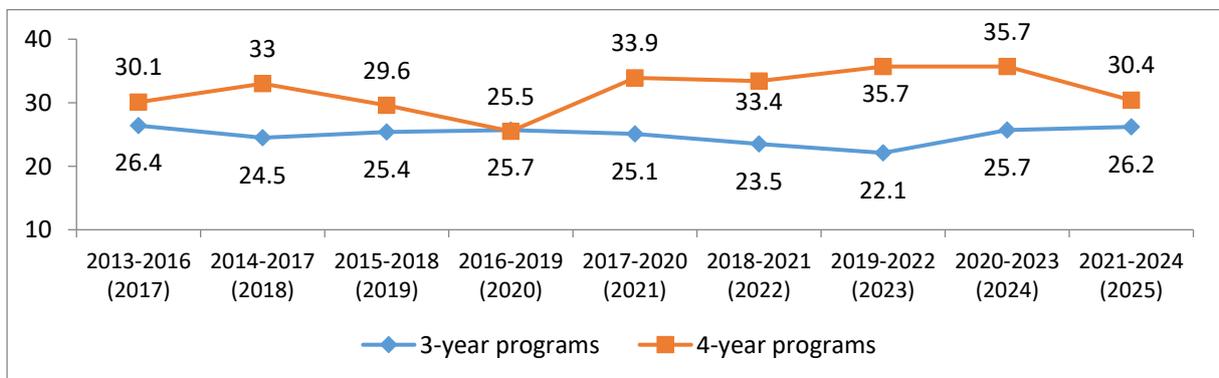


Figure 13. Evolution of the dropout rate of bachelor's degree programs, throughout the entire academic years, by duration of studies

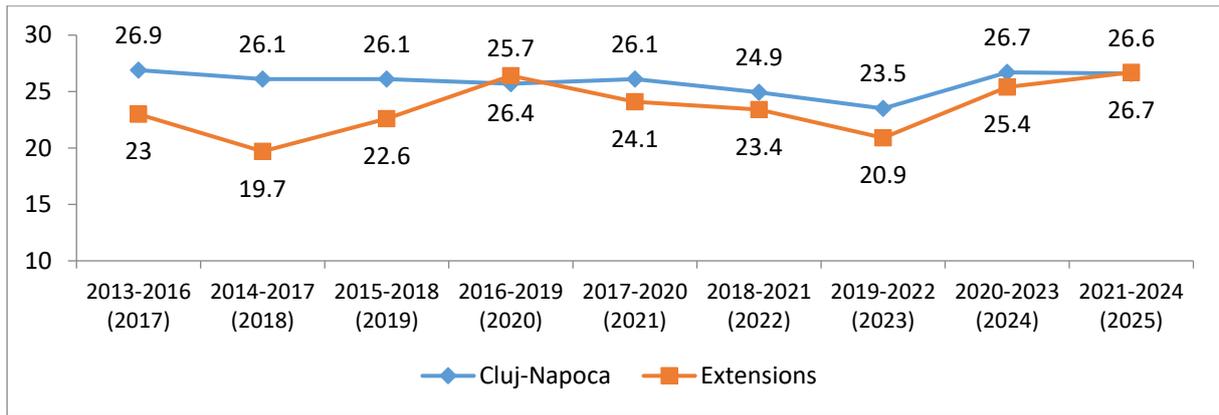


Figure 14. Evolution of the dropout rate of bachelor's degree programs, throughout the entire academic years, by university extension

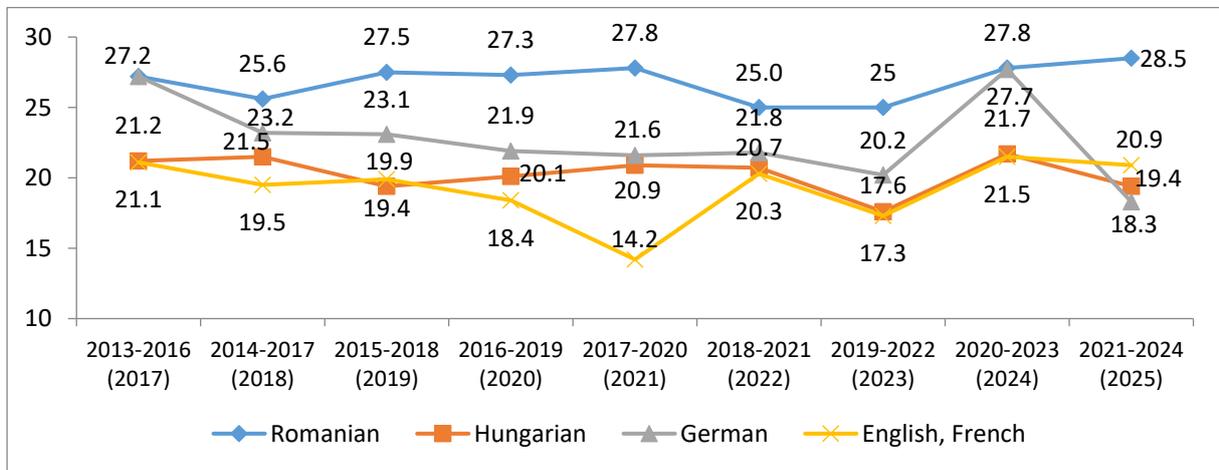


Figure 15. Evolution of the dropout rate of bachelor's degree programs, throughout the entire academic years, by language of study

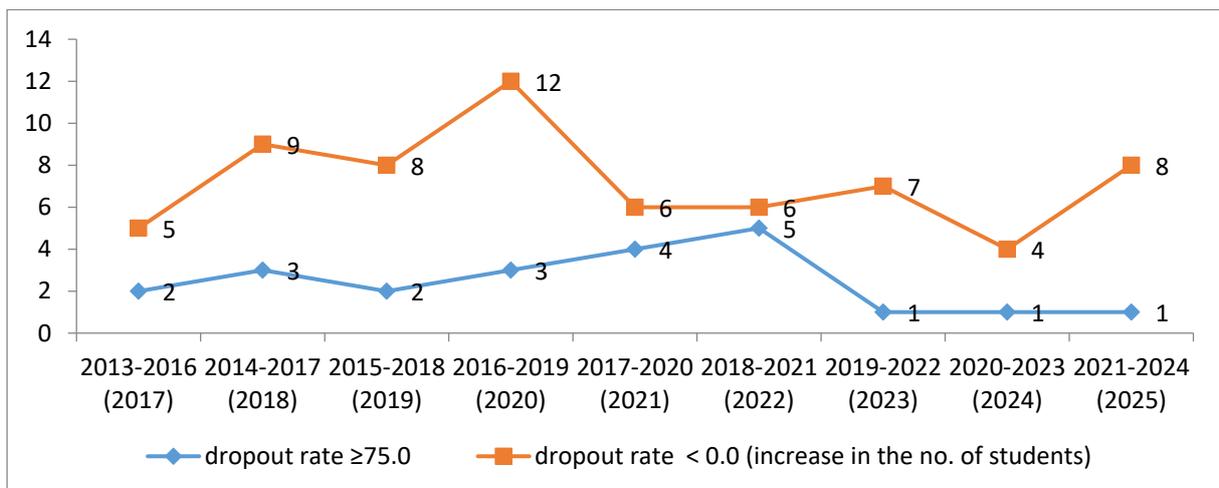


Figure 16. Evolution of the number of bachelor's degree programs with dropout rates over 75% throughout the entire academic years, and respectively, those with very low dropout rates

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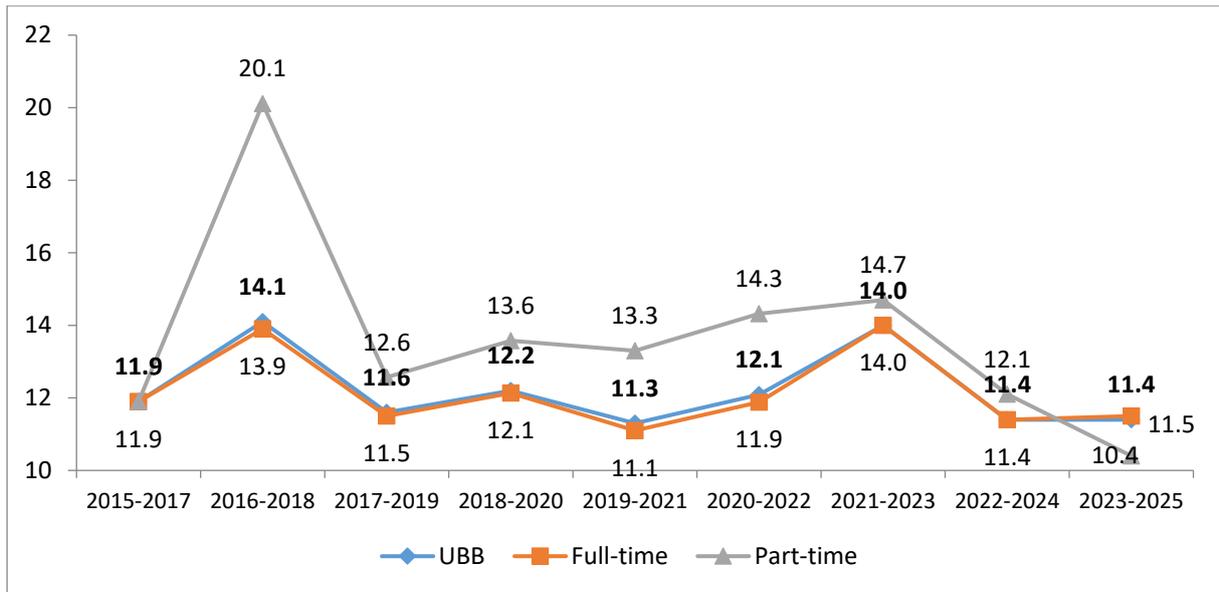


Figure 17. Evolution of the dropout rate of master's degree programs, by form of study

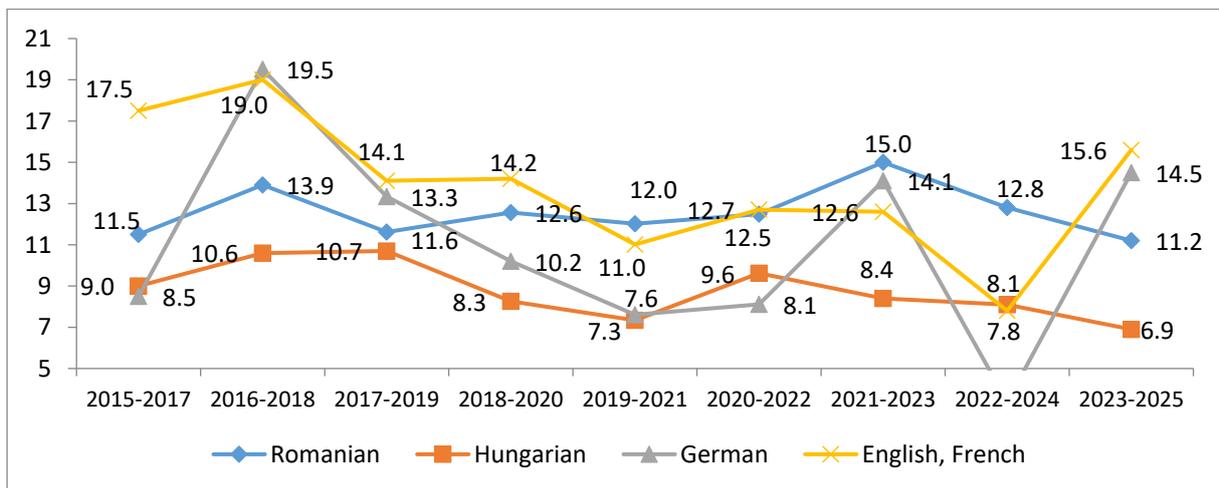


Figure 18. Evolution of the dropout rate of master's degree programs, by language of study

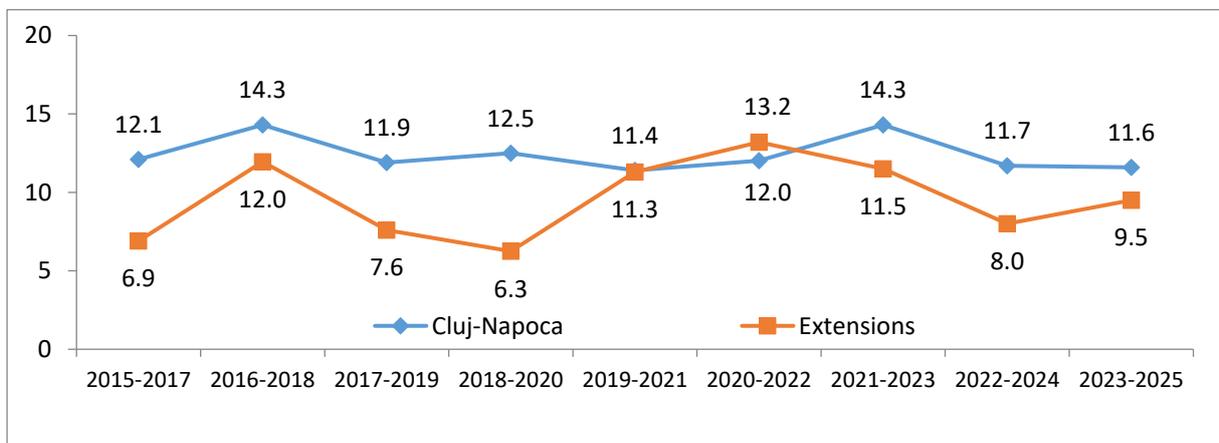


Figure 19. Evolution of the dropout rate of master's degree programs, by university extension

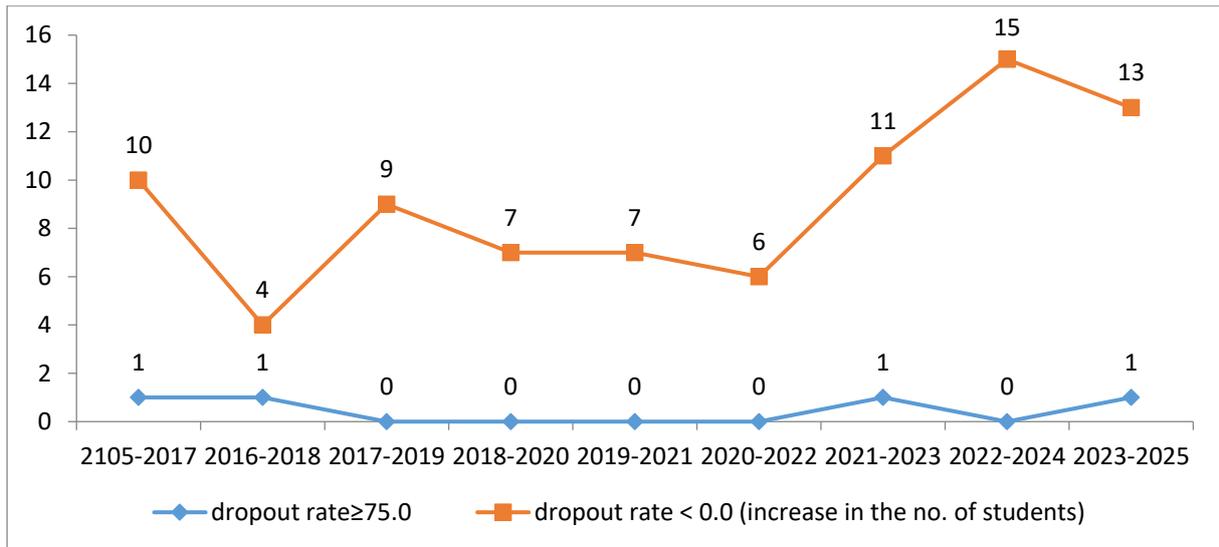


Figure 20. Evolution of the number of master's degree programs with dropout rates over 75%, and respectively, those with very low dropout rates

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Anex 1. General overview UBB, bachelor's level

	Dropout rate of the study program 2021-2024 (2025) cohort		Dropout rate in year 1/year 2	
	No. of students	%	2023/2024 – 2024/2025	
			No. of students	%
TOTAL UBB	3016	26,6	1791	16,0
Three-year programs	2703	26,2	1654	16,2
Four-year programs	313	30,4	137	13,7
Full-time	2349	25,8	1306	14,9
ID-FR	667	30,0	485	20,2
Romanian	2538	28,5	1503	17,5
Hungarian	279	19,4	164	11,1
German	35	18,3	20	10,3
English, French	164	20,9	104	11,5
Cluj-Napoca	2659	26,6	1556	15,9
Extensions	357	26,7	235	17,0
- <i>Alba Iulia</i>	2	10,5	0	-
- <i>Bistrița</i>	79	37,8	56	28,3
- <i>Blaj</i>	1	5,9	0	-
- <i>Gheorgheni</i>	4	13,3	5	17,9
- <i>Năsăud</i>	34	26,2	16	12,7
- <i>Odorheiu Secuiesc</i>	13	19,1	5	5,7
- <i>Oradea</i>	1	4,0	0	0,0
- <i>Reșița</i>	113	34,1	90	21,8
- <i>Satu Mare</i>	11	21,6	16	22,2
- <i>Sfântu Gheorghe</i>	29	30,2	6	8,7
- <i>Sighetu Marmăției</i>	45	25,4	34	19,8
- <i>Târgu Mureș</i>	18	11,1	5	3,4
- <i>Zalău</i>	7	30,4	2	9,5

Anex 2. Dropout rate (%) of bachelor's degree programs throughout the entire academic years, at the faculty level, cohort 2021-2024 (2025)

Faculty of ...	Total	3-year programs	4-year programs	Full-time	ID-IFR	RO	MA	GE	EN/FR
Mathematics and Computer Science	17.7	17.7	-	17.7	-	19.3	32.4	6.3	11.9
Physics	10.0	6.1	19.0	10.0	-	6.7	30.0	-	-
Chemistry and Chemical Engineering	18.8	26.5	16.5	18.8	-	20.2	12.0	-	-
Biology and Geology	28.3	30.0	19.0	28.3	-	29.6	23.1	-	-
Geography	25.7	25.7	-	27.7	0.0	29.3	11.3	-	-
Environmental Science	29.7	30.9	27.8	29.7	-	30.7	25.0	-	-
Law	37.8	-	37.8	31.1	70.8	37.8	-	-	-
Letters	32.5	32.5	-	32.5	-	35.6	22.2	23.3	26.0
History and Philosophy	30.0	30.0	-	29.3	32.2	29.6	29.3	-	40.0
Sociology and Social Work	31.0	31.0	-	27.6	41.3	32.5	17.0	-	-
Psychology and Educational Sciences	20.0	20.0	-	15.3	26.2	20.2	18.9	37.5	-
Economics and Business Administration	25.1	25.1	-	24.6	27.0	26.4	21.5	17.3	19.1
European Studies	30.4	30.4	-	30.3	30.6	31.1	-	44.4	24.7
Business	38.9	38.9	-	40.4	34.8	40.7	-	-	29.4
Political, Administrative and Communication	30.2	30.2	-	31.3	27.2	31.0	19.4	21.1	30.9
Physical Education and Sport	25.3	25.3	-	25.7	22.7	30.7	3.4	-	-
Orthodox Theology	20.2	33.3	12.3	20.2	-	20.2	-	-	-
Greek Catholic Theology	11.7	41.7	4.2	11.7	-	11.7	-	-	-
Reformed Theology and Music	33.3	33.3	-	33.3	-	-	33.3	-	-
Roman Catholic Theology	13.0	14.8	10.5	13.0	-	-	13.0	-	-
Theatre and Film	22.3	22.3	-	22.3	-	28.6	11.9	-	-
Faculty of Engineering	40.0	17.7	40.0	40.0	-	40.0	-	-	-

Note. The negative values denote the fact that the number of students enrolled in year 2 or the final year of study is higher than that of the first year (reenrollment from previous cohorts or recognition of previous learning).

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Anex 3. Dropout rate (%) of bachelor's degree programs in the first year of study, at the faculty level, cohort 2023-2024

Faculty of ...	Total	3-year programs	4-year programs	IF	ID-IFR	RO	MA	GE	EN/FR
Mathematics and Computer Science	10.0	9.9	11.8	10.0	-	11.1	14.9	6.2	7.8
Physics	14.3	25.0	-12.5	14.3	-	13.6	16.7	-	-
Chemistry and Chemical Engineering	11.2	5.7	13.3	11.2	-	12.9	6.3	-	-
Biology and Geology	9.7	8.3	17.2	9.7	-	8.9	11.3	-	-
Geography	18.0	18.0	-	16.6	32.4	18.9	13.9	-	-
Environmental Science	16.9	20.5	11.5	16.9	-	17.9	11.1	-	-
Law	14.3		14.3	11.6	31.0	14.3	-	-	-
Letters	20.1	20.1	-	20.1	-	23.7	13.0	4.5	4.4
History and Philosophy	22.4	22.4	-	20.8	29.5	25.1	11.1	-	12.7
Sociology and Social Work	17.8	17.8	-	16.2	21.8	18.8	9.6	-	-
Psychology and Educational Sciences	11.1	11.1	-	9.0	13.9	12.1	8.1	18.2	8.5
Economics and Business Administration	16.9	16.9	-	15.4	21.8	17.9	10.4	15.4	20.1
European Studies	19.9	19.9	-	18.0	32.0	23.2	-	30.0	4.5
Business	20.6	20.6	-	17.7	26.7	22.6	-	-	11.4
Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences	18.9	18.9	-	18.8	19.1	19.6	10.0	5.3	21.6
Physical Education and Sport	16.2	16.2	-	15.1	22.7	17.3	10.8	-	-
Orthodox Theology	0.0	6.1	-3.3	0.0	-	0.0	-	-	-
Greek Catholic Theology	10.4	25.0	5.9	10.4	-	10.4	-	-	-
Reformed Theology and Music	22.2	22.2	-	22.2	-	-	22.2	-	-
Roman Catholic Theology	19.2	25.0	0.0	19.2	-	-	19.2	-	-
Theatre and Film	10.1	10.1	-	10.1	-	7.7	13.5	-	-
Engineering	39.7	-	39.7	39.7	-	39.7	-	-	-

Note. The negative values denote the fact that the number of students enrolled in year 2 or the final year of study is higher than that of the first year (reenrollment from previous cohorts or recognition of previous learning).

Anex 4. Dropout from master's degree programs, overall picture at UBB, cohort 2023–2025

	Number of students	%
Total	515	11,4
Full-time	481	11,5
Part-time	34	10,4
Romanian	359	11,2
Hungarian	37	6,9
German	10	14,5
English, French	109	15,6
Professional	382	10,7
Research	132	14,6
Teaching	1	2,3
Cluj-Napoca	480	11,6
Extensions	35	9,5
- Alba Iulia	0	0,0
- Bistrița	4	14,8
- Blaj	1	4,0
- Gheorgheni	1	6,7
- Odorheiu Secuiesc	0	0,0
- Oradea	0	0,0
- Reșița	21	12,0
- Sfântu Gheorghe	2	6,3
- Sighetu Marmăției	5	21,7
- Zalău	1	6,7

Note. The negative values denote that the number of students enrolled in year II is higher than that of the first year (reenrollment from previous cohorts or recognition of previous learning).

In the calculation of the values for the Faculty of Law (1-yearlong study program) the number of students enrolled and the number of graduates were considered.

Summary Report on University Dropout at BBU, 2022 - 2023

Anex 5. Dropout from master's degree programs at the faculty level, cohort 2023–2025

Faculty of ...	Total		Full-time study programs		ID-IFR		RO	HU	GE	EN/FR
	No. of students	%	No. of students	%	No. of students	%	%	%	%	%
Mathematics and Computer Science	63	15.2	63	15.2	-	-	10.4	5.9	5.3	20.4
Physics	3	9.4	3	9.4	-	-	4.5	-	-	20.0
Chemistry and Chemical Engineering	12	10.9	12	10.9	-	-	13.0	7.1	-	10.7
Biology and Geology	7	4.0	6	3.9	1	4.3	3.2	2.8	-	13.3
Geography	28	12.1	28	12.1	-	-	14.8	2.0	-	
Environmental Science	12	20.0	12	20.0	-	-	13.6	-	-	37.5
Law	28	26.4	28	26.4	-	-	23.4	36.4	-	33.3
Letters	12	7.3	12	7.3	-	-	3.4	6.1	20.0	14.7
History and Philosophy	29	13.0	26	13.7	3	9.1	13.4	9.1	-	-
Sociology and Social Work	33	15.6	26	13.1	7	53.8	15.7	15.2	-	-
Psychology and Educational Sciences	47	6.6	45	7.3	2	1.9	6.2	6.4	30.0	-
Economics and Business Administration	91	10.0	85	10.0	6	9.2	9.8	6.1	5.0	17.3
European Studies	12	8.1	12	8.1	-	-	16.9	-	-	-5.1
Business	30	28.0	27	30.3	3	16.7	28.2	-	-	27.8
Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences	69	15.0	57	14.7	12	16.7	17.4	17.4	30.0	8.6
Physical Education and Sport	6	4.1	6	4.1	-	-	4.1	-	-	-
Orthodox Theology	9	13.2	9	13.2	-	-	13.2	-	-	-
Greek Catholic Theology	3	4.8	3	4.8	-	-	4.8	-	-	-
Reformed Theology and Music	2	4.9	2	4.9	-	-	-	4.9	-	-
Roman Catholic Theology	0	0.0	0	0.0	-	-	-	0.0	-	-
Theatre and Film	9	15.5	9	15.5	-	-	33.3	0.0	-	12.5
Engineering	10	32.3	10	32.3	-	-	34.8	-	-	25.0

Note. The negative values denote that the number of students enrolled in year 2 is higher than that of the first year (due to reenrollment from previous cohorts or recognition of previous learning).

In the calculation of the values for the Faculty of Law (1-year study program) the number of students enrolled and the number of graduates were considered.