Lithuania: Research Assessment Exercise
Panel S1: Social Sciences
Lithuania: Research Assessment Exercise

Panel S1: Social Sciences

MOSTA, March 2015
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Introduction

Background

The overall objective of the research assessment exercise of the Lithuanian Higher Education and Research Institutions was:

To provide the Lithuanian public, policy-makers and decision-makers and the academic community with the most objective picture possible of the excellence and competitiveness of Lithuanian science in comparison with global practice in the respective area of science.

The assessment produced evidence based analytical material that carefully and in detail analyses the research excellence and competitiveness of Lithuanian research, whilst also considering its socioeconomic impact and the capacity of its research institutions. This material provides evidence for research policy making at different levels as well as enabling the research institutions involved in the process to gain a significant impetus for improving their operations. The research assessment was directed at institutions that were Higher education institutions and their constituent faculties/departments/research groups or State research institutes.

Altogether nine panels were appointed to perform the evaluation. This document is the report of Panel S1: Social Sciences.

Scope of Panel S2: Social Sciences

The Panel was asked to evaluate research in 20 Units of Assessment (UoA) using the following criteria: research quality, economic and social impact, infrastructure, research management and development potential and to score each Unit on a five point scale, namely, ranging from outstanding [5] to poor [1]. The overall objective was to benchmark research in Lithuania against international research in the Social Sciences.

Material on which the assessment was made

Each Unit participating in the evaluation provided the panel with a self-assessment report for the years 2009 - 2013. The self-assessment report contained the following categories:

1. General information about the unit of assessment (UoA)
2. Human resources
3. Research output
4. Doctoral training
5. National and international collaboration
6. Other scientific and social activities
7. SWOT analysis
8. Funding

The self-assessment also included a list of best publications which were sent to the panellists. The panel also had access to a bibliometric analysis including information on citations and international co-authors.

The evaluation by the Panel was based on the self-assessment reports prepared by the Units of Assessment themselves, bibliometrics based on the data from the Scopus database, publicly available information via the websites of the research institutions as well as site visits and meetings with the representatives of the Units of Assessment. The Panel and the organisers of the assessment exercise do not take any responsibility for the quality and accuracy of the information submitted by the individual Units of Assessment.
Assessment procedure

Experts from Panel S1 visited Lithuania on February 23 – 27, 2015 and during this period they made site-visits to all UoA. The final Panel S1 assessments were based on both the self-assessment reports and evidence gathered during site visits. At least two Panel members were present at each visit. Each self-assessment report was read in detail by at least two Panel members and then discussed by the whole Panel on at least two occasions, namely, before and after the Panel visits to the Units.

Institutions involved

Panel S1 was asked to evaluate 20 UoA within 15 institutions. The scientific disciplines of these institutions include Management and Administration, Education, Economics, Communication and Information. The institutions were as follows

Universities

1. Šiauliai University
2. Vytautas Magnus University
3. Vilnius University
4. Klaipeda University
5. Aleksandras Stulginskis University
6. ISM University of Management and Economics
7. Kazimieras Simonavičius University
8. Kaunas University of Technology
9. Lithuanian University of Educational sciences
10. Lithuanian sports university
11. Mykolas Romeris University
12. Vilnius Gediminas Technical University
13. International Business School at Vilnius University

Research Institutes

1. Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics
2. Lithuanian Energy Institute
Assessment of the Unit
ISM University of Management and Economics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the UoA</th>
<th>ISM University of Management and Economics</th>
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<td>Total no. FTE researchers</td>
<td>16,11</td>
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<td>Composition of the Unit of Assessment (UoA)</td>
<td>Faculty Department; Research Office; mOffice of Doctoral Studies</td>
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</table>

| Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA | 3 |
| The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania | 3 |
| The physical infrastructure of the UoA | 3 |
| Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA | 3 |
| The development potential of the UoA | 4 |

**OVERALL SCORE** 3

**Overall score**

ISM is a relatively new private institution with an initial focus on providing education and training with high standards. Research (basic and applied) has been included in the agenda of the institution more recently and consequently it has not reached yet an outstanding level.

ISM seems to be a well organised institution with a well-designed strategic planning. The Senate, with several foreign members, plays an advising role. This is relevant for providing to ISM an international vision.

At this moment ISM cannot be considered as a strong international player in the discipline although probably it is on the right way. The potential of research in ISM is good, and it could be expected a promising future. Nevertheless, resources restrictions (especially lack of enough human resources for research) can reduce this potential.
Quality of the research performance and impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

This is an institution that is mainly focused on education and training. Only 5.5 FTE researchers in the whole institution provide a clear idea of the main focus (teaching and training) of the institution at least in its first years. Nevertheless, research has an increasing relevance in ISM and the current levels seem to be good and with a positive tendency. From 2009 to 2013, these small number of researcher published 39 articles some of them in international journals.

The common research theme (Innovation and Entrepreneurship) is a good and logical approach for an institution devoted to Management and Business. However, not all seven specific research themes have developed equally yet and do have sufficient critical mass. Only three, Marketing, HRM and Organisational Behaviour, seem to meet required standards (priorities) with respect to quality and internationalisation. Only part of the research work is done in teams.

Some researchers operate in recognized international research networks. A substantial number of the academic output is written in English and a portion in international journals. Seven of eighteen theses are published in English. ISM also wants to become an internationally recognized research university. International exchange is rather well developed. There are a number of foreign visiting scholars and a number of ISM scholars go abroad. Exchange with Western Europe and US is promising, but should be extended and intensified (for example more international staff and students). The number of international researchers and international doctoral students is still limited. External international funding of research is still rather limited (participation in EU-research programs).

Collaboration with Lithuanian and foreign academic institutions and scholars in the region is developing rather well.

In summary, regarding the impact of its research, ISM cannot be considered yet a strong international player in the discipline although probably it is on its way. The trend is positive but at the moment they are still playing a relevant role mostly at national level.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

The national economic and social impact of the ISM seems to be good. Part of the academic staff is active in public and non-governmental advisory bodies and the number of non-academic publications, TV and radio interviews are increasing over the years. They have a relevant role in media with a considerable amount of contributions.

However, the quantity of externally funded applied research is small. Collaboration with business and industry is limited. Bearing in mind the specific character of this institution, one would expect a stronger role in the field of consultancy, continuing education, commissioned courses and so on.

Given the common research theme, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, one might expect a more elaborated policy and research strategy in this respect, for example as regards SME's and start-up spin-offs.

The most relevant fact is that this not fully positive vision of the external observers is shared by the institution. In the visit ISM presented the strategic plans that include a reinforcement of the external impact of ISM with the objective of developing research as a mixture of interdisciplinary basic and applied with higher impact on the community.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

ISM is located in a renewed historic building that seems excellent for the teaching mission of the university. Although social science researchers do not have special needs of physical infrastructures it is not clear if ISM provides spaces required for mutual interaction and interaction with doctoral students.
The informational infrastructure (hardware and software) of the ISM seems to meet international standards. Although a need to subscribe to the more specialised Science Direct Database is expressed explicitly, as well as the acquisition of the so-called InCites tool, which will make it possible to measure and benchmark ISM research output nationally and internationally. ISM has its own library and affords electronic access to the important online databases with online journals and online books. Finally, ISM has an Innovator's lab and is developing and International Business Center which will offer an infrastructure for research and competence development.

In summary, as it is recognised by the self-report, the level infrastructure is correct. Nevertheless the report also mentions that some improvements would be desirable in case of having additional funds.

**Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA**

ISM has defined detailed strategies and plans for developing research and the necessary human resources. These plans are ambitious and promising if they can be developed. The good planning-system of ISM is one of the strongest points of the institution. Nevertheless, the small number of researchers and limited resources could slow down future developments.

At ISM there are two research-related departments: a research office and an office of doctoral studies. There is not a separate unit for applied research.

At the background, the Senate plays an advising role and approves the five year research plans. This group consists partly of foreign professors. This is relevant for providing to ISM an international vision.

There don't seem to be explicit career development policies for the academic staff, and no objectives are formulated about the necessary quantity of doctoral students. There is a strong wish to become more attractive for foreign researchers and doctoral students.

On the other hand, there are opportunities for the academic staff to attend international conferences abroad and to make foreign study visits.

**The development potential of UoA**

In principle ISM has a high development potential. It is a rather new university (established in 1999) and has a remarkable somewhat deviating organisational structure (no separate faculties, a strongly internationally oriented Senate, a private character). Also, ISM's mission is ambitious: to become an internationally highly regarded research university in the field of management and economics. So far, international research and collaboration has developed rather well, both in the region, the rest of Europe and America. Nevertheless, the output in the form of articles in renowned international journals has to increase. Another risk is lagging international research funding (EU). Also remaining underdevelopment of research in some fields is a risk. Sharpening and focusing the research strategy might partly resolve this. Also a further development of applied research is desirable in order to be able to increase the national and regional socio-economic impact of ISM research. Helpful in this respect might also be: a more explicit development of an internal HRM and career development strategy, as well as a more explicit publication strategy.

In summary, the potential of research in ISM is very good, though the resources restrictions (especially human resources) can reduce this potential.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

At this moment ISM cannot be considered as a strong international player in the discipline although probably it is on the right way. The trend is positive but momentarily they are still playing a relevant role mostly at national level.
The national economic and social impact of ISM seems to be good. However, the quantity of externally funded applied research is small. Collaboration with business and industry is limited. However, the strategic plans of ISM include a reinforcement of the external impact of the institution.

Physical infrastructures are adequate although it is unclear if they are good enough for supporting a strong research activity. The IT-infrastructure (hardware and software) of ISM meets international standards. The level of the infrastructure is correct, although some improvements would be desirable.

ISM has defined detailed strategies and plans for developing research and the necessary human resources. This plans are ambitious and promising if they can be carried out. The planning in ISM is one of the strongest points of the institution. Nevertheless, the small number of researchers and limited resources could slow down future developments.

For playing a relevant international role and increasing the impact on the community, research has to be reinforced in several aspects:

1. Overall, research has to be further developed and needs to have sufficient critical mass.
2. Being a small institution with limited resources, sharpening and focusing the research strategy is recommendable.
3. In spite of the traditional tendency of social scientist to work alone, working in teams should be promoted and facilitated. Infrastructures have to facilitate this team-working.
4. Internationalisation of research should be a main goal. Exchange with foreign universities should be extended and intensified.
5. External international funding of research (i.e. participation in EU-research programs) should be promoted.
6. Collaboration with business and industry in the fields of consultancy, continuing education, commissioned courses and so on should be reinforced.
7. It would be recommendable to develop additionally a more elaborated policy and research strategy in regards SME's and start-up spin-offs.
8. A possible Knowledge Transfer Office could manage all the external activities of ISM. This should be a source of funding for supporting applied research.
9. Improving HRM policies in behalf of the academic staff and doctoral students is advisable.
10. Special attention should be paid to resources (especially human resources) that might probably be the main bottle neck for a promising future of research in ISM.
**Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics, Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the UoA</th>
<th>Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of institution being assessed</td>
<td>Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total no. FTE researchers</td>
<td>25,1</td>
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<td>Composition of the Unit of Assessment (UoA)</td>
<td>Agricultural Policy and Foreign Trade Division; Division of Market Research of Agricultural Products; Division of Farms and Enterprises Economics; Division of Farms Business Survey; Rural Development Division; Finance and Accounting Division; General Affairs Division</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA | 3 |
| The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania | 3 |
| The physical infrastructure of the UoA | 3 |
| Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA | 3 |
| The development potential of the UoA | 3 |

**OVERALL SCORE**

LAEI can be considered as a strong national player with some international recognition. It has a significant impact at the Lithuanian level. Under certain conditions, the institute also has potential to developing into a stronger international player. This requires, for example, sustainable and perhaps increased state funding for fundamental research and development, as well as a further increase of international funding (EU-Framework programs). Also research funding by national and international business in case of applied research and development has to be developed in a systematic way. Peer-reviewed scientific output in internationally visible scientific journals of the institute develops into the right direction, but should increase both in a quantitative and qualitative sense in case of realising its wider international ambition. A good point is the high percentage (65.3%) of internationally co-authored Scopus publications. Also other possible impediments that could hinder further international development of the institute should be solved, such as the lack of direct accessibility of some international databases, as well as the still limited internationally open research environment of the institute.

**Overall score**

LAEI can be considered as a strong national player with some international recognition. It has a significant impact at the Lithuanian level. Under certain conditions, the institute also has potential to developing into a stronger international player. This requires, for example, sustainable and perhaps increased state funding for fundamental research and development, as well as a further increase of international funding (EU-Framework programs). Also research funding by national and international business in case of applied research and development has to be developed in a systematic way. Peer-reviewed scientific output in internationally visible scientific journals of the institute develops into the right direction, but should increase both in a quantitative and qualitative sense in case of realising its wider international ambition. A good point is the high percentage (65.3%) of internationally co-authored Scopus publications. Also other possible impediments that could hinder further international development of the institute should be solved, such as the lack of direct accessibility of some international databases, as well as the still limited internationally open research environment of the institute.
Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

As of 2010 LIAE is a state-funded national scientific research institute employing 25.1 FTE researchers. Researchers can be discerned in different categories: chief researchers, senior researchers, researchers and junior researchers. Since the transformation of the institute interdisciplinary fundamental research, or in its own terms ‘multi-faceted holistic evolutionary systems-research’ has become a new important focus of research, next to applied research, with two interdisciplinary long-term scientific and experimental development programs for 2012-2016.

LIAE has a strong ambition to become an internationally recognized research institute in the field of agricultural and food economics and policy, farm and company economics, rural and regional development, environmental economics, and consumer behaviour. The institute has developed and is developing scientific collaboration with various comparable institutes in Lithuania and the Baltic and wider region, as well as with some comparable academic research institutes in Western Europe (Denmark, Finland, Netherlands). Although the critical mass of researchers is substantial it is not fully clear yet if all researchers actually do have the required competences to carry out fundamental research. Some researchers have carried out outstanding international comparative qualitative and quantitative research and have published jointly with foreign co-authors the research results in indexed journals. The four articles submitted for review were all published in recognized scientific journals. Three of which have a high international visibility, such as Energy Policy (Elsevier) and The Journal of Productivity Analysis (Springer). So far the institute doesn’t have its own professors or researchers who occupy a part-time professoriate elsewhere. Research managers play a key-role with respect to research development, as well as the so-called Methodology Committee (responsible for quality control and methodological assistance to PhD-students), and the LIAE Research Council (examination and evaluation of research output). In collaboration with Aleksandras Stulginskis University the institute publishes a peer-reviewed journal. Every five years, in 2009 and 2014, LAEI organizes international scientific conferences.

The research output in 2009-2013 consisted of science monographs, articles, research papers, theses, and software. Between 2011-2013 on the whole 17 doctoral students enrolled, partly belonging to the tenured research staff of the institute. LAEI has a joint PhD program with Vilnius Gediminas Technical University. Two doctoral theses were produced, in 2010 and 2014 respectively. The total number of publications in Scopus in this period was 56, of which 49 articles, and for the rest monographs and prototypes (software for farm management). The score per researcher was 2.0 Scopus-articles. Of all 56 articles 32 (65.3%) were co-authored. Of the twenty publications selected by the institute, about half was published in international journals, and a quarter in the institute’s own journal.

Staff members have presented on a regular base research papers at international scientific conferences, mostly in neighbouring countries. No international researchers are employed temporarily so far in the institute. There were two short-term incoming visits from Romania.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

The institute considers itself as a main player in the field of agrarian, food and regional economics in Lithuania. It plays a role in the new valley research infrastructure (Valley Nemunas) and carries out (or has carried out) a number of research projects, which are policy-relevant to Lithuania. Staff-members contribute to relevant national advisory committees, for the biggest part under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture. Collaborating with social partners on all levels (business, national and local authorities and business) is perceived as strength by the institute. The institute has good contacts with farming, tourism, local authorities, NGO’s, and the Lithuanian parliament.
The physical infrastructure of the UoA

The physical infrastructure (offices, computer hard- and software, IT) is appropriate. However, not all databases are available because of lack of funding. Relevant databases are accessible with the exception of full text journals on the ISIS Web of Science and the Scopus database. If necessary, researchers are able to consult these databases in other public libraries, such as the National Library next door. There is a need to acquire the latest mathematical models, but financial resources are limited.

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

LIAE has five research departments and two supportive departments (finance/accounting, general affairs). Research management is well organized in the institute, and compared to universities there is no competing teaching obligation and less organisational bureaucracy. Research managers are responsible for planning research and departmental human resources. Depending of projects, there are also temporary research supervisors, and senior researchers who supervise PhD-students. Likewise, the Methodological Committee and the LIAE Research Council play a supportive role in the research management. Competence development is a priority and enabled by training programmes (scientific writing, presentation skills and methodological training), and internal seminars. The research staff is stimulated to graduate (if not graduated) and to write PhD-theses. In some cases researchers are awarded a sabbatical leave to complete their thesis. There is formal career development with respect to the various discerned researcher positions.

The development potential of the UoA

In principle the transformed ILAE has development potential, also dependent of funding and the role the institute is allowed to play at the national and regional levels as well in the Lithuanian valley R&D structure. The institute started several good R&D-practices in recent years. Also the research environment has been improved. At the global level, including Western Europe and Asia, the development potential is less crystalized yet. At this level the institute has to compete with internationally renowned foreign research institutes or universities in the field in Europe, America and Asia. By intensifying the existing collaboration with comparable research institutes in the Baltic Countries, AS University, and strategic partnerships with relevant universities and research institutes in the EU, including the Nordic countries, the institute could become an important player at both the regional and European level, and possibly to some extent also at the global level. In this case also state funding for basic research, EU-research funding and also funding from national and international businesses should be more robust.

Conclusions and recommendations

The LAEI is a good research institute with a significant national impact and a considerable international development potential. From the viewpoint of research and research quality, so far the transformation of the institute into a national state funded research institute has been successful. Research infrastructure and research management are in order.

Yet, in case LAEI intends to reach a more pronounced internationally recognized position, the institute’s research environment should be organized internationally more open.

This implies:

- an increase of international research funding (EU, business, other)
- an increase of interaction with the international academic community by sending more doctoral students and junior researchers abroad, for example under the ERASMUS programs; inviting international staff for longer periods at the institute; inviting renowned international academic staff to take part in the scientific advisory structure of LAEI; promoting international visiting
fellowships or part-time visiting professorates abroad of LAEI-senior research staff; publishing doctoral theses in English; intensifying partnerships with foreign universities and research institutes in the Baltic and Nordic regions, as well as in other global regions; and last but not least intensifying of visible international peer-reviewed publishing.

- Additionally important in this respect are a further extension of the institute’s fundamental research projects.
- Also a widening of research scope should be considered. A good example in this respect is the attention already being paid to theme of eco villages.
- With respect to the available scientific infrastructure direct access to all relevant international research databases should be organised (Web of Science, Scopus).
**Education Sciences, Šiauliai University**

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<td>Composition of the Unit of Assessment (UoA)</td>
<td>Faculty of Social Welfare and Disability Studies; Faculty of Education Science; Department of Music Education</td>
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</table>

| Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA | 3 |
| The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania | 3 |
| The physical infrastructure of the UoA | 3 |
| Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA | 3 |
| The development potential of the UoA | 3 |
| OVERALL SCORE | 3 |

**Overall score**

Šiauliai University, Education Sciences is unit focusing on education and teacher training (nearly 90% of focus), with psychology as second most important area of research and teaching (5%). Unit is of intermediate size, 15 professors (12.6 FTE) with 100% for R&D and 36 Associate professors (32.8 FTE), with 100% for R&D, and in addition lecturers and assistants. The UoA has important responsibility of teacher education in all areas from natural science to humanities and arts. The UoA provides about 110-140 Masters’ degrees in each year, in total 13 doctoral degrees 2011-2012 (but no doctoral degrees 2013) and there is only 3 doctoral students after Master studies enrolled to doctoral studies yearly 2012-2013 (other doctoral students 4-3 enrolled 2012-2013).

The research output as published reports is relatively low, only 2.7 SCOPUS classified articles per researcher, but 2.5 citations, which approaches visibility edge. In addition, some research in special education is of relatively good quality.

Funding for research from international programs is very low, only 7 k€ but there could be prospects to increase it in future.
The UoA has clearly an important position in national level, in particular through its contribution of education teachers and other professionals in education. In addition to this, the UoA has strong focus on special education, education of disabled and on logotherapy. The research conducted in the UoA in these areas clearly excels the research in other areas of education within the UoA and this area of research is internationally the most competitive sub-group in the UoA.

**In the overall score 3** the emphasis has been on following aspects: In quality of research good achievements in special education studies are given weight, in national impact the importance of teacher education is weighted, and in development potential, the motivation and competence of younger researchers and PhD students are weighted.

**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

Research topics of UoA are relevant from a viewpoint of international research community and they have potential for national impact. In particular, research on special education focuses on topics of contemporary international interest. Apart research in special education, education of disabled and logotherapy the other research topics or approaches, however, appear not to be the leading edge research or of high originality; international trends and approaches are successfully applied in national contexts or used as basis of incremental results but the breakthrough potential is lacking. This is reflected as low number of publications in international peer-reviewed journals, none in a leading journal. The scientific quality of and methodological quality of research as documented in national publications and research journals is, nevertheless, good. The special education is an exception from this trend and researchers in that area are producing results with very good quality and the results have been internationally recognised and published in journals having relatively good visibility. In addition, the UoA is publishing own journal *Special Education* which might have potential to gain good visibility, in contrast to many other similar “in-house” journals.

The publications submitted for review would most probably be not adequate for internationally recognized, high impact journals, except in case of 3 or 4 publications in special education and disabilities. Of the rest 10 publications, perhaps 3 or 4 concerned with teacher education could have been acceptable with slight modifications. With more attention on description of empirical methods and analysis of results and more attention on polishing up the presentation the works submitted for review perhaps 70%-80% could have had chances to be published in internationally journals. Rest of the publications are rather reports or summaries without much scientific interest.

Research in general education, teacher education and subject didactics exists but is not as impressive as in special education. In science education research in natural sciences there is some promising potential and indication of results of wider significance. Also in this one “in-house” journal, Journal of Baltic Science Education, could have potential to reach moderate international visibility. For the teacher education this area of research is, however, important. With some increased effort, the research in science education could gain international recognition and visibility.

**The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania**

The research carried out in UoA (and in particular the research of the highest quality) focuses on special education. This is very important area in educational research, with potential of high impacts in improving school system in general. The UoA has produced important results in this area, with apparent application in practices in school. There is also evidence of research based development of practices, and evidence of attempts to collaborate with different stake holders. The research unit of special education (including education of disabled and logotherapy) in UoA appears to be the only one which could take responsibility of
high quality education in its area. If this is the case it should be a national priority to secure the future of the unit.

In other areas of research the direct impact of the research is moderate or even low. The research of science education could have in principle an important role in developing modern approaches on science teacher education, but this potential is not in full use and is too disconnected from practice of teacher education. Anyway, the self-evaluation report or the site-visit produced no reports or written descriptions of the outcomes of the projects in communal level, or with stakeholders or policy-makers. Therefore, it is not clear, what is actually the impact of the research on its intended area of applications. This indicates that there is a risk that useful research results (produced by researchers who apparently have good capability for this kind of research) have lesser impact on practices than they could have. The staff of the UoA is active in national level in disseminating the results on different media, which is proved by 80-120 yearly presentation in media.

**The physical infrastructure of the UoA**

The research environment of UoA is very good for educational research, with new and well equipped library building, research spaces and study and teaching spaces. Databases and availability of research journals is good and they cover the most important journals in the research area of the UoA. The basic facilities including research equipment, special teaching/laboratory facilities for research, computers and software are modern and good. The laboratory-spaces include special laboratories for disabled and logotherapy and provide possibilities to conduct good quality research in these areas. The equipment is maintained by the staff and in development of the laboratories and software the staff collaborates e.g. with computer scientists.

**Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA**

The research management has underwent a renovations since the completion of self-evaluation report. During the site visit it became apparent that now the research is structured in thematic areas, around faculties and research institutes. The new structure is clearly better than the one reported in self-evaluation report. However, the structure is still too fragmented and further consolidation is needed. In fact, the only unit which is clearly structured, which has clear and strategic research plan is the unit focusing on special education. In goal orientation and focus of research research management should follow this example also in case of other units.

The UoA reports several collaboration partners, some in Western Europe and many in Eastern Europe and former soviet regions. Better strategic plan is needed how to collaborate with different partners, because none of the universities/units mentioned are leaders in their areas. In particular, in order to realize the full potential of special education attention must be paid on strategic partnerships with leading research institutes in that field.

Also, although interdisciplinary is mentioned to be important for the UoA, there is little indication of strategic plan and management of interdisciplinary co-operation and collaboration between closely related fields like psychology and cognitive science within the UoA or between it and other universities. Also, the role of students and postdoctoral students in the research teams and research environment in general remains unclear (except again in case of special education).

The human management plan of UoA appears to be based on scheme, where most researchers need to compete their positions for each 5 year period and their achievements are assessed every 5 years. Most of the research is done by researchers in such positions. This may not be the best solution and may be one reason for short sighted planning of research and tendency to publish in low quality journals (with apparently rapid publication timelines in comparison to high quality journals with more careful peer-review procedures to ensure the quality). The workload of the UoA and the ratio of research to teaching is comparable to most
other similar institutions. There is adequate time (of 30% or working time) for research and with this timeshare, many comparable institutions manage to produce high quality research. However, the number of students attending the research is low in comparison to similarly focused research units in Western Europe. The importance of providing possibilities to attend international conferences and visits abroad is noted and also doctoral students are supported in this. Long term visits in good international units should be increased.

Research management should also pay attention on recruiting doctoral students and ensuring the completion of doctoral studies. The number of doctoral students is critically low (only 3 in recent years yearly) and this poses severe threat for the unit and its future. Recruitment of doctoral students to research teams is not yet sufficiently determined, and number doctoral students involved in research and the intensity of the involvement is still too low. There are plans to improve the situation but the plans do not produce yet concrete results.

The development potential of the UoA

In regard to research, the best development potential of the UoA is in the special education, in which area the most competent researchers of the UoA already seem work. Only in this area there are promises of well-planned research strategy, possibilities to improve the quality of research so that it gains international recognition and visibility. In this area the UoA could become an interesting and highly regarded international partner. Adequate, in some respect also good, laboratory facilities exist for research in special education and the UoA have potential to strengthen the possibilities in this research area. In this area UoA has potential to participate in international research activities and become a competitive unit. However, it is not in foreseeable future that it could be an international leader or initiate genuinely new research directions.

In regard to human potential, it became evident during the site visit that the UoA is improving its plans for career development of staff, but there is not yet solid evidence of the outcome of new plans. The most active staff is now working in the special education studies and there is potential for further improvement. Only in this sub-group there is enough researchers to maintain the necessary cohesion of research (to gain the “critical mass” for new thoughts). In addition, the UoA has very good, enthusiastic and devoted doctoral students, as well as some very active young researchers who seem to have visions how to improve the quality of research. The UoA can benefit much from this potential if it manages to provide prospects for future career.

In regard to international contacts the UoA already has some very good contacts and it should focus on increasing the collaboration with strategically important areas and to seek new similar kind of valuably contacts. The UoA cannot yet attract competitive researchers abroad. In addition, at present, it may be difficult for the UoA to be competitive in raising research funding. In improving that focus of research is needed and strategic planning in selecting the collaborators.

The UoA’s vision of future and future plans are for most part realistic, but it might be that UoA does not yet fully realize the necessity of finding the focus of research and importance of continuing the efforts in consolidating the research. Serious attention is needed to judge how realistic the plan to maintain research teams in all thematic areas is.

Conclusions and recommendations

The UoA has clearly an important position in national level, in particular through its contribution of education teachers and other professionals in education. The UoA has strong focus on special education, education of disabled and on logotherapy. The research conducted in the UoA in these areas clearly excels the research in other areas of education within the UoA. A strength of the UoA is motivated and enthusiastic research group in the mentioned area. Other research fields of the UoA are considerably less visible or have low activity. The most visible and up-to-date impact on international level research is coming from the
special education group, which already has managed to establish convincing international level research. The visions the UoA has for special education, education of disabled and logotherapy are also convincing and focus on topic of high relevance in national level as well as on international level. These development, however, seem to be fairly recent ones and the impact of the teaching and research in this area is not yet fully developed.

Sufficiently large part of the staff which attended to the interview was engaged and motivated to carry on with the necessary changes and renovations. One remarkable advantage of the unit is the highly motivated group of researchers in special education and PhD students. Researchers engaged with special education have clear visions of improving the quality of research through internationalisation and participation in international networks of researchers. It is crucial for the future success to secure the career possibilities of the PhD students and postdoctoral researchers. Very much of the future development potential hinges on the success on keeping the young and competent researcher within the academia.

A possible threat for the UoA is low number of doctoral students in recent years 2012-2013 and apparently declining number of doctoral degrees (no doctoral degrees in 2013). On basis of research done in special education there should be good chances to produce better results in that in near future.

In summary, the UoA should sharpen its strategy of research. The special education and education of disabled is the strength of the unit and it produces its best research in this area. Research in other areas is not comparable to it. In practice, most active researchers already seem to work on the topic. Logotherapy is also fitting nicely on the special education. However, there might be also other units of language education which could equally well host logotherapy. Research in science education can have chance improve quality of research, provided it founds closer connection to teacher education. In case of physical education a solution to be considered its inclusion to larger units, e.g. to Lithuanian Sports University. In humanistic education, music and arts it also seems advisable to seek for larger units through integration of existing teams. One model could be further specialisation on special education, become a national leader in it and seek for international recognition. In that area the UoA should put much effort in increasing its collaboration with good international research units. In national level, the UoA should also recognize good strategic partners to improve quality of research together (one possibility could be Lithuanian University of Education and its group of early childhood education, also its teacher education).

It is also important that the UoA recognizes the key persons and researchers who have potential and competence to lead the development and provides them good working conditions and competitive career opportunities.

The teacher education is clearly an important part, but the UoA is not able to have good quality of research connected to all disciplines. Focusing on e.g. science education only could be advisable.

The rewarding system of researchers should be changed so that success in long term research, with output in high quality journals is rewarded instead of guiding effort to increase the number of low quality publications in low visibility local journals. In house publishing, if not well motivated by national reasons, should be discouraged.
Education, Lithuanian University of Educational sciences

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Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA: 3
The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania: 3
The physical infrastructure of the UoA: 2
Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA: 3
The development potential of the UoA: 3

OVERALL SCORE: 3

Overall score

Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences is unit focusing on education and teacher training (nearly 80% of focus), with psychology as second most important area of research and teaching (14%). Unit is of considerable size, 36 professors (7.4 FTE) with 100% for R&D and 98 Associate professors (24.5 FTE), with 100% and in addition lecturers and assistants. The UoA has important responsibility of teacher education in all areas from natural science to humanities and arts. The UoA provides about 150 Masters’ degrees in each year and about 7-8 doctoral degrees. The number of doctoral students after Master studies enrolled to studies (yearly 20-25) is considerable larger than degrees awarded.

In the overall score 3 the emphasis has been on following aspects: In quality of research good achievements in early childhood studies are given weight, in national impact the importance of teacher education is weighted, and in development potential, the motivation and competence of younger researchers, postdoctoral researchers and PhD students are weighted.
Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

In evaluating the quality of research attention is paid on the quality and relevance of strategic research plans, outcomes of research as they are published in national publication forums and their visibility of international forums. Although the number of publications, the visibility of the journals and their impact are also important additional factors, and attempt is made not to emphasise the bibliometric factors disproportionately in comparisons to other important factors.

Research topics of UoA are quite diverse, some of them rather reproductive/comparative studies than original research producing and progressing new knowledge. In early childhood education the applicability of research results in concrete projects and concrete outcomes is a strength. The publications submitted for review would most probably be not adequate for internationally recognized, high impact journals, except in case of perhaps two publications in early childhood studies. Perhaps 4 or 5 could have been acceptable with slight modifications. However, with some effort (more attention on description of empirical methods and analysis of results, more attention on polishing up the presentation) the works submitted for review could have good chances to be published in internationally journals. Rest of the publications are rather reports or summaries without much scientific interest.

The research done in the UoA is not at the leading edge or high originality and breakthrough potential is lacking. The only exception is early childhood research, which focuses on topics of wider and contemporary interest. This research field is clearly the strength of the UoA. The early childhood studies also has well thought and planned research agenda and research strategy and seek to have international collaboration partners. Most probably only this group within the UoA is on track to gain international visibility and recognition and will develop into interesting research partner in near future, if enough support is given and if the plans can be realised. The group engaged in early childhood studies has also been active in participating in international research projects (e.g. in self-regulation in play).

The fragmented structure of research and lack of long term strategy in other areas of educational research in UoA is reflected as low number of publications in international peer-reviewed journals, none in a leading journal. Also, the topics of the research in most areas (with the exception of early childhood) do not have such originality that they easily could gain international recognition. Some of the research areas such as history of Lithuanian education may be of some local interest but can be hardly thought to be very central for development of educational system and policies in general. In some of the topics (like early childhood studies and teacher education) there might be potential to publish in international high-impact journals. The publishing and dissemination plans of research lack ambition. With effort, the research could gain international recognition and visibility.

The new research plans are focused on five thematic areas, it might be that two or three them recognition (with suitable focusing, didactics and subject area pedagogy and teacher education) have potential to become strong enough to gain international reputation. Within the unit also sports education is represented, but this research is probably better represented and developed in Lithuanian Sports University. Stronger collaboration, perhaps also unification could be advantageous for quality of research in this area.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

The research carried out in UoA (and in particular the research of the highest quality) has led to production of study material, educational solutions (e.g. games) and recommendations of curricula. The UoA also collaborates with textbook publishers in producing modern study materials. At least to some degree these activities derive from research but in many cases it is not clear how deeply these activities are connected to research and what is the research driven innovative component in these activities. Nevertheless, at least research in early childhood education and in teacher education have had and continue to have concrete and beneficial impacts on national level, for example in developing teaching and study material.
Projects and their outcomes are described on a very general level (no information of number of participants, duration of the projects and their coverage was available and no project reports or documents were provided). Nevertheless, the staff of the UoA is active on a national level in disseminating the results on different media (about 100-60 public presentations each year) and takes responsibility of developing the educational system on local level, with local policy makers and stakeholders (though no final reports or evaluations of the outcomes were available).

**The physical infrastructure of the UoA**

The research environment of UoA is adequate for the research carried out in the UoA, new library facilities meet international standards. Databases and availability of research journals is good and they cover the most important journals in the research area of the UoA. In addition, the unit has developed special spaces for learning and teaching experimentation or laboratories (e.g. for play in learning). The equipment is maintained by the staff. With limited funds the creativity of establishing such facility is appraisable. Basic facilities are adequate, but that a researcher coming to the environment should not expect expressly stimulating and competitive research environment in general, with the possible exception of research on early childhood and play.

**Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA**

The site visit and interviews revealed that a complete restructuring of research strategy was carried out after the completion of the self-evaluation report. The self-evaluation report mentioned 23 different research areas (which is of course far too many) but new plans included only five thematic areas. In regard of goal orientation, a long term research strategy existed at least in two or three cases. This line of development should be encouraged, and further sharpening of the strong areas of research and further focusing is still needed. The UoA reports several collaboration partners, some western universities and many in Eastern Europe and former soviet regions. Better strategic plan is needed how to collaborate with different partners. From some partners (like Universities of Wroclaw, Oulu, Indiana, Kansas, Chicago, Toronto, Arhus etc.) UoA can work as equal partner and benefit to improve its own research performance, while for others (like Kazakh, Bishkek, Baku etc.) it acts in different role, helping the partners to develop. The strategy with different kinds of partners should be clarified.

In case of human resource management, the workload of the UoA and the ratio of research to teaching is comparable to most other similar institutions. There is adequate time (of 30% or working time) for research and with this timeshare, many comparable institutions manage to produce high quality research. However, the number of students attending the research is low in comparison to similarly focused research units in Western Europe. In human management too much emphasis is given on amount of research results in form of publications; rather, quality should be rewarded more. In addition, strategic research plans in level of research groups, developed by groups themselves, would be advantageous. There is improvement in long term strategic planning but more effort is needed if the UoA wants to become a stronger international player. The importance of providing possibilities to attend international conferences and visits abroad is noted and also doctoral students are supported in this. Long term visits in good international units should be increased.

**The development potential of UoA**

In regard to research, the best development potential of the UoA is in the early childhood studies, in educational and psychological research connected to it. Only in this area there are promises of well-planned research strategy, possibilities to improve the quality of research so that it gains international recognition and visibility. In this area the UoA could become an interesting and highly regarded international partner. In this area UoA has potential to participate in international research activities and become a competitive unit.
However, it is not in foreseeable future that it could be an international leader or initiate genuinely new research directions.

In regard to human potential, it became evident during the site visit that the UoA is improving its plans for career development of staff, but there is not yet solid evidence of the outcome of new plans. The most active staff is now working in the early childhood studies and there is potential for further improvement. Only in this sub-group there is enough researchers to maintain the necessary cohesion of research (to gain the “critical mass” for new thoughts). In addition, the UoA has very good, enthusiastic and devoted doctoral students, as well as some very active young researchers who seem to have good visions how to improve the quality of research. The UoA can benefit much from this potential if it manages to provide prospects for future career. Such plans are now initiated and should be realized as soon as possible.

In regard to international contacts the UoA already has some very good contacts and it should focus on increasing the collaboration with strategically important areas and to seek new similar kind of valuably contacts. The UoA cannot yet attract competitive researchers abroad. In addition, at present, it may be difficult for the UoA to be competitive in raising research funding. In improving that focus of research is needed and strategic planning in selecting the collaborators.

Conclusions and recommendations

The UoA has strong focus on early childhood education and the research conducted in the UoA in that area clearly excels the research in other areas of education within the UoA. Another strength of the UoA is motivated and enthusiastic research group in early childhood studies and its connection to psychological research. The most visible and up-to-date impact on international level research is coming from this group. The visions the unit has for early childhood studies are also convincing and focus on topic of high relevance in national level as well as on international level. These development, however, seem to be fairly recent ones and the impact of the teaching and research in this area is not yet fully developed.

The self-evaluation report mentions a diverse collection of unconnected research topic. However, in site-visit it turned out that since the completion of the self-evaluation report the UoA has completely restructured its teaching and research, now under a handful of thematic areas. This is very good move and definitely will help to consolidate the research and teaching within the UoA. The research management is determined to change the situation and focuses better on the strong research areas, in particular to early childhood studies. Sufficiently large part of the staff who attended the interview was engaged and motivated to carry on with the necessary changes and renovations.

One remarkable advantage of the unit is the highly motivated group of PhD students and young postdoctoral researchers, which have clear visions of improving the quality of research through internationalisation and participation in international networks of researchers. It is crucial for the future success to secure the career possibilities of the PhD students and postdoctoral researchers. The future development potential hinges on the success on keeping the young and competent researcher within the academia.

In summary, the UoA should sharpen its strategy of research, recognise one or two of its strongest areas of research it wants to push forward and improve its status. In these areas the UoA should put much effort in increasing its collaboration with good international research units. On national level, the UoA should also recognise good strategic partners to improve quality of research together (one possibility could be Siauliai University and its group of special education, also teacher education in Siauliai).

It is also important that the UoA recognises the key persons and researchers who have potential and competence to lead the development and provides them good working conditions and competitive career opportunities.

The teacher education is clearly an important part, but the UoA is not able to have good quality of research connected to all disciplines. Focusing on e.g. science education and humanities could be advisable, leaving
e.g. sports education for LSU. In addition, there are many very marginal branches which are not central importance for future plans and development.

The rewarding system of researchers should be changed so that success in long term research, with output in high quality journals is rewarded instead of guiding effort to increase the number of low quality publications in low visibility local journals. In house publishing, if not well motivated by national reasons, should be discouraged.
**Faculty of Sport education, Lithuanian sports university**

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<tr>
<th>Name of the UoA</th>
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**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

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<tr>
<th>The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania</th>
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<tr>
<td>The physical infrastructure of the UoA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>The development potential of the UoA</td>
<td>2</td>
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**OVERALL SCORE**

| 3 |

**Overall score**

Lithuanian Sports University (LSU) is a specialised public higher education institution that has developed its unique traditions in sport, leisure and health sciences. LSU is known as a leading academic and research centre in sports science in the Baltic Sea region. It enrolls nearly 2000 students. It has two faculties: Health and Sport Education. The SEF (Faculty of Sport Education) is the unit assessed in this exercise. The main teaching task in this Faculty is training teachers in physical education. The main research line in this faculty is “Leisure Management, Economics and Sociology”

This introduction of SEF explains some of the peculiarities of research in this institution. On the one hand, it is an institution well focused in a specific field and with a long tradition. On the other hand, it seems that its specificity provides a certain feeling of isolation among higher education in Lithuania.

SEF is a strong national player in research, it has some international recognition but has a lot of possibilities that are not enough exploited perhaps because the lack of human and financial resources.
Quality of the research performance and impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

The SEF has concentrated research in two well defined areas and it seems that the performance in both areas is quite good. Research topics of SEF are relevant from a viewpoint of international research community and they have potential for national impact. The international trends and approaches are successfully applied in national contexts or used as basis of incremental results.

The SEF seems to be strong at national level and with an acceptable level of international recognition. They do not play yet a leading role at international level probably because resources, especially human resources, are scarce. In this sense, only 8 PhD students at the moment is not too promising.

The number of publications in international peer-reviewed journals is low, none in a leading journal. The scientific quality of and methodological quality of research as documented in publications and research journals is good. However, they have plans for increasing the international research cooperation with similar universities in Europe (although at the moment they do not have any proposal submitted to H2020) and for increasing the number of publications in international journals. With additional effort, the research could gain international recognition and visibility.

Concentrate efforts and doing research in bigger groups with stronger international cooperation could be the way for reaching a more solid level of research in this institution.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

SEF is active in working with society. There is a good level of interaction and consequently a certain impact on the community. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the possibilities of a unit like this with so many possibilities of interaction, one would expect even more

The SEF has many activities related to the external world. The research carried out in SEF (and in particular the research of the highest quality) focuses on special education. This is very important area in educational research, with potential of high impacts in improving school system in general. The SEF has produced important results in this area, with apparent application in practices in school. There is also evidence of research based development of practices, and evidence of attempts to collaborate with different stakeholders. However, there is little evidence of close and productive collaboration between the researchers and the stakeholders in charge of national school system (e.g. ministry of education or its representatives, headmasters, school management, parent and organisation representing the parents etc.). Therefore, it is not clear the impact of research on its intended area of applications. There seem to be many plans of applications of the research results, but scarce information of concrete results. On the other hand, it clear the impact of the staff of SEF at national level in disseminating the results on different media. They also play a relevant role in the sportive federations in the country.

As a consequence of these increasing activities with the community, SEF is planning to attract funding from business something that currently does not happen.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

The research environment of SEF is adequate, in some aspects good, for educational research. The basic facilities including research equipment, special teaching/laboratory facilities for research, computers and software and library resources appear to be adequate but not outstanding.

The self-report does not mention big problems in the infrastructures. It is true that they mention some deficits like lack of software for developing some specific research and also the wish of having some additional instruments for developing additional activities. As the research approach of SEF is very interdisciplinary, it would be important to ensure that working spaces support collaborative working or facilitate contacts during
the research. In general, the infrastructure appears to be what one could expect from an averagely good research environment.

Nevertheless, nothing indicates some special competitive advance of SEF as a research environment. The overall impression is that basic facilities are adequate, but that a researcher coming to the environment should not expect expressly stimulating and competitive research environment.

**Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA**

The general management of research in SEF is one of its strongest points. There is a good analysis of the strong points and potentialities of the Faculty. There are well designed plans for future development. The management of human resources, specially in the case of young researchers, seems to be well designed.

The research career is quite demanding, at least formally. As in other Lithuanian universities most researchers need to compete for their positions for each 5 year period and their achievements are assessed every 5 years. A competitive research environment requires enough possibilities for rich intellectual collaboration, stability of research groups and possibilities for exchange of ideas and views. For this, not only enough “critical mass” is needed but also enough time for research and creative work.

The teaching load of the researchers and staff seems to so high that for such activities there is little time. Also, although interdisciplinary is mentioned to be important for SEF, there is little indication of strategic plan and management of interdisciplinary co-operation and collaboration between closely related fields like psychology and cognitive science within SEF or between it and other universities.

The overall appearance is that the research environment is perhaps not supporting ideally the development of the researchers and their advancement in their research careers.

**The development potential of UoA**

Although the SEF has a relatively good situation at the present, it seems that they are not too optimistic in regard to the future. Lack of enough leaders in the field, lack of resources and lack of external support are slowing down the development of this Faculty.

The unit’s future visions and plans seem to be realistic in regard to the development of scientific quality and impact of their research. SEF is clearly building on their strengths and heading for improvements in their chosen field of specialisation. Attention could be perhaps paid on how to select the strategic research partners so that they really support the goals of SEF, giving priority to partners who already have record of high quality research. In publications and dissemination plans there is apparently lot to improve. This is particularly important when the research in other ways seem to meet the international standards. The career progression plans are not very clear and there is no plan how talented researchers are supported. The competitive basis, on 5-year periods, might not be the best option to support creative and talented researchers. European and North-American Universities is limited to some important and productive contacts, but remains in general rather thin. Given the fact that the research topics are relevant for the international community, better and more established contacts could greatly improve the quality and impact of research in SEF. For such long term collaboration strategic plan would be in place. Limited resources for research and visits abroad may seriously limit the researchers’ capabilities in conducting research, keep in touch of international advance of research and having possibilities to networking and exchange of ideas. On basis of the research the staff has published, many of them has potential to conduct and publish good research given that appropriate environment is granted.
Conclusions and recommendations

Research in SEF is strong at national level and with an acceptable level of international recognition. They do not play yet a leading role at international level probably because resources, especially human resources, are scarce.

The SEF has many activities related to the external world. There is an adequate level of interaction and consequently a certain impact on the community. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the possibilities of a unit like this with so many possibilities of interaction, one would expect even more.

The research environment of SEF is adequate, in some aspects good, for educational research. The basic facilities including research equipment, special teaching/laboratory facilities for research, computers and software and library resources appear to be adequate but not outstanding.

Although the SEF has a relatively good situation at the present, it seems that they are not too optimistic in regard to the future. Lack of enough leaders in the field, lack of resources and lack of external support are slowing down the development of this Faculty.

In summary, SEF is a strong national player in research, it has some international recognition but has a lot of possibilities that are not enough exploited perhaps because the lack of human and financial resources.

For playing a relevant international role and increasing the impact on the community, research has to be reinforced in several aspects:

1. Research in SEF has to be developed reaching a critical mass. Concentrate efforts and doing research in bigger groups with stronger international connections could be the way for reaching a solid level of research in this institution.
2. Internationalisation of research should be a main goal. Exchange with foreign universities should be extended and intensified.
3. External international funding of research (i.e. participation in EU-research programs) should be promoted.
4. Bearing in mind the possibilities of SEF with so many possibilities of interaction with the external world (nationally and internationally) it is important to increase the collaboration with business and institutions developing multifaceted activities for the community.
5. A Knowledge Transfer Office could manage all the external activities of SEF. This should be a source of funds for supporting applied research.
6. Improving human resources policies for staff and for doctoral students would be advisable. Career of researchers should be more attractive and demanding at the same time.
7. A special attention should be paid to resources (especially human resources) that could be the main bottle neck for a promising future of research in SEF.
**Faculty of Politics and Management, Mykolas Romeris University**

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**OVERALL SCORE** 2

**Overall score**

This score reflects the panel’s overall assessment of the Unit, taking into account its current research output and potential to internationalize further. On the plus side the panel was impressed by the energy, focus and ambitions of the UoA and deemed the current research output of some of the Unit’s scholars to be of a good international standard. The panel was, however, a little concerned by the proliferation of in-house journals and the overly regional and eastward looking focus of the Unit. It should also be noted that the performance of the three sub-units that were assessed in this exercise (the Institute of Political Science, the Institute of Public Administration and the Institute of Management) is somewhat varied.

**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

The research conducted in this unit covers a wide variety of subjects and the unit has an explicit commitment to interdisciplinary research, as does the University. Internationalisation is a clear priority for the UoA and for MRU in general, but still is in a rather initial phase. There is a very clear awareness of what is required to raise the Unit’s international research profile (e.g. publication in ISI journals). That being said most of the
‘important publications’ do not meet this standard at present. Monographs are not typically published with major academic presses and most journal articles are not in Web of Science indexed outlets, with some notable and commendable exceptions (e.g. *Forest Ecology and Management* is a leading journal in the field of Forestry and *Geoderma* in Soil Sciences). There is also not a great deal of evidence of publication in mainstream public administration, political science and management outlets, even though this the stated research-focus of the Unit. Of the 6 publications submitted, two were in very well established ISI journals and the research conducted could be considered original and important, although in one of these publications the MRU researcher was listed 8th of 9 authors. Of the other four, none were in particularly prestigious outlets or could be considered especially innovative and had between 0 and 2 citations on Google Scholar. It is worth underscoring that the research performance of the three sub-units that were assessed in this exercise is rather varied. None of the articles provided prior to the visit and only a tiny fraction of the top 20 listed publications were from the Political Science department for instance, even though this constitutes circa 25% of assessed personnel. There are a small number of ‘stars’ (e.g. one researcher who, on his own, has a Google H factor of 11 since 2010) that are doing an admirable job in raising the profile of the unit but these cannot be expected to carry the PVF indefinitely or to singlehandedly improve on its current position. The Unit has over 100 staff at lecturer and above level, many of whom have little to no international profile. PVF publishes two scientific journals, one of which is included in Scopus (though not to be confused with the Sage publication of the same English language name: *Public Policy and Administration*). It appears that MRU management have adopted a policy of promoting in house journals (8 at present) but the wisdom of this strategy is questionable. Unless, these journals become indexed on Thomson Reuters in the near future, they are unlikely to attract the output of top international scholars. In house journals also run the risk of ghettoising the output of staff members. Furthermore, most of the output in these journals is in Lithuanian, with only English language abstracts (Volume 13(4) of the above named journal had only 2 of 12 articles in English). There are no international doctoral students and no international staff, save one international postdoc in 2013. But the number of completed doctoral dissertations per year is quite good, though overall numbers decreased in 2012 and 2013 and only one dissertation was published in English. The use of international external examiners for PHD defences is to be commended, although Lithuanian remains the primary language for doctoral studies, which inevitably limits the output of students and their marketability and the involvement of external examiners. The amount of EU-funded research is modest at present, as well as the size of contract research, though there are a number of current applications to Horizon 2020. Some researchers function as experts in international or EU-advisory boards. The Unit has, unusually, forged links with Asian universities and this may prove profitable (e.g. applying to Korean and Japanese foundations for funding of projects), however the links with high profile world-class social science centres (particularly in political science) in Western European and North America are rather weak (exceptions include Lund, Bologna, Radboud which have strong traditions in public management and administration). Participation in major international conferences needs to be addressed (APPAM, APSA, ECPR, EGPA, CEPSA etc.) as this greatly facilitates the creation of international networks.

**The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania**

This UoA has perhaps chosen to focus more heavily on its international research and educational profile but there is clearly much to offer Lithuanian society also. This unit has networks with both the science and business communities and additional networks with practitioners and non-academics in local government and the public sector. The unit has conducted research in conjunction and on contract for government ministries, such as the Ministry of the Interior (e.g. a project entitled “*The Concept of a Safe Municipality*” in 2012). Also, with the financial support of the Lithuanian Research Council, a number of policy-relevant research projects have been conducted by PVF researchers such as the project *Integrated Transformation of E-health* or the study on the *Potential Use of the Lithuanian Professional Diaspora*. Although one might expect much more of this type of high impact work, given the unit is comprised of an Institute of Management and Institute of Public Administration and has expertise in key areas of interest to government
agencies such as public sector reform, social services administration and management of the energy sector. The research developed by the UoA is important for society but the UoA shows a limited dynamic with non-academic institutions and a more proactive role should be played on this front. Overall, the relatively low level of funded contract research is an indication of the limited domestic impact of PVF-research. There is clearly potential to increase links with the business sector given research interests of unit, but historically such links are weak. There are not a lot of national collaborations were listed in the self-assessment document and they seem mainly oriented towards the organisation of join events, rather than to supporting knowledge transfer and actions to catalyse change within organisations; and the relationships with business bodies have been focused on international accreditation. That being said, academic staff have significant memberships in committees and in scientific advisory boards of governmental bodies and business companies and these linkages could be used more forcefully as an entry point to enhance the institutional impact on the economy and society.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

The UoA’s physical infrastructure is of high quality and comparable with the standard of other well-established international research institutions. This UoA has the advantage of being a relatively new University, with the associated facilities and equipment. Space does not appear to be an issue and there is a new Research and International Mobility Centre under construction, with all of the associated and up to date research facilities and equipment. According to the prospective plan, the new building will host modern laboratories and will offer the opportunity to create a new research environment to further support the internationalisation process of the UoA, as well as the development of research capacity by providing new facilities and equipment for doctoral students and researchers. From 2015-2020 PVF research will be carried out in interdisciplinary labs, merging researchers in the field of public governance and management. There will be dedicated space provided for doctoral students in the Doctoral School of Social Sciences, which is vital in their training and professionalization. The Unit also has access to the necessary software for conducting research (SPSS, AMOS etc.). Good access to online journals (e.g. JSTOR Arts and Science I, II, IV, VI, VII, Thomson Reuters). The library is open 24 hours.

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

This UoA has a clear and well-articulated vision for its future. It is, as one would expect from a Management Institute, very goal oriented and has developed a clear set of benchmarks and standards with which to assess its progress to further internationalization. The UoA has purposively attempted to create additional research capacity by merging several departments and now is a very large unit with critical mass. Research, carried out in Institute of Public Administration, Institute of Management and Institute of Political Science, is clearly embedded in the multi-year umbrella research program of MRU. The unit has both annual and long-term (2010-2020) strategic plans, which appear quite well defined and focussed in terms of research development and strategy. There is a clear emphasis on developing interdisciplinary research strengths but the ‘niche’ area identified (public policy and politics in Lithuania and Eastern partner countries) is not, by any means unique to the unit (indeed it was a theme identified by almost all of the units the Panel assessed), however research around the topic of sustainable development in the region has good potential to create a name for PVF on the global scene. In order to foster and develop the research capacity the unit has allocated a research workload for academics and adopted a portal to assess and motivate researchers. There is a commitment to explicit contract hours for research activity for staff members (400 hours per year). Researchers are required to engage in self-evaluation of their progress and career development, which follows international best practice. Additionally, there is a key awareness of the need for young career researchers and doctoral students to be internationalized and professionalized and they are encouraged to participate in international networks, conferences and workshops. Further training and workshops is also provided on-site for staff. The UoA is
enrolling a good number of PhD students and they seem mainly dedicated to carry out their research activities. In addition only about 50% of the enrolled PhD students come from master studies in the same institution, which is a good indicator of the Unit’s capacity to attract talented students from other academic institutions. However, there are some concerns about the low number of doctoral degrees awarded (relatively high attrition rates) which may suggest some dysfunctional situations in the doctoral ‘journey’ of the students. Hiring practices aim at recruiting staff on the basis of merit and research performance (as defined in terms of ISI publications) and this was one of the few units visited that did have international researchers on staff (though not many). From 2016 onwards, promotions will be defined in terms of ISI publications with the promotion to full professor requiring 6 ISI articles. Overall, there appeared to be a clear commitment to research expansion, the career development of staff members and training of young researchers. The unit has a reasonable understanding of itself in the national and international context and has a plan to expand the research infrastructure that may provide better capacity for research.

**The development potential of UoA**

The panel was of the opinion that there certainly is development potential for PVF. The UoA has the capacity to become a recognised and respected player in the international scientific community within the disciplines of public management and administration. The written academic output is good in a quantitative sense (relatively large numbers of books/articles produced annually), but could be improved significantly, in a qualitative sense, by the production of more publications in internationally renowned journals, etc. Particular attention should be paid to the balance of basic research, which is the main path to top journals, and the focus on applied research that, in turn, can answer some of the challenges of Lithuania and other Central and Easter Europe countries. The Unit currently has no international doctoral students, despite having relatively large numbers of PhD students enrolled and this is unlikely to change in the short to medium term. To increase the visibility of doctoral research at this Unit, more theses will need to be completed in English. Institutional international collaboration, outside the region, is beginning to take shape but needs to be more focussed and strategic; a Unit can only sustain so many partnerships, and where possible these should be with the best international universities. At present there appears to be a somewhat ‘shotgun’ approach to partnerships. Also participating in EU-research networks and EU research funding has to improve significantly, if the unit is to position itself in the international research community. In terms of increasing international funding (e.g. Horizon 2020) greater links with West European institutions of higher education will need to forged. As with all social science institutions in Lithuania there are looming funding threats that may undermine the Units clear vision for its future. The age profile of the unit is somewhat higher than their peer institutions in Lithuania with 57 per cent of staff over 45 (compared with a median of 42% in the 30 units assessed by panels S1 and S2).

**Conclusions and recommendations**

There is a strong emphasis on and awareness of the benefits of internationalization at both MRU and within the Unit, but the focus did seem slightly more weighted (by University management) to internationalizing study programmes, of which there are already multiple double degree programs in place (with international universities of rather somewhat varied quality and reputation). The Unit is rather asymmetric in its research profile; there is a handful of high performing scholars but a relatively large number of researchers that might be considered inactive in terms of their international profile. The rather eastwards looking focus of the Unit needs to be considered, given the disciplines of public administration, management and political science are far stronger and more developed in Western Europe and North America.

Specific recommendations/points of concern:

1. The explosion of in house journals is worrisome; this is not best practice internationally. Researchers should be focussing on publishing in ISI journals, not on editing and creating their own journals.
2. Doctoral students should be encouraged more forcefully to complete their PhDs in the medium of English, or at a minimum, complete part (1-2 articles) through this medium.

3. The Unit has forged good links with Eastern European universities, and indeed is seen as a leader by comparable institutions in Belarus etc. However, the Unit needs to adopt a more focussed strategy for building links with top ranking West European and North American institutions, as this is where social sciences are strongest internationally. Consideration should also be given to the rank of such institutions (e.g. Middlesex with whom the university has 5 joint degree programmes, currently ranks 79th of 85 universities in the UK in the Politics subject ranking and 78th of 116 in Business and Management: http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/)

4. The PVF should invest more in attracting applied contract research at the national level, especially given the research expertise and interests of those in the unit.

5. Funding needs to be provided for researchers to attend the main conferences in their subfields (e.g. EPSA, ECPR, ISPRM, ASPA, EURAM)

6. The potential creation of a joint doctoral programme with universities in Hungary and Poland is to be commended but would benefit from input from units with even stronger and more established political science/public policy profiles and traditions.
**Economics and Management, Aleksandras Stulginskis University**

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**OVERALL SCORE** 2

OVERALL SCORE

In its current position the overall evaluation of the ASU_EV: Economics and Management acknowledges the satisfactory national role played by the Unit. However, the research environment is still evolving to achieve a level of international recognition in the scientific community of the same disciplines. There are good potentials that the unit will be able, in the next 5-10 years, to become an international player, but at the moment such capacity is not fully expressed. The physical infrastructure as well as the relevant economic and social contribution of the unit’s research to Lithuania can represent important building blocks to create an international profile. However, major attention has to be paid to the quality and impact of the research which in its current forms appears too much focused on national research outlets and lacks the expected international profile.

**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

The unit occupies a stable position in the national scientific community. This is supported by the uniqueness of the Unit’s research topics in relation to the economic and managerial challenges of the rural development
in Lithuania. The research outputs are acceptable, but most of the publications appear to be published in national research outlets or in international ones with a low relevance of scientific impact. This is indeed the case of the papers published in “Engineering Economics” as well as in the proceedings of international conferences such as the “International Scientific Conference on Economic Science for Rural Development”. Very few articles are published in research journals cited in SCOPUS: the number of all publications per researcher is 1 and for articles is 0.7, while the citation is only 0.8. Major attention should be paid to publish in high quality international recognised journals, see for example ABS list. There is a primary propensity to publish in conference proceedings.

The ASU_EV: Economics and Management is mainly concerned with the development of applied research and has a significant standing and acknowledgement at national level. Indeed, it can be considered as a solid national player and a partner for the development of research in the area of rural development and sustainable agriculture, but the research capacity to disseminate the research outputs needs to be enhanced.

The Unit has a small number of FTE academic staff dedicated to R&D. This is a limitation for the production of a good quality research and to impact on the research discipline. Nevertheless, the Unit has a clear research focus and a narrow specialisation of the research topics. This is definitely a strong feature of the research activities that can drive significant growth of the Unit in the future. The clear focus on the research activities in combination with a specific attention to the development challenges of the Eastern Europe, that are strongly related with the tradition and expertise of the ASU_EV: Economics and Management, offer a good basis to strengthen the national role of the Unit and potentially it can be leveraged by the unit to arise their profile in the international community. Other research topics are clearly identified by the unit such as in particular the “provision of safe and high quality food”, however the unit has not yet produced significant research outputs in this area of investigation.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

The ASU_EV: Economics and Management plays an important role in society. The focused research topics are economically and socially relevant for their impact in Lithuania. Outside the academic environment the ASU_EV: Economics and Management appears engaged in developing applied research projects as well as in supporting knowledge transfer and skills capacity development. The steady increase of the academic staff’s exposure through national media such as articles, radio and television programmes (the unit has respectively moved from 14 publications in 2009, to 39 in 2012 and 104 in 2013) proves that the academic staff is dynamically committed to generate an economic and social impact for Lithuanian society. The ASU_EV: Economics and Management has developed a number of collaborations with national universities and research institutes focusing on a wide range of educational and research topics. The research and educational activities of the unit appear is not fully converted into insights to inform policy of agriculture and rural development, policy of cohesion, and policy for economic and management for rural sustainable development. Overall, the unit has a good potential to significantly impact on society, the main limitations to date are related to the lack of structured relationships in the form of external funded projects as well as of specific initiatives aiming to develop stable partnership relationships with non-academics.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

The ASU_EV: Economics and Management is located in brand new premises which presents very good lecture rooms and spaces for research. However, the existing facilities appear still not fully exploited in order to create a research context and atmosphere fully adequate to support high quality research activities that are comparable with other international institutions. In particular, considering the chosen research strategic areas of interest, i.e. “provision of safe and high quality food” and “sustainable rural development”, it is missing the definition and organisation of dedicated laboratories to support and drive excellence in the focused research disciplines. The access to the library and to the most important research databases is acceptable considering the expected standard quality level for a national research institution. PhD students can have
access to a good collections journal databases, information databases to carry out secondary data analysis, and they can use a well set up computer class established with the support of Lithuanian Agricultural Advisory.

**Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA**

The Unit’s research environment presents some criticalities and in its current situation is still evolving in order to achieve the level of quality standard comparable with globally recognized academic institutions in its discipline. The ASU_EV: Economics and Management has defined clearly the drivers to manage research in an effective way and to ground the assessment of the unit, however the practices in place to support the development of PhD students and early career researchers need to be improved. The majority of the enrolled doctoral students are graduates from the same institution, there is not any international doctoral student, the doctoral thesis are written in Lithuanian, and there is a lack of systematic and extensive mobility of the young researchers. In addition the training of PhD students should include structured courses in research design methodology and promote longer research visit abroad (at the moment the average duration is two weeks per student).

At the moment academic staff is strongly engaged in educational activities with limited dedication to research activities: the FTE personnel in R&D is 9.2. In addition, very few doctoral degrees are awarded against the number of doctoral students enrolled (PhD enrolled vs awarded respectively: 15 vs 1 in 2011, 19 vs 1 in 2012 and 19 vs 4 in 2013). The practice of engaging PhD students in teaching activities should be discouraged making sure that they are fully committed to carry out research. There are no post-doc students. This is a major limitation in order to put forward promising research programmes. Although, it is clearly indicated that research mobility is one of the key dimensions of all international agreements in practice the mobility appear fragmented and not strategically managed. It is not clear what is the medium- and long-term human resource strategic development.

**The development potential of UoA**

It is expected that the ASU_EV: Economics and Management will be able to strengthen its current position in order to support its development towards the role of an international player (first) and, in the long-run, potentially to become a respected international Unit. The identified research focus on “sustainable agricultural and rural development” (cascaded down in the 7 defined research objects) is relevant in today’s society and economic age. In particular the scientific objectives related to the “integrated development of rural areas – through business modelling and social innovation” as well as the “systems of public administration of agriculture and rural development” are very promising to impact the international scientific community and society at large. This represents also a good qualitative indicator of the unit’s ability to initiate new research directions that are cutting age. The ASU_EV: Economics and Management has already a good national standing and has established in the last few years a number of international collaborations in the form of European projects and agreements. The unit has been able to raise competitive R&D funding: 307k (2011), 613k (2012) and 415k (2013), that are integrated by some international research funding (98k in 2011, 85k in 2012 and 96k in 2013) which need to be further developed. These build the basis to position the institution in the international scientific community as a potential partner for research projects and ventures. However at the moment the unit does not have a critical mass to develop internationally recognised research activities: the number of FTE personnel in R&D is just 9.2; the number of graduated PhD is quite small – 6; there are not post-doc fellows. The ASU_EV: Economics and Management has already successfully join research networks exploiting the FP7. Some interesting international projects to be mentioned are: INTEGRAL, RURALJOBS and RETHINK. They are aligned with the research vision and objectives. The identified research niches are really promising and can establish the ASU_EV: Economics and Management as an international research players taking advantages from the relevance of the topics for
local development in Lithuania and Eastern Europe and beyond. The UoA seems to have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats. However there are some major concerns such as: a) the rapid increase of PhD students is not a good indicator of the enhancement of research capacity, i.e. with the quality of research activities; b) the research activities are still very much multidisciplinary and not interdisciplinary; c) the mobility of research groups needs to be improved; d) there is not a clear strategy to improve the research management and the capacity to translate existing action research into publishable outputs with high potential international scientific impact; e) overall lack of strategic focus to raise the research excellence through a clear identification of the actions to put in place to this scope. At the moment the Unit is mainly recruiting PhDs from a cohort of students graduating from master programmes at the same university. Although this is a good practice to promote best students, this should be integrated by an attention to recruit students coming from other institutions and possibly from abroad. Finally, the ASU_EV: Economics and Management has established a number of collaborations at international level, such as the collaboration with the University College Dublin and University of Padova on the basis of the project INTEGRAL, or the collaboration built around the project AGSURUDE with University of Cordoba and University of Pisa, that can be a good starting point to build an international network, but this requires also a strategy plan for the internationalisation of the research, which at the moment is not clearly defined.

Conclusions and recommendations

The unit has shown a very good attitude towards the evaluation process. This is a clear indicator of the propensity of this unit to support and drive a continuous improvement of their research quality and impact as well as their role in Lithuania. The Panel has particularly appreciated the energy and enthusiasm of the academic staff and PhD students that seem very much committed to develop their research activities and standing in the international community.

Below some recommendations are listed for the potential benefit of the unit. These recommendations have to be taken into account in combination with the assessment of the above perspectives.

Although the attendance of conferences and similar scientific events to present completed or ongoing research projects is a good practice in order to promote research conversations and get feedback, much more attention has to be paid on turning such research outputs into journal papers making sure that they reach wider international scientific audience. This means to address journals in Scopus and other important international databases that are fully internationally recognised in the scientific community in the same research area.

Major efforts have to be put in place in order to rationalise and publish the research results, particularly through a better elaboration of a strategic plan and related actions to enhance the staff’s research capacity. This should include a better understanding of how to support young researchers and make sure that they are primarily focused on research. Some priorities should be focused possibly on enhancing: research mobility going beyond short visit; research training by better coordinating the activities of the doctoral programmes as well as by enhancing internal specific events such as research meetings, workshop and master classes; and capitalising on the existing European research projects and international conferences. It seems also very important to develop a benchmarking exercise adopting a global perspective. In fact, the fact that ASU_EV: Economics and Management considers as most relevant competitors the Universities in the Baltic States and in Eastern Europe is an indicator of the need to adopt a more extensive international perspective which is missing at the moment.

The unit should develop a more structured approach towards national private and public organisations. For this reason a dedicated strategy plan is advised. This should include actions addressed to explore how to create stable or quasi-stable relationships in order to develop and support join investigations, knowledge transfer, initiatives and projects.
A major attention has to be put on creating a vibrant and engaging research and academic atmosphere. The ASU_EV: Economics and Management can count on brand new facilities, but they need to be enriched with contents through the design of how to use the space and make it interesting and inspiring for researchers, students and other stakeholders on national and international level. At the moment the facilities appear very poor in terms of interior design, development of dedicated laboratories, open spaces for innovation and for business development.

The identified performance perspectives, i.e. number of PhD students, PhD students’ involvement in research groups’ activities, effectiveness of the training of young researchers, international communication capacity, and competitiveness in the space of scientific research are reasonable and appropriate, nevertheless they should be further extended in order to consider and account not only the quantity, but more importantly the quality and impact of the research activities carried out by the PhD students, the alignment and contribution to the strategic research outputs of their research activities, and the characterization of the publications (nature, relevance, level of internationalisation, and impact).

All doctoral thesis are published in Lithuanian; while English should be encouraged as a language to produce the final doctoral thesis both as a monograph or collection of scientific papers. International mobility should be promoted beyond short visit abroad. Academic staff and doctoral students exchange should be a priority.

While the organisational roles responsible for acting on the data are well defined and it is indicated that a software has been put in place to trace the research performance, this needs further attention. It is fundamental for the definition of indicators and particularly of the key performance indicators to be implemented; this has to take clearly into account the kind of effects that they will have on academic staff’s behaviors. This involves an understanding of how the selected indicators will be used to assess and reward staff.
Economics and Business, Kaunas University of Technology

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Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

The development potential of the UoA

OVERALL SCORE

Overall score

The UoA is a large institution in the second largest city of Lithuania. It is a strong regional and to a large extent also national player. Its ambitions are clearly stated to be an internationally recognized institution. Its current scientific research quality and impact on the scientific discipline is adequate. The position of the UoA within the international scientific community is still evolving. The impact of the unit’s research in Lithuania is on a good level, given the presence of a recognized center of excellence, its collaboration with other Lithuanian universities, research institutes, business and public organisations.

The infrastructure is good and the faculty fairly young – 72% are younger than 45 years of age. However, the international orientation must increase, partly as a means towards quality improvement, partly to increase the UoA’s visibility.

Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

The UoA is a large unit consisting of 165 FTE, of which 40 FTEs in R&D. Excluding PhD candidates it has 51 FTE researchers. It has a substantial critical mass for research. Research is focused on two areas:
advanced economic models and management of value in the context of social and economic changes. Both areas fit in the broader university research program Sustainable growth and socio-cultural development. Research has to be inter/multi-disciplinary and is basic or applied. The research is nationally oriented on innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainability. However, the research ambition is to carry out impactful research with high international level researchers and in a competitive multi- and interdisciplinary research culture encompassing internal and external strategic academic partnerships. The school has one officially recognized National Research Excellence Center on National Competitiveness and Innovation, inserted in the Institute of Business Strategy. It also publishes two peer reviewed scientific journals. The UoA submitted ten journal articles in its self assessment. They represent relevant research in various fields and a couple are published in journals with a relatively high impact. A substantial part of the scientific articles listed in the self assessment report were published in English in refereed journals or as a chapter in edited books. However, none of the 20 most prominent research publications are ABS listed.

The UoA lists 54 doctoral theses over the years 2009-2013, all but one written in the Lithuanian language. There are no international doctoral students. In the school’s self-assessment there is no indication of the presence of tenured international faculty staff. All in all, the school is an active academic unit with an extensive national, regional and international network. Given its embedding in a technical university its main strength lies probably in applied research.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

A couple of important research groups are mentioned in the SAR, e.g. Centre for Electronic Business Research, Institute of Business Strategy. The UoA has also been recognized nationally in the National Research Programme. The UoA collaborates with national public organisations and conducts applied research for national companies. Several of the listed most important publications address economic issues in Lithuania. Several of the UoA’s faculty are members of national research committees and boards.

The impact of the unit's research in Lithuania is on a good level, given the presence of a recognized center of excellence, its collaboration with other Lithuanian universities, research institutes, business and public organisations, and not in the least, the vast amount of memberships in governmental, non-governmental, and business advisory boards.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

The UoA has recently moved to new facilities and has access to one of the largest university libraries in Lithuania which contains a host of databases. The department of economics & business has created economic modelling software. The physical infrastructure encompasses a new more spacious building with a large library, a computer network plus resources, economic modelling software, electronic access to the most important academic journals, newspapers, e-books, Web of Science, etc. The school also established a Bloomberg Open Access Center for Finance and Market Research. In sum, the physical infrastructure seems to be up-to-date.

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

The UoA has an internationally oriented research strategy in that it strives for increasing the proportion of scientific articles in international scientific journals and in peer reviewed publications. Simultaneously it seeks to increase applied research, which can be expected to have less international impact. The UoA’s research strategy and the state's funding criteria are somewhat not aligned.

It isn't obvious what the UoA's human resources management and career development encompasses more specifically. However, the faculty fairly young – 72% are younger than 45 years of age. The UoA has the intention to form a potential of high international level researchers inclusive the development of research
groups, as well as to develop a comprehensive research culture, but doesn’t make clear, save formulating a number of intentions, what this implies for the research management (SA, p. 2-3). Given the size of the UoA the number of distinguished foreign visitors and appointments is not exceptionally high. The same is true with respect to foreign visits of its own academic staff, although the number of foreign visits and duration of visits has increased substantially in 2014. This looks promising.

The development potential of the UoA

The UoA has an international research strategy, is nation-wide leading and has international influences through research collaborations. If the state's funding system continues to emphasize international publications the UoA can possibly move towards becoming internationally recognized within 10 years. However, the international frontier will move as well.

The UoA in principle has a high development potential. It’s embedding in a technical university and relatively large research staff offers interesting additional possibilities and opportunities. The challenge is a better utilization and further development of its existing international academic and applied research network beyond solely the region (Baltic States, CIS, Nordic states). It could be worthwhile to develop further good and sustainable strategic partnerships with one or more North American or West European (and perhaps also Asian) business schools, technical universities, as well as with non academic applied research institutes and consulting firms (Frauenhofer, TNO, others such as the Rand Corporation). Participation in EU framework programs (10 applications for Horizon 2020!), inclusive funding, should be intensified. At the same time academic output in recognized refereed international journals (e.g. ABS listed) should increase, as well as actively seeking and giving more space to international doctoral students and international research staff. Academic staff also should become more active at international scientific conferences and at the same time getting more opportunities for presentations at international scientific conferences. Finally, the school's research program earns a more alluring image, anticipating more explicitly technological innovation, competitiveness, and for example also another interesting topic, such as the future of work and work organization.

Conclusions and recommendations

The UoA is a strong national player. Its ambitions are clearly stated to be an internationally recognized institution. The infrastructure is good and the faculty fairly young. The international orientation must increase, partly as a means towards quality improvement, partly to increase the UoA’s international visibility. Hence, academic output needs to increase, especially in recognized international peer-reviewed journals along with active international recruitment of PhD candidates and collaborative actions with recognized western institutions. The unit should consider formulating a management incentive system – not necessarily a monetary based - that would take the institution in this direction.
Faculty of Business Management, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University

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### Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA
- 2

### The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania
- 3

### The physical infrastructure of the UoA
- 3

### Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA
- 2

### The development potential of the UoA
- 3

### OVERALL SCORE
- 2

**Overall score**

The UoA is a solid national player with a clear strategy and view on research. It is research active and productive, however there is an over reliance on publications in its own journals. The UoA’s economic and social impact in Lithuania can be considered to be at a good level. It conducts relevant research and faculty members are widely represented throughout Lithuanian organisations. The physical resources are internationally comparable, maybe with the exception of properly enabling an academic environment with regards to seminar facilities. The management is devoted and competent and the unit has clear strategies for research and promotion.

**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

The UoA is a medium-sized faculty where management dominates slightly and economics is the second largest discipline. Its number of FTEs amount to 80 (including 11 assistants). The main research fields...
include engineering of universal sustainable development, intelligent and advanced investment and social, economic and technological processes. It also develops multi-criteria evaluation methods and decision support models.

UoA staff publish high number of articles in WoS and SCOPUS journals (232 over the period 2009-2013), with relatively low share of publications in Q1 journals. Scientometric numbers expressed "per researcher" are biased - real number of researchers is much higher. Articles are highly cited.

The UoA publishes three scientific journals, of which one is The Journal of Business Economics and Management (JoBEM). No less than eight of the 20 listed most important publications are published in (JoBEM). The unit has included only four articles for assessment of which two are published in the well cited Technological and Economic Development of Economy. However, none of the listed most prominent publications are in ABS journals.

UoA’s research is interdisciplinary, however, research fields and goals are concretely specified. A significant part of UoA research is based on quantitative methods, which would allow for better access to highly recognized journals, but this could be utilized better. Relatively low number of articles has an international co-authorship. From the point of view of the strong international co-operation (including mobilities) this is quite surprising and could be considered as a potential for further development.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

Many UoA faculty are members of wide range of governmental, national and international bodies. Social relevance of UoA research is also acknowledged by the number of contract research activities.

FBM collaborates nationally with Kaunas University of Technology and lists some 15 other collaborations with research institutes and other public organisations in addition to a number of company collaborations. Many faculty members are members of editorial boards of scientific journals as well as on committees and scientific advisory boards of governmental bodies.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

Research infrastructure is at a very good level, from the points of view of the library equipment, access to electronic databases, software etc.

The office facilities do not allow too many faculty members to be in work at the same time which may impede natural collaboration and seminar activities.

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

Research is well-managed and the unit has clear strategic and short term plans. Scientific activities are compulsory for all staff, qualification requirements are verified in the regular (5-year) period. Strategic plans are developed every third year. Key goals are identified and measured by various indicators. Annual reports of faculty performance is compiled annually and submitted to the Head of Department, and subsequently summarized to the Faculty. There is a pressure for the publications in highly ranked journal. The UoA express some reservations to the motivation system regarding to social sciences. Maybe at the UoA there is too much focus on ‘performance measurement’ at the expense of natural leadership and culture creation.

Some doctoral students come from other institutions (even from abroad), students participate at the UoA research activities. Four students (at the bachelor level!) have been awarded by the Research Council of Lithuania. In its SAR the UoA identifies teaching overload as a weakness. Funding is seen as lacking.
The development potential of the UoA

The UoA has the potential to become an international player due to the previous research outcomes, level of the research management, level of internationalization and level of student participation. On the other hand, research internationalization (international co-authorship) should be developed.

Research would benefit from a greater focus, the management of research appears efficient with regards to plans and follow-up, albeit maybe too short-termistic. Teaching load is addressed as a weakness, external funding scarce.

Conclusions and recommendations

The UoA is a solid national player with a clear strategy and view on research. It is research active and productive, maybe favouring volume of output ahead of quality measured in terms of recognized journal outlets. The UoA should consider adopting a stronger focus of research publications in this direction. The management is devoted and competent, maybe there is an over reliance on a strict performance measurement paradigm. The unit can have a good future if it strengthens its international and scientific quality focus.
Faculty of Economics and Finance Management, Mykolas Romeris University

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Quality of the research performance and impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA: 2
The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania: 2
The physical infrastructure of the UoA: 4
Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA: 2
The development potential of the UoA: 3

OVERALL SCORE: 2

Overall score

Given the relatively young history of MRU-EFVP, the faculty is developing into the right direction to becoming in due time a strong national player with international recognition. Particularly strong is the level of participation in national expert councils and advisory committees, as well as the physical infrastructure of MRU. Also, MRU’s and EFVP’s research strategies point into the right direction, including the new incentive to publish in renowned international journals. However, still a number of important impediments have to be mastered. Relevant in this respect is in particular the need to increase international funding significantly as well as contract research funding. At the same time written academic output needs to increase in visible internationally renowned peer-reviewed journals.
Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

MRU, established in 2004, has a centralized research policy, focused on fundamental and applied research at regional, national and international levels. MRU’s research priority between 2010-2014 has been Innovations for Global Growth, implemented by means of five more specific research programs, such as for example Improving Life Quality and Enhancing Employment Possibilities. As of September 2015 part of the research will be carried out in interdisciplinary laboratories at university level. The total annual workload of a full-time academic is 1530 hours. This includes 400 hours research, and 1000 hours for teaching in case of a full-timer. The university measures research output, and there is a differentiated payoff/remuneration system in case of an exceeded research workload and international publications. MRU and EFVP participate in doctoral programmes for PhD-students organized by five Lithuanian universities.

EFVP is one of the newest faculties at MRU. It was established in 2006 and got the right to award doctoral studies in 2011. Primary subject of the faculty is Economics. Management and Administration is the second largest subject. The four separate departments of the EFVP carry out a mixture of disciplinary and interdisciplinary fundamental and applied research in the context of an encompassing university-wide research programme. Main research fields are the development of dynamic innovative and competitive business systems, entrepreneurship based research, finance, and education. Available for research is 29.1 FTE. Written academic output (books and articles) has been reasonable in a quantitative sense, and is rising. Of the 10 publications submitted for review the majority was co-authored with nationals and had been partly published in visible international indexed peer reviewed scientific journals. The themes covered in these articles often concerned national or Baltic issues.

Chief aim of MRU’s publication strategy is to publish in peer-reviewed Scopus-listed journals. Between 2009-2013 researchers published on average 2.7 articles in Scopus-listed journals. The total number of publications in Scopus in this period has been 122. The percentage of international articles is 7.7, which is comparatively low. Six articles were co-authored by international scholars. The total number of doctoral theses published between 2009-2013 has been 14. The average (annual) number of doctoral students amounts to 23.3. In 2013 one thesis was awarded in the Lithuanian language, and none in English. Also the number of foreign doctoral students and the number of international visiting research staff is low. EFVP has one international doctoral student.

Other output is for example the organisation of two annual international conferences.

The majority of the doctoral students works part-time or is also employed as a teacher. Internationalisation mainly takes place via a still rather limited number of visiting staff abroad, as well as by (more extensively) attending of international research conferences. EFVP itself publishes two international scientific journals (one is listed in Scopus). The number of part-timers is substantial (110 FTE versus 164 people employed), particularly among the group of lecturers. Not all researchers, master sufficiently the English language. International research funding is still modest (€ 38.000,- in 2013), as well as contract-research funding by national industry (€ 5.000,- in 2013).

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

Given the quantity of membership of the research staff of domestic advisory boards or expert committees the economic and social impact of EFVP is on a good level. On the other hand contract research not carried out in a personal capacity is negligible. Also the level of competitive R&D funding of the Research Council of Lithuania is modest (€ 44.000,- in 2013). Having a strong policy impact at the national level is not immediately visible in the level of competitive national R&D funding and research funded by national industry.
The physical infrastructure of the UoA

EFVP is part of MRU and because of that it is using the up-to-date modern MRU-infrastructure for research and teaching. MRU has a modern and still developing infrastructure for research. By September 2015 a new building with new and more extensive research facilities will become available. This building will host twenty research laboratories, a Doctoral School of Social Sciences, International Studies, conference rooms, and an International Mobility Centre. MRU (and EFVP) merit a policy of desk-hopping (academic staff is not housed in separate office rooms), has a modern library, software and statistical analysis licences, and a MRU Researchers' Portal.

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

Also research management is mainly organized at the central MRU-level. As a part of MRU Strategic Activity Plan 2010-2014, MRU organizes long-term differentiated thematic research programmes and will moreover introduce a number of new research facilities by September 2015. At EFVP-level professors manage the research activities of the four departments. Internationalisation of research is a high MRU priority. MRU offers supportive training program for researchers and services with respect to academic writing and publishing, self-assessment and monitoring. In addition EFVP organizes periodically summer schools, methodological seminars, research cafes with experienced and doctoral students. Career development of researchers isn’t a clear objective of the faculty itself. At the MRU-level staff may utilize the services rendered by the future international mobility centre.

The development potential of the UoA

EFVP’s first priority is teaching. However MRU increasingly stresses the importance and significance of international research and peer-reviewed publishing in indexed international journals. To support this MRU first has introduced a guiding university long-term research program. Moreover, more recently MRU has also introduced specific research publication norms and indicators. Finally, by September 2015 MRU will also open new facilities, which will have to contribute to further internationalisation of fundamental and applied research. In sum, the required physical and institutional structure for further development of research is available at MRU. The question is to what extent EFVP will be able to use this infrastructure effectively. There are a number of impediments, such as the fragmentation of research within EFVP, the relative large number of part-timers, the actual priority of teaching, the still weak level of participation in EU Framework programs including the lack of skills or experience to take part in these projects, remaining foreign language weaknesses of a part of the academic staff, and last but not least the still limited number of publications in internationally recognized journals. On the positive side worth mentioning is the international research ambition of a part of the managerial and academic staff. Eventually, the development potential of the UoA will depend largely of the success of the interplay between MRU’s centralized research development strategy, and the actual balance between teaching and research at the faculty level.

Conclusions and recommendations

MRU is an interesting university with a very good physical infrastructure, an important focus on internationalisation of research, and an intriguing different way of organizing research and teaching (no fixed open work places, facilitating homework of scientific staff, an ambitious centralized research strategy). In this context EFVP has reached the position of a good national player with some international recognition. However, to contributing effectively to MRU’s ambitious research goals, the faculty still has to make important steps towards further international recognition of its research.

First of all, to become a more distinctive and also less fragmented research unit, the objectives of the research programme of the faculty have to be redefined in a more coherent way. This includes also further
development of research and project management, as well as related human resources and career management.

At the same time, a more planned and coordinated effort has to be put in realising the important MRU-goal of internationalisation of research. This requires first of all a substantial increase of international funding (EU-Framework programs, European Research Council, international business and industry), a more extensive exchange with scientists abroad by inviting for example more visiting international research staff from abroad (especially from Western Europe and North America), an increase of international doctoral students and post-docs, publishing doctoral theses in English, and last but not least, building strategic partnerships with one or more interesting foreign faculties and/or research groups.

Furthermore, reconsidering the balance between teaching and research is important. The teaching burden of both full-timers and part-timers is high and might easily go at the expense of research.

Also the amount of publicly as well as privately funded applied contract research-activities has to increase and should be more explicitly embedded in de faculty’s research activities.

All things considered, eventually such efforts will result in a significant qualitative betterment and increase of international peer reviewed scientific publishing and further international recognition of EFVP.
**Faculty of Economics, Vilnius University**

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**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

- 2

**The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania**

- 3

**The physical infrastructure of the UoA**

- 3

**Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA**

- 2

**The development potential of the UoA**

- 2

**OVERALL SCORE**

- 2

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**Overall score**

The faculty has a stable position in the national scientific community, but is perhaps with the exception of the Marketing Department and the future joint research centre with the Bank of Lithuania not versed well enough yet at the wider international level, including Western Europe and North America. At the national level the economic and social impact of faculty’s research is at a good level given the significant size of participation of faculty’s staff in Lithuanian scientific and public advisory boards. Particularly the new joint research centre of the faculty and the Bank of Lithuania on banking and finance is an asset to the faculty, which will contribute to internationalising of research. Contract research, until now, is too fragmented and not embedded institutionally in the faculty structure. The physical infrastructure is also at a good level and is part of the VU physical structure. It allows the faculty to remain a strong national player with respect to teaching and research. Research management needs a fresh impulse with the intention, for example, to reduce the relatively large number of part-time lecturers, to decrease the average age of the faculty staff, to improve collaboration across departments, and to become more attractive to international staff. The relatively high number of part-timers and high average age of staff also impedes the development potential of the UoA. A last impediment is the low level of participation in EU-research projects and programmes. All
in all, the UoA can be considered chiefly as a strong national player, both in teaching and research. Steps with respect to further internalisation of research are being taken (research centre with Bank of Lithuania).

**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

With about 140fte (90 fte academic faculty) this is a large teaching and research unit. The faculty devotes 56% of its attention to the Management discipline and 40% to Economics. Its main ambition is 'to establish and to maintain leading positions in the system of science and studies of economics and management of Lithuanian higher schools', and 'to become the nucleus of the free economic and management thought'. Research is either applied or fundamental and carried out in the nine departments of the faculty, for example Accounting and Auditing, Economic Informatics, Marketing, and Economic Policy. Six departments do applied research and the remaining three fundamental. Marketing and Economic Policy are considered as the strongest and most developed research groups in the faculty. An important adage is staff's freedom in choosing research areas. There is little or none synergy between the nine departments. Each department has its own research priorities, usually correlating with teaching. A guiding and encompassing research programme of the UoA is missing. On the other hand there is a five-year strategic plan for the faculty as a whole, which is part of the five-year-period VU-strategic plan. In this strategic plan VU stresses the importance of increasing the proportion of scientific articles in international journals and in peer-reviewed publications.

The UoA publishes two international peer reviewed journals, Ekonomika and Organizations and Markets in emerging economics. There have been no international doctoral students between 2009-2013. In 2014 there were two international doctoral students admitted, one from Lebanon and one from Azerbaijan. All 34 theses published between 2009-2013 were in the Lithuanian language. Part of the academic staff went abroad for shorter periods and in return there were some visits of foreign staff to the faculty. There has not been temporary or tenured international research-staff.

The total research output 2009-2013 encompasses some 121 Scopus-listed articles, or 4.2 Scopus articles per researcher. However, it turns out that about three quarters of the 20 mentioned most important publications concerned monographs, conference proceedings or have been published in one of the two peer-reviewed journals published by the faculty itself. Some 15% of the international research output (articles) has been co-authored, in a number of cases with foreign authors. Of the four publications submitted for further review only one was published in an international American peer reviewed journal, one in one of the two peer reviewed faculty journals, one in American conference proceedings, and one in a special issue of a German journal. Two of these articles were co-authored, and two were on pensions. All in all, at first sight this is not a convincing picture if related to the international ambition of the UoA.

Since 2008 the UoA collaborates with the universities of Kiev and Wroclaw in organizing annual international conferences. Furthermore, the faculty collaborates with 8 foreign universities with respect to research. In collaboration with the Bank of Lithuania a research centre on banking and finance is currently being developed. In this centre 4 foreign part-time researchers will be employed, who will also be hired for the remaining part by the Bank.

The group of doctoral students (some 28 enrolled between 2011-2013) is young on average, enthusiastic and perceives itself on equal footing with senior staff. Grants from the European Erasmus program enable international traveling. Part of this group is also involved in teaching.

**The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania**

The UoA has a significant social and economic impact in Lithuania. In this respect, Lithuanian's economic transformation and competitiveness, for example by testing an modelling, is defined as the main 'niche' of research of the UoA. Research -in this case for the biggest part applied research- is often linked with the
transition of Lithuania to a free market economy in the context of the EU, for example national monetary policy, pensions, taxation, effectiveness of economic and social policies, and management of Lithuanian social and economic development. A weak point in this regard is the lack of contract research funding at the institutional level, with one notable exception: the establishment of a joint financial-economic research centre with the Bank of Lithuania. There is also some form of consultative collaboration with a few ministries as for example the Ministry of Social Security and Labour on the revision of pensions, and the Ministry of the Interior of Lithuania on the implementation of Total Quality Management in public sector organizations. Moreover, a number of faculty members act as an expert in public and scientific advisory bodies in Lithuania and abroad, for the majority at the national or (wider) regional level.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

The physical infrastructure of the UoA is embedded in the wider infrastructure of VU and is appropriate in the national context. The UoA has access to many important digital journals, e-books, databases, archives, etc. The faculty is housed in a faculty building on the VU-campus with 45 class rooms, including seven computer labs. All classrooms are equipped with multimedia. There is Eduroam Wi-Fi. Staff can also dispose of professional and training software, such as SPSS. VU has a new library, also supplying full-text access to a number of relevant databases. Supportive service with respect to further internationalisation of research at the EU-level might be improved. Researchers consider the extensive preparatory paper work in this context as an extra burden.

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

Apart from a Strategic plan there is no coordinated guidance or institutionalized research management in the UoA. Individual or group choice of research is free, and because of that each department has ample room for manoeuvre. The vice-dean, formally responsible for research in the faculty, sets out each year a publishing plan for the following year as a part of the 5-year-period Faculty Development plan. As a consequence of the new Strategic plan a new system of incentives for research achievements has been implemented in 2014. Research is stimulated by means of financial premiums (€ 2000,-) in case of articles in indexed top-journals. Therefore, doing research and publishing in indexed journals will turn out to be more profitable than merely being engaged in teaching. On average academic staff is allowed to spend one third of the available working time on research. About 15 doctoral students are also employed as junior researcher, assistant or lecturer.

There is a risk of fragmentation of research or, as it is formulated by the faculty itself, 'ghettoization' of research. Part-time academic staff usually is not involved in fundamental research, but often carries out contract research or consultancy in a personal capacity. It is not obvious to what extent VU offers HRM and career development for researchers. The average age of the faculty staff is high with 55 years. The UoA employs a substantial amount of part-timers (mostly lecturers), having more than one job. Salaries are perceived as low, which apparently hinders academic staff going abroad. Teaching is considered as the primary and most important task of the faculty. On average there is a heavy teaching load. About one third of the available working hours can formally be spent on research, but this turns out to be lower in practice.

The development potential of UoA

The faculty is a relatively large unit with in principle sufficient critical research mass in the context of a well-established university. However, there are some important bottlenecks that impede the further development of research of the UoA. First of all, there is the average high age of the faculty staff. Then there is the fragmentation of research and corresponding lack of research collaboration between the various faculty departments. Also hindering the development of research is the lack of involvement of part-timers in research as well as the high teaching burden of the academic staff. On the negative side so far are also the lack of international doctoral students, the low level of leading foreign academics involved in the UoA, and
the low level of EU-research funding also including participation in EU-research and EU research networks. As a consequence the impact on the international scientific community is still rather limited. Innovative and promising is the new research centre on banking and finance.

Conclusions and recommendations

The UoA is a strong local and regional player, still with 'a fixation on domestic Lithuanian issues'. With the support of the university the UoA is working slowly into the right direction as regards research management and scientific publications. The faculty is well represented in Lithuanian society and less abroad in authoritative scientific and advisory boards or research networks. At wider international level first steps are taken towards further internationalisation. However, research funding until now has been primarily limited to national public (institutional) funding. Faculty staff perceives applying for EU-projects as positive, but feels hindered by the need to invest time in preparatory paper work and low chances of success.

It is recommended that in the context of the VU-Strategic plan, the UoA formulates more explicitly a focused, long-term and integrative national and international research plan for the whole faculty, which also intends to create synergy between the various faculty departments and researchers. Likewise, in this context research management and supportive services at the level of the faculty itself needs further attention. The UoA should invest, to a considerable extent, more in internationalisation of research; also in case of faculty departments which still play a subordinate international research role. This also implies intensifying (co-) publishing in a broader variety of international peer-reviewed top-journals, participating more actively in EU-research programmes and projects, international academic staff exchange, as well as recruiting international doctoral students and international staff. A more integrative and focused long-term research strategy might also contribute positively in this regard. Doctoral students should be stimulated more explicitly to publishing their thesis in English. External non-state research funding, either domestic or international (EU) has been almost zero and void so far, and should be elaborated considerably. The Economic science centre, but also the research management, research groups as well as individual researchers all need to be stimulated actively in this challenging effort. Finally, special attention needs to be given to human resources management and career development of academic staff. The average age of academic staff needs to decrease, as well as the number of part-timers.
Faculty of Communication, Vilnius University

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### Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

- 2

### The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

- 2

### The physical infrastructure of the UoA

- 3

### Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

- 2

### The development potential of the UoA

- 3

**OVERALL SCORE**

- 2

### Overall score

In its current form and structure the Faculty occupies the position of a satisfactory national player with a potential capacity to move forward by strengthening its national position as well as by developing a more prominent international profile. The unit presents a wide range of research areas which is an indicators of the richness of the academic activities carry out by the Faculty, but this presents some main challenges in terms of definition of a clear strategic focus of the research in order to arise the international profile in the scientific community. The unit can have a relevant impact in Lithuania and the research activities that they are carrying out are very important for cultural, societal and economic development. However the relationships with non-academics appear still much unstructured. The research infrastructure is appropriate for an international institution and provide a satisfactory research environment to attract international academics. Despite the unit’s research environment is promising to support the development of the Faculty as an academic institution globally recognised in the discipline of communication and information, there are concerns in relation to the actual quality of the research and the research management system. They both need interventions in order to create an international research capacity.
Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

The Faculty’s research interest is very rich and diversified offering a broad understanding of the communication and information sciences. This can be definitely a strength in order to develop interdisciplinary research as well as to build a portfolio of multidisciplinary research activities, but at the moment the wide range of research areas is constraining the research quality and impact. In addition the number of academic personnel full time dedicated to research is rather small: 8,4 FTE. The overall research activities carry out by the unit is relevant with an acceptable standard of quality in terms of originality, perspectives and completeness. However the research production is limited: 2,7 articles per researcher indexed in Scopus. The number of articles in SCOPUS is not satisfactory for an institution that wants to establish its profile in the international community: total no. of publication 40 with only 23 articles ten of which are cited. However, there is a significant capacity and opportunity for the Faculty to produce research outputs that can attract the attention of the international community. In particular, the ongoing focus on digitisation as a research perspective appears particularly promising for the development of the unit’s research activities. In this regards the article published in Emerald EL is a good example of publication.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

The Faculty’s research is very important for society and their potential is still fully unrevealed. The unit appears strongly committed not only to produce research outputs, but also to communicate through articles and other communication media the results of their scientific activities. However, the forms and nature of the national collaborations point out a lack of attention to build a systematic interaction with society at large. Most of the relationships with public organisations are focused on training and the development of some joint events: the content of the listed collaborations is related to ‘Researcher training’ or ‘join development of events’. In addition the relationships with businesses are small and somehow fragmented even if they appear strategically focused on digitisation. The participation in the activities of the Lithuanian Standards Board is promising as well as the participation in working groups although it is not fully clear the level of partnership created with institutions. Despite the high number of memberships of the academic staff in committees and in scientific advisory boards of governmental and business companies, the unit shows a low level of dynamism in attracting external funding and most importantly in establishing collaborations with local stakeholders that can produce a significant impact beyond the institutional educational activities.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

The unit is providing a research environment that is comparable with international well-established academic institutions in the discipline of communication and information sciences. This includes the access to databases and online sources of contents. The infrastructure has good technological contents and it is addressed to applications for the research of information and communication. A rich range of digital technologies, such as for example 3D scanner, micro spectrophotometer, and eye tracking tools, offers the opportunity to researchers to carry out relevant research investigations. In addition a number of online resources are accessible for research purposes. Overall PhD students can count on a research environment and spaces that are well equiped at good international standard in the same field of research.

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

The Faculty’s research environment is promising to become comparable with globally recognised academic institutions in the discipline of communication and information, but at the moment is still evolving in order to achieve a level that is expected in the international scientific community. The main focus is on basic research, but there is a strong awareness of the need to balance such attention with the development of more systematic applied research. In this regards, the four categories of activities implemented by the unit
(participation in working groups, support to the activities of national technical committees, collaborations with professional associations, and contract-based research studies) go in the right direction but need to be intensified and expanded. The unit’s key research objectives have been clearly identified together with an understanding of the means to achieve them. From procedural point of view the unit has clearly defined its strategy and research plans, though there are concerns about the quality of the contents of the strategic and operational documents. Particularly, it is not fully clear how the unit intends to preserve its wide variety of research subjects and align them to the key research objectives that have been delineated. The proposed identity of the unit in relation to a consolidated CIS research with a strong characterisation on interdisciplinary aspects is interesting but its effectiveness is not clearly articulated and analysed against the real research capacity. Indeed, despite the efforts of allocating academic staff’s workload specifically dedicated to research (30% of working hours) academics are mainly absorbed by teaching activities with limited time for research. The number of PhD students enrolled is not particularly high and the practice of employing them as part-time lectures should be discouraged. The adoption of the annual summary plan of publication appears a good means to plan the research activities and to foresee the research outputs. However, it is not fully clear how the unit is implementing a research management system that can support the research assessment through a set of indicators, targets and incentives for research.

**The development potential of the UoA**

The Unit has a significant potential to become an international player occupying a respected and leading position in its discipline. The research profile of some researchers is very good. The academic staff appears strongly motivated and engaged to produce research outputs addressing international outlets and to make potential impacts on society. There is a pool of young researchers that have developed an international profile and they are now engaged in Faculty’s research activities. The competitive R&D funding is relevant even if mainly related to state budget, while the international funding linked to international competitive R&D programmes is almost insignificant. The existing research infrastructure is under development, but the use of digital technologies offers a good platform to develop relevant international research activities. This shows a good capability of the selected research objectives to impact internationally although the number of publications with international coauthors is only 7 articles, and the no. of citation is just 1,17. At the moment the unit has identified too many best in class institutions and should rather compare itself with a limited number of institutions to extract the best insights and implications for research development. It is fundamental to fully identify the key features that can ground the raising of the unit’s international profile, rather than just assuming that a composite and interdisciplinary approach to the discipline can drive excellence. The number of FTE academic staff in R&D is small (7,4) and does not define a critical mass to initiate new research directions and make a significant impact at international level. There are in place a number of international collaborations but they are mainly addressed to the Baltic States and Eastern European countries. Overall the unit seems to have a clear strategic understanding of the directions that need to be undertaken and of the means to put in place to achieve the expected results. The Unit’s swot analysis well reflects the actual research position. The unit’s involvement in HIBOLIRE network represents a good initiative of international collaboration. Instead the number of outcoming international visits is quite small and fragmented (6 visits in total for less than 1 month); while the incoming visit even limited in number appear appropriate.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

The Faculty has a wide range of research areas and the span of the sub-topics that are investigated can provide a good platform to carry out interdisciplinary as well as multidisciplinary research projects that can contribute internationally to the discipline of communication and information. There is a good understanding of how to classify and then address the alternative types of research outputs in order to strategically prioritise the researchers’ focus. The prevalent focus on basic research (70%) can provide a good route to publish
research papers into prestigious international research outlets. However, at the moment the faculty comes short in producing articles in recognised international journals. Even if the unit is editing some interesting and relevant journals that present some international features in terms of editorial board members and authorship of the published articles, this cannot be considered satisfactory in order to build an international profile. For this reason much more attention should be paid by the academic staff and young researchers to target international journals that are widely acknowledge in the scientific community. In addition, it is necessary to make sure that researchers can have access to the most prestigious publications. Researchers have to be motivated to address their research outputs to international well recognised research outlets. In this regards, even if the four scientific journals edited by the unit represent, indeed, an important resource and source of knowledge it is important to be aware of their limitation and of the fact that they can hamper the researchers’ propensity and interest towards external and more competitive internationally well-recognised publications.

It is advised for the unit to develop a better strategic focus of how they manage external relationships with public and private organisations. At the moment the relationships appear mainly fragmented and not responding to a research agenda. The unit can leverage on the existing network of contacts of the academic staff to identify and define some public and private partners with which to develop joint projects and initiatives.

The existing technologies can represent a good basis to establish relationships with commercial partners that are interested in the deployment of technological applications on which the faculty is developing academic competence.

The publication in English of doctoral thesis should be strongly encouraged. In addition the recruitment of PhD students should address potential candidates from other national and international institutions.

The Faculty’s research capacity and plans can drive in the next 5-10 years the development of the international profile and to establish the unit as a highly regarded partner in international collaborations and networks. Different factors can contribute to this achievement.

To support the research growth dynamics, it is important that the unit benchmarks the practices of some of the key ‘competitors’. At the moment the unit has identified too many best in class institutions and should rather compare itself with a limited number of institutions to extract the best insights and implications for research development. As part of this exercise it is fundamental to fully identify the key features that can ground the raising of the unit’s international profile, rather than just assuming that a composite and interdisciplinary approach to the discipline can drive excellence. The number of international collaborations that have been established to date should include more western European countries. This is particularly important in the light of the participation into European consortiums applying for EU funding. Also the incoming and outgoing research visits should be quantitatively and qualitatively extended. Overall the unit seems to have a clear strategic understanding of the directions to undertake and the means to put in place to achieve the expected results.
Kaunas Faculty of Humanities (2), Vilnius University

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**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania: 2
The physical infrastructure of the UoA: 3
Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA: 2
The development potential of the UoA: 3

**OVERALL SCORE**: 2

**Overall score**

The unit is a satisfactory national player with some international links. Some topics such as sustainable development have strong economic and societal relevance. Interactions with non-academics should be improved. Also, international openness (at the broad sense) should be improved as well as the international training of the staff.

**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

The UoA possesses a good standard of quality of the research strategy, plans and infrastructure. The main focus is on basic research, but there is an awareness of the importance of extending the research activities towards investigations that can have practical implications particularly at national level. The UoA’s research focus is original and important. It focuses on subtopics of sustainable development, IT-based entrepreneurship development and eco-dimensions of culture and creative industries that provide ample opportunities to raise the international profile of the unit. However, many research areas are covered by just
10.7 FTE staff. Furthermore, at the moment the research production sees mainly addressed to the scientific journal Transformation in Business & Economics. Although the merits of this journal are recognised there are concerns about its capacity to reach a broad international audience which can then drive the raising of the UoA’s international profile. In the actual form the unit is a satisfactory national player with some international links. The papers enclosed to the self assessment report solve the topical problems, use adequate methodology and are of a good theoretical and empirical quality as well, but, as mentioned above, half of them (4 of 8) were published in one journal.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

The research carried out by unit is important for the society and can be rich of implications and insights both for decision making and for change management of national public and business organisations. The Unit’s interactions with non-academics are at the low level in relation to the expectations of recognised academic institutions. However, the richness of the Unit’s research program in combination with the quality of the research infrastructure should represent a good basis to foster a more extensive and dynamic collaboration with external stakeholders. The relationship established with LAAA as well as the analysis of some case studies build a good starting point. Also the production of one spin-off is promising.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

The Unit is able to provide satisfactory research environment. The buildings appear well equipped with technologies and facilities that offer a qualified research and educational environment. In addition the unit has invested into digital technologies and provides access to the most important databases supporting the research activities into the discipline of social and economic development. In addition the unit employs a number of technical and administrative staff that guarantee the provision of services. PhD students have good access to the physical infrastructure.

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

The number of enrolled PhD students (4 per year) is not at the level of an expected well recognised research institution. PhD students come from the same institution, there is no doctoral student from abroad. All defended theses were written in the Lithuanian language. The level of research mobility is lower than seems to be from the self-assessment report. International co-operation at writing articles with researchers from abroad is at a low level. PhD students have a low level of self-confidence, they have hardly any international training. On the other hand, new motivation system related to publishing activities is prepared, based on the system of Vilnius University so the research management is changing to be goal oriented.

The development potential of the UoA

The unit has a potential to become an international player. It is expected that in the next 5-10 years the institution will be able to perform a significant leap and quickly move from being a national player to become an international player particular in the macro region of Baltic countries and Central and Easter Europe. The level of the international competitiveness of the researchers is rather lower due to the low level of international training, but the topics solved at the institution could have an international impact. The institution have a critical mass of the researchers. Young researchers have a potential to initiate new research directions in next years. SWOT analysis of the institution is realistic and helpful for future development of the Unit.

Conclusions and recommendations

A major effort has to be put into the participation of consortium applying for international funding, second, it is necessary to extend the focus of publishing from internal management publications (even if with an
international standing) towards well-recognised international publications, third, enhance the level of collaboration with other international experts by co-authoring papers and publications, fourth, to better refine the unit’s perception into the international context defining the key distinguishing scientific features and interests, fifth, to develop more empirical research which also includes relevant applied research that can potentially arise the interest not only of local actors, but most importantly of international stakeholders. International co-operation should be more „western-oriented“.
**ŠU Economics and Management, Šiauliai University**

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<th>Name of the UoA</th>
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| Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA | 2 |
| The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania | 2 |
| The physical infrastructure of the UoA | 3 |
| Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA | 2 |
| The development potential of the UoA | 2 |

**Overall score**

The UoA’s research activities present a good standard of quality in relation both to the relevance of the current scientific debates and to the role that they can play for national and local development. However, the level of international openness is at a low level from the point of view of the number of articles prepared with researchers from abroad, number of PhD students from abroad, long-term incoming and outgoing mobilities etc. Research staff has no strong motivation for publishing outside and for stronger participation at H2020 calls. Training of the staff is realised, but mainly based on short-term courses.

**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

The declared main research objective of the UoA is to “ensure a better, more sustainable gender-equal future in the region and in the country”. Although this research focus is well defined, original and relevant, it seems that more efforts are necessary to align this theme with the ongoing research programmes carried out by the different sub-units particularly in terms of research outputs. However, there is a clear understanding and approach to plan research activities and push them towards excellence. Despite this great potential, the
research studies are mainly addressed to be published into local journals that even if aspire to be internationally recognised still do not have the capacity to reach a large scientific audience. From this point of view, 4 „in-house“ journals published by the unit perhaps should not be considered as strength (as it is in the self-assessment report), but as the threat (researchers publish at soft conditions in university journals and are not motivated to publish in highly recognized journals outside the university, what is necessary for visibility of the research results).

The UoA is mainly focused on basic research that appears to be at a good standard of quality and this offers the opportunity to be allocated into internationally recognised journals. The search of possible synergies between the national and regional challenges and the conceptual investigation capacity of the unit provide a very good platform to develop robust theory-based papers complemented with a relevant empirical analysis. The UoA hosts recognised national sub-units of research competence that can emerge as very good players in the international scientific community. The work that is carried out at the unit can raise significant attention from the international academic community. On the other hand, efficiency of international co-operation is currently quite low, measured by the number of articles with co-authors from abroad. Articles enclosed to the self-assessment report have good both theoretical and empirical quality, advanced methodology is used and the papers contribute to the relevant research topics.

**The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania**

The UoA’s research focus is very important for society and it is aligned with the needs and wants to identify and analyse the factors affecting a sustainable well-being in the region and the country. The polyvalent research approach, i.e. the “umbrella” approach, adopted by the Unit is a very good pre-condition to be involved as a partner in research and development projects outside the academic environment. However, at the moment the unit appears mainly specialised into basic research and currently there is an awareness that more applied research is needed. This should include also a stronger orientation towards initiatives aimed to promote and support knowledge transfer towards public and private organisations. The lack of contract research services is an indicator of the need to develop better and more stable relationships with non-academic institutions. The great emphasis that the UoA is paying on the collaboration can represent an important driver to enhance their impact on society. The paraphernalia of frameworks and tools, such as leadership assessment, surveys, opinion assessment and auditing methods, represents a strong basis to engage external parties. The link with the District Municipality and a number of seeding contracts with business and public organisations build a good starting point. In addition, the collaborations that have been established with public organisations with a specific attention on gender equality, labour income tax, social impacts, diversity management and discrimination, define a route to better and more effectively impact on society through policy recommendations and insights for decision making. A number of academic staff is engaged in committees and scientific advisory boards of governmental bodies and business companies, but this seems not to produce direct beneficial effects for the UoA with a low level of effectiveness of existing partnerships.

**The physical infrastructure of the UoA**

The UoA appears to be able to provide a good level of research environment, which is comparable with international academic institutions in its discipline. The Unit provides a well-equipped libraries centrally and at faculty level with a total of 579 readers’ seats (237 computerised) and offering access to 73 national and international databases and an extensive number of e-publications. The UoA offers specific learning spaces and has in place hard and software technologies that can enable the unit to develop some specific research activities. Infrastructure is well-accessible also for PhD students.
Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

The management of the research is structured. The strategic objectives are clearly defined and they are original and relevant both for research advances and social impacts locally, nationally and in the Baltic States and beyond. The level of internationalisation and the focus to translate research into practice and insights for management represent the priorities of the UoA. Very importantly there is a clear understanding how to define and use KPIs as drivers to affect a good research-oriented behaviour. However still some criticalities remain in relation to the workload of academic staff. Indeed, 98% of the academic staff is mainly focused on teaching with a limited time for research. The Unit has successfully established 4 annual international scientific conferences. On the other hand, research staff has just weak motivation for publishing outside and there is weak ambition to apply for H2020 projects. Research training of the staff consists of rather shorter courses than longer international mobilities.

The development potential of the UoA

The UoA can be considered as a recognised research institution in the national scientific community. It has a potential to become a strong and respected national player with some international impact. Despite the quite intensive teaching workload of the academic staff, the UoA shows a good capacity to produce research activities and most importantly presents a strong understanding of how to evolve future research activities in a way that can be impactful both for knowledge advances and social impacts. The scientific environment appears suitable to support a scientific growth of the unit. All the topics investigated in the four main UoA’s research fields (Economics, Management and Psychology, Administration – Law and History, Education and Sociology) are relevant and capable to impact the national scientific community. The UoA has a realistic understanding of its strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats.

Conclusions and recommendations

The UoA has clearly defined its research focus and has in place a good strategy plan to publish studies into ranked international journals. In this regards it would be beneficial for the unit to adopt one of the possible well established list of recognised internationally journals, such as the ABS list. This will help the unit to move forward the research quality and impact.

The UoA should better emphasis the strategic relevance to support its development as a centre of scientific competence. This should be integrated by a recruitment of more PhD students (that should be entirely dedicated to research activities) as well as by the implementation of the foreseen career researcher’s development plan. As part of the development strategy a major attention should be paid to raise funding by combining a focus, on the one hand, to the national and international research calls for research projects, and on the other hand to contracted action-based research studies funded by public and private organisations. Finally, a major attention should be paid on the internationalisation by further developing the existing agreements with international universities and supporting longer-term incoming and outgoing international visits.
# Energy Economy, Lithuanian Energy Institute

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<td>The development potential of the UoA</td>
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**OVERALL SCORE**

![Overall Score Diagram]

## Overall score

The research of the unit is focused on the important and relevant topic, both at the basic research and at the applied research. Although the unit has some international connections and co-operations (e.g. at solving some international projects), the level of international openness is quite low. Furthermore, there is a very small number of PhD students, the unit does not attract PhD students from abroad. Research management should be strongly improved, the motivation and ambitions of researchers, particularly young researchers, is very low. The unit has some budget constraints, the budget significantly decreased in recent years. Papers enclosed to the self assessment report are of high theoretical and empirical quality, but almost all of them have been published in just two journals.

## Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

The unit plays an important role within Lithuania as a unique and narrowly specified research unit, with some international connections and co-operation. The research is divided into two ways - basic research in the field of energetics and energy economics, and applied research for the governmental bodies in Lithuania.
It is appreciated that the results of research are published in SCOPUS journals, papers are cited. Number of publications per researcher, number of citations excluding self-citations per article etc.) are considered as average. The unit is a part of research consortia which solve some international research projects.

On the other hand, low number of papers are jointly prepared with institutions abroad. It could be explained by the fact that the international mobilities are lower than expected for this type of institution. Institution does not attract young researchers and also does not attract researchers from abroad (perhaps due to the budget constraints.) From these points of view, the international openness of the research is at the quite low level.

**The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania**

Energetics is commonly considered as one of two most important challenges facing the EU countries in 5-10 years prospective (besides population ageing). From this point of view, it is quite surprising that the UoA express the low interest in this topic from governmental bodies. There is a good co-operation and synergy with other organizations, for which the analyses and studies are prepared and which provide data for the research of UoA. The unit has a number of national collaborations, mainly with state ministries and energy agencies. Members of the institute also participates in national journals and national scientific advisory boards. The Lithuanian governmental bodies are the main contractors for the unit’s contract research.

At the site visit, the unit stated that they are or aspire to be a leader in the field of energo-economics within the whole area of the Baltic states. Nevertheless, governmental bodies from Latvia and Estonia do not contract some research from the unit.

**The physical infrastructure of the UoA**

The self-assessment report is too brief for clear assessment of the physical infrastructure of the unit. For example, it is not clear if the access to most important databases is ensured and it there is lack of access to the theoretical background. The self-assessment report describes just software and (at the other part) the access to data. After clearing the state regarding access to the libraries and open access centres, the situation could be considered as satisfactory.

**Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA**

The research management is poor. There is very low number of PhD students (1 per year), with low level of international experience. Training of research staff is not described in the self-evaluation report. During the site visit, it has been confirmed that the experience from senior researchers to junior researchers is transmitted mainly at an informal basis. There is also lack of personell who should manage the research, including strenghtening the co-operation between technological and economic groups within the unit. The atmosphere during the interviews with researchers and PhD students as well was disappointing, young researchers are not motivated. There is lack of leadership, lack of research drivers, lack of ambitions of the researchers.

**The development potential of the UoA**

UoA stated the ambition to be the strong national player with some impacts on international research. This ambition is supported by the research area of the unit, which is important and economically and societally relevant, and by the current number of articles in SCOPUS journals. On the other hand, the development potential is strongly limited by the financial issues (including significant decrease of budget in recent years, presented at the site visit by the management), by the weak level of the international openness (attracting researchers from abroad, attracting doctoral students from abroad, low level of international mobilities of the staff and PhD students etc.) and by the low level of motivation and ambitions of the researchers.
Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions are stated at the part „Overall Score“. For fulfilment the ambition beeing strong national player with some international impact, it is recommend: (i) to build up a motivation scheme for researchers and PhD students, leading to increasing the international openness of the unit and publishing in highly recognized international journals, (ii) to attract senior researchers who are the research drivers, (iii) to specify narrow research topics in which the unit could be excellent from the international point of view or which are attractive for the business sphere within Lithuania or abroad.
VMU Economics and Management science fields, Vytautas Magnus University

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<td>The development potential of the UoA</td>
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OVERALL SCORE 2

Overall score
The UoA is relatively small and has limited research resources, especially with regards to faculty, since most are part-timers. The research output is still predominantly concentrated on Lithuanian issues and the unit lacks a publication strategy. The unit favours an interdisciplinary ‘cluster’ approach to research which can be put in question. The research is at an adequate level and represents a stable national level. The future will depend on the units international (publication) approach and on the access of resources.

Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA (2)
The UoA is a relatively small unit consisting of only 15 FTE academics, most of them (approx. 70) having part-time positions. The unit’s disciplines are economics and management, with a slight emphasis on the former. The UoA’s research is organised in three clusters of interdisciplinary character, all being rather applied and directed towards improving the Lithuanian economy and society. The unit produces around 3-4
Scopus listed publications annually. It has included seven paper for review. A few of these are of a quality that might be publishable in higher ranked journals. Among the listed 20 most prominent publications, many are in Lithuanian and a couple are conference papers.

A fair number of faculty are members of scientific journals editorial boards.

Research in this UoA seems to have a good level, certainly at national level although the international scope is weaker. There are no international co-authors. They have strong relations with the academic community in the field but most of them are at Lithuanian level. At international level they are mostly related to Eastern countries. Consequently, The UoA’s impact in the field is limited.

The UoA lists 34 completed PhD’s for the period, all of them are in Lithuanian.

**The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania**

Many of the projects the UoA is developing have an applied approach and we could suppose that they have a relevant impact at national level. Some of the unit’s faculty are members of committees and scientific advisory boards of governmental bodies and business companies. The unit’s faculty collaborates with one national research institute and another 15 public organisations. It has 150 PhD students enrolled, which must be regarded as high, given its size. It collaborates with five national universities in a joint doctoral school.

**The physical infrastructure of the UoA**

The UoA declares that research infrastructures, although improvable, are enough for developing research. The UoA uses resources of the university for research purposes, e.g. VMU virtual library, central library including 4 faculty libraries, etc. The UoA has Bloomberg terminal, Passport, Software for market analysis, financial analysis, search systems, 46 and 30 trial data bases per year.

**Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA**

The number of persons in the UoA is high but the FTE for research is only 6. This indicates that dedication to research is to some extent marginal for most of the academics. This situation is not the best for managing research in a unit. Nevertheless, the formal structure of research management seems excellent with well organised clusters, objectives and planning. However, the SAR states that “There isn’t a shared plan for publishing the research results”.

The UoA rates its cluster approach to research highly. The unit argues that the cluster system provides flexibility and enables the formation of efficient research groups that can respond to changes in research trends. Maybe this is true, but that may cater for proactivity with regards to applied research. In basic research ‘trends’ play a lesser part in directing research and the cluster approach may not be optimal in an international publication strategy. The UoA has an assessment and reward system for teachers and research fellows which applies a methodology approved by the University Council for distributing official salaries and bonuses. The system is linked to promotion possibilities. Whether the system supports international visibility and impact can be questioned.

**The development potential of the UoA**

Overall, the quality and impact of research is nationally good, but in order to strengthen the international impact the UoA should develop a publication and research strategy with an international focus.

The future of the UoA may be promising. It has a good national network and an incipient international network. Faculty is relatively young, 65% are below the age of 45. It is productive in comparison with comparable national units, not least PhD education. On the other hand it seems that there are some limitations due to lack of resources, especially human resources with more dedication to research, since it
relies heavily on part time academics. The future development depends on the evolution of these critical factors.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

The UoA is relatively small and has limited research resources, especially with regards to faculty, since most are part-timers. The research output is still predominantly concentrated on Lithuanian issues and the unit lacks a publication strategy. The unit favours an interdisciplinary ‘cluster’ approach to research which can be put into question, particularly if the unit aims for an international publication impact. The unit should develop a clear research publication strategy combined with targets on outlets. The international dimension, increased exchange and collaboration with international business schools, can be a vehicle in realizing this. The unit obviously has good physical facilities (except maybe office and seminar spaces), many and relatively young as well as productive faculty members. The impression is that faculty is active also with teaching and in interacting with external national parties. In order to enhance research the balance of faculty time needs to change.
Faculty of Creative Industries, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University

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<th>Name of the UoA</th>
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| Composition of the Unit of Assessment (UoA) | Faculty of Creative Industries |

- **Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**: 1
- **The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania**: 2
- **The physical infrastructure of the UoA**: 1
- **Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA**: 1
- **The development potential of the UoA**: 2

**OVERALL SCORE**: 1

**Overall score**

The VGTU_KIF Faculty of Creative Industries presents at the moment a number of challenges and shortcomings. These can be considered likely as the result of a recent restructuring and reorganisation of the faculty in its current structure of four departments which requires some more time for the faculty to implement the defined research strategy. From research point of view a first significant limitation is the number of disciplines and then of research themes co-existing within the unit. Although the research focus is clearly stated, i.e. Creative Industries, it is a kind of ‘umbrella label’ which does not really reflect what the unit is developing or can potentially develop. Therefore in the current position the unit does not have a clear research focus and consequently an understanding of how the number of disciplines allocated in the faculty can collaborate and synergistically interact in order to produce acceptable quality research outputs particularly at international level. A second main concern is related to the infrastructure that do not reflect what a faculty focused on creativity should be equipped with. There are not creative spaces and the library is really basic and mainly oriented to teaching. There is also a lack of dedicated laboratories and even the academic staff’s offices need to be better organised and designed. The academic staff seem not to be committed to produce high quality research outputs and generally the level of motivation is quite low. A
further main issue is related to the absence of PhD students which significantly undermine the research capacity of the unit. Potentially the unit could play a major role at national level, but unfortunately at the moment they do not take advantages of relevant partnerships with non-academics that could produce a significant impact at societal and economic level. Despite the strong limitations the unit is trying with the leading of a new dean to implement a new strategy and revise their management system which appears quite poor and in need of rethinking.

Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

The UoA’s research activities is under configuration and although it is focused on a promising research area in their actual form contains new scientific discoveries only sporadically. The research profile of the UoA is mainly national, even if there are some initiatives that potentially could contribute to raise the unit’s international standing in the future. The overall critical mass for research of the faculty is limited to only 3,9 FTE research personnel. Not all departments are equally engaged in the production of research outputs. In particular, from the list the most important publications it emerges that the two linguistic departments are left behind in terms of research productivity. In fact most of the research outputs are produced in relation to the topic of ‘Creative Industries’ which represents the main focus of research of DCEC and DPPS respectively. The academic staff presents different and heterogeneous disciplinary backgrounds with a very low level of interaction and synergistic integration.

The publication strategy is very auto-referential being mainly centred on publishing research outputs on the journals edited by the unit. It is much appreciated the publication in Expert Systems with Applications which is a top journal and should represent a good internal benchmark to drive further research production. The research appears fundamentally conceptual. It lacks, in the current structure, the capacity to contribute to international debates in the community of the same research area. On the other hand, the lack of a clear focus on the national challenges limits the potential high-level impact that the unit could have for the development of the discipline in Lithuania and the Baltic States. The unit does not have any doctoral programme which represents a serious limitation to the creation of research capacity.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

The UoA’s research focus is very important for society. Indeed, the creative industries represent an important engine of the economic and social development of Europe: increasingly EU countries are addressing attention on the creativity as a driver for public and business innovation as well as a lever for social innovation (this is the case for instance of United Kingdom with a focus on design and service industries, Finland with an attention on software and game industries, Italy with an interest on social inclusion and fashion industries). The academic staff of the unit is playing an important role in catalysing attention to the creative industries in Lithuania participating in the creation of initiatives such as Vilnius Film Cluster and participating in Lithuanian Communication Society and National Association of Creative and Culture Industries. There is an effort in place to build a critical mass to carry out research which potentially could also be translated into international research outputs. However, the focus of the research activities needs to be reflected and rationalised. The faculty members are committed to contribute to social and economic impacts at national level by being actively involved in the National Association of Creativity and Culture Industries as well as in participating in some creative clusters’ activities. There is also a good propensity to develop start-up enterprises in the creative sector leveraging students’ creativity. Already the unit has successfully experimented and promoted the development of some start-up companies founded and run by students with an academic support.
The physical infrastructure of the UoA

The UoA’s research environment is under development, but it is currently not sufficiently evolved to be comparable with the international standard of other institutions working in the same discipline. This is also related to the lack of a doctoral program, i.e. PhD students. The Creative Industries Lab does not appear to be fully structured and equipped in order to represent a good infrastructure to position the faculty as a national player in the disciplines related to the creative industries. In addition there is not dedicated technical staff in the Lab supporting research activities. In its current form it could eventually support only knowledge transfer initiatives that need to be specifically designed starting from the high number of collaborations activated individually and apparently on consultancy-based by the faculty’s members. The library is mainly addressed to support teaching activities rather than research. The overall office spaces are in need of refurbishment and interior design.

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

The organisation of the management of research is under development. The four departments associated with the faculty have started recently to define their research focus. However, they are not well integrated and they appear silos oriented with different levels of performance in terms of quantity and quality of the research outputs. The unit’s research vision and mission is clear but the strategy for translating them into action needs major refinements. The departments define a research plan, including research themes and individual annual priorities, but they are poorly integrated with a clear definition of the objectives, targets and ways to assess and reward the research efforts of the groups and individual operating in the unit. Actually the reward system in place seems to promote dysfunctional behaviours: the retribution system promotes short-term approach because academic staff aims to get points that would allow them to receive better hourly teaching salary which is linked with the number of publications rather than their quality. The regulations for scientific activities define a good informative background, but the research workloads are not properly managed and developed. Academic personnel is heavily engaged in teaching activities and do not really have enough time and energy to carry out research activities that can be impactful at international level. There are some researchers that are more active and focused on producing research outputs, but they are mainly oriented towards outlets that do not have a wide international recognition. The faculty has a plan to promote effective knowledge sharing practices that can potentially support early-career and senior researchers, but they come short in terms of impact and in any case need to be integrated with plans to support the development of research skills. The kind of research outputs produced by the unit are not well defined and the research focus appear still too broad. It is missing a specific definition of the unit’s research niche and of the operational actions to further develop it. There are some good publications. The unit is not involved in any doctoral programme and this is a major shortcoming.

The development potential of the UoA

The faculty has a very good understanding of the strong national role that they can play. They are aware of their limitations and weaknesses. Over the next 5-10 years the unit could be able overcome the actual limitations and to strengthen their national position as trustworthy partner within national collaborations networks and act as a gatekeeper and agent for the development of scientific activities about the creative industries. This can be accompanied by enhancing their international profile by focusing on targeting well established publication outlets and building stronger international research partnerships beyond the educational remit. The unit has not been able to secure any funding related to international and competitive R&D competitions. The unit has produced a good level of publications, 143 total publications included in Scopus even if only five with international coauthors. Its actual strength lies on a national rather than international level. At this moment the critical mass of available full time research personnel is too small: only 1 FTE academic personnel in R&D. This hampers the capacity of initiating new research directions.
even if the academic staff may have a good understanding of the research field as emerged from the interviews. It is worth to point out that an actual important ‘selling point’ is that the unit has some active scholars producing good quality research outputs, but they work mainly in isolation with the rest of the faculty’s members. There is a lack of critical mass to develop research at a comparable international standard level and this also affects negatively the capacity to raise funding awarded competitively. There are not PhD students and the number of visiting scholar is very small, only 6 in total for an average duration of 1 month. The number of international collaboration needs improvement: to date they are limited to two Universities and three research institutes.

Conclusions and recommendations

The faculty started its research activities very recently in 2011. Therefore it is still in a stage of organising and make operative the overall research strategy through an active engagement of its four departments. At the moment the variety of the disciplines included in the faculty appear mainly as a melting pot, rather than an organic composite of disciplines. This has strong implications in terms of research capacity of the unit so that even if the general research focus, i.e. Creative Industries, has been clearly defined the faculty comes short in terms of capacity of producing relevant quality research outputs at the same level of standard of comparable international institutions in the same area of research.

In order to provide some possible insights from the evaluation that could drive changes for the unit some recommendations are listed below.

The active role of the UoA in the formation of the National Association of Creative Industries as well as in the development of Vilnius Film Cluster needs to be integrated with a research plan and actions that enhance the level of interaction of the unit with the society. Very few applied research project have been implemented and the relationships with public and business bodies are not sufficiently structured.

The Unit should leverage more significantly the experience of supporting the development of start-up enterprises. This can be a venue to significantly contribute to the impact in Lithuania both at social and economic level. For this reason a strategy plan needs to be defined and implemented. This strategy should clearly distinguish start-ups from spin-offs and then define the role that the faculty can really play.

The faculty should focus on strengthening the Creative Industries Lab making sure that it is converted into a platform that can support not only knowledge transfer, but most importantly the development of applied research projects by inviting public and business bodies to interact through such infrastructure. Major attention should be paid on developing a library and research resources that can support high-quality research activities.

The enrolment of PhD students should represent a priority as well as the definition of a human resource strategy towards the development of a stronger research capacity.

It is important to have a better perception of what the faculty is and stands in the international context and in this relation to clearly identify a niche research area to focus on, rather than to broadly focus on creative industries. In addition, the means to achieve the research objectives have to be clearly identified and prioritised, indicating an action plan to implement and assess them over time. The departments’ research activities should be clearly defined distinguishing their nature and focus by balancing between basic and applied research as well as by defining in accordance with the peculiar features of the different groups the kind of impacts that are expected.
Overall score

The TVM is a peculiar institution in Lithuanian higher education. It is a private institution depending on the University of Vilnius (VU). It was established by VU as a private institution, it reports financially to VU and it is renting the current building that belongs to the VU. Even the diploma they are issuing is signed by VU. It is supposed that TVM was created as a private institution for having a dynamic and flexible Business School without the more bureaucratic ties of public institutions.

As a typical Business School the main objective of the institution is teaching and training people for leading companies and organisations. From the beginning of the institution, research was not a main institutional goal and only has been included in the agenda recently. Another indicator of this low dedication to research is that TVM has not a doctoral programme (by the way, as many other Business Schools in the world). As a logical consequence the overall research level is still poor.
Quality of the research performance and impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA

Research is in the agenda of TVM for few years. Consequently, at the moment research is not yet well developed. On the other hand, as a typical business school, research is not a main priority (e.g., almost no references in the web to research activities). Annual average of R&D funding is very low (total of 55,000€, no international funding). Many of the publications submitted to the Panel are conference proceeding or published in local journals although one of this journals is relevant at international level.

The new (created in 2011) Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center is the body responsible of organising research. Its main focus in obviously applied research and knowledge transfer as one expects from an institution like this.

As it is frequent in a teaching oriented institution in the area of business, most academic staff are part-timers, many working in other institutions and with an important teaching workload. Academic staff in TVM has to play a triple role as lecturers, consultants and researchers. In any case, the total number of researchers (FTE) is only 7.5. This is a small critical mass for producing relevant outputs. TVM recognises this weakness that it is remarked in the Self-assessment report.

TVM has its own journal, as many other institutions in Lithuania. It is unclear the benefits of such type of local journals. Although researcher are required to publish in international journals, with only few exceptions publications are still in local journals with limited international scope and many of them are just conference proceedings. Nevertheless, international activities in conferences and meetings are becoming a more frequent activity.

TVM got some research projects: it is partner in one EU project (Egoprise) and others from the Research Council and they are involved in proposals for H2020 and Erasmus Plus.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

The self-evaluation report provides information about the impact of research on the country. Apart obviously of teaching activities that obviously could be relevant, they mention few collaborations with public national organisation and business. One would expect more from an institution like this focused in business and entrepreneurship.

Although they do not show many social and economic impact activities in the visit they affirmed that they are very active in the field of consultancy, probably more at individual level than at institutional one. For instance, they got some innovation vouchers (support scheme from innovation agency). On the other hand there is no evidence of additional funding from these external activities. Based on site visit, it is apparent that in many cases Lithuanian SMEs do not have resources for engaging with university research and there is not strong innovation culture, especially when the researchers’ contribution would be more in ‘soft’ than ‘hard’ technologies. It takes two to collaborate.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

TVM shares the main library of VU that is close to the TVM building. This provides a good access to books, journals and on-line data at the same level that the UV.

TVM has a new building obviously designed for the teaching needs of the institution. The infrastructure for research is basic, although they declare that it is enough. Bearing in mind the current research activity developed by TVM, the infrastructure is adequate. However, a higher research activity would require more spaces for the interaction of researchers and for facilitating team working.
Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

After several approaches to organise research in TVM, they created in 2011 a centre for developing research focused in entrepreneurship: the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center. This centre is trying to support the formation of research groups and is supporting researchers in preparing application for external grants. It is still an incipient structure that needs to be developed for reaching international standards. The staff recognizes the support of the centre, but the international networks of the academic staff have not realised in sufficiently active efforts in applying for funding with international partners.

The research scope of this centre is limited to certain areas (entrepreneurship and related aspects) what could be considered a sensible approach.

Nevertheless, the main problem is funding. As a private institution, it is basically financed with student’s fees. They do not receive research funds from the state. They can participate in competitive calls for projects but the type of academic staff (mostly part-timers and working in several institutions) is not the most adequate for struggling with these calls and all the needed work for being successful.

As a way of promoting some mobility, researchers are encouraged to travel to conferences. They have a budget of 1000 euros per year for these scientific trips.

The development potential of UoA

The future development of research in TVM depends on two main and related factors.

1. On the one hand the consolidation of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center. This centre should be very pragmatic, focusing research in few themes and trying to reach an international level in these few aspects. This is a promising initiative.
2. On the other hand, the future of research in TVM depends of funding. In principle, TVM funding depends on tuition fees. In this sense the current context is not the best because at this moment there is a reduction in number of students and consequently in available funds. Looking for competitive research funds or for contracts with the business sector are the only alternatives.

Two additional factors do not help to be optimistic about the future of research in TVM: The typology of academic staff, mostly part-timers, and the lack of doctoral students who provide new blood to research teams in most institutions.

Conclusions and recommendations

From the beginning of the institution, research was not a main institutional goal and only has been included in the agenda recently. Another indicator of this low dedication to research is that TVM has not a doctoral programme. As a logical consequence the research level is still poor.

Although TVM has a recent research plan based on the new Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center with some positive outputs, the overall assessment of the research level of this institution is necessarily low: research is incipient in quantity and quality.

The impact of applied research developed in TVM on the local community is weak. At least it is weaker than one would expect from an institution focused on business and entrepreneurship.

Research infrastructures are basic although they benefit of sharing the library of the University of Vilnius.

In summary, TVM is trying to develop research but the future development of research depends on the consolidation of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center and on getting additional funding. In this sense the current context is not the best because at the moment there is a reduction in number of students and consequently of available funds.
For playing a relevant international role and increasing the impact on the community, TVM should take in account several recommendations:

1. This is a business school that was created for training entrepreneurs in Lithuania. In an institution like this research is only a way of supporting the main objective. TVM does not need to be an outstanding research institution in all fields. A realistic approach to research based on actual possibilities is the best option.

2. The idea behind the creation of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center is good. This centre should organise research but obviously focused on applied research and knowledge transfer.

3. Bearing in mind the limited resources, research should concentrate in very few themes related to the main objective of the institution. This is the only way, in our opinion, of reaching a level of excellence in at least one or two areas.

4. Concentrating the research efforts of academic staff in similar research lines and organising teams on these themes should be a priority.
Joint Unit Of Social Sciences, Klaipeda University

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<th>Name of the UoA</th>
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**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

- The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania
- The physical infrastructure of the UoA
- Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA
- The development potential of the UoA

**OVERALL SCORE**

1

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**Overall score**

Klaipeda University, Joint Unit of Social Sciences is a unit focusing on education (40%), management and administration (16%) and sociology and psychology (12% both). Unit is of considerable size, 26 professors (23 FTE) but only with 33% for R&D and 46 Associate professors (43 FTE), with 33% for R&D, and in addition lecturers and assistants (all 33% for R&D). The UoA has local impact through its teaching and activity of staff in different kinds of local projects. The unit produced 46 Master degrees in 2013 (number is declining from 2011), and 2 doctoral degrees in 2013.

The research output as published reports is relatively low, only 0.9 SCOPUS classified articles per researcher, and 1.9 citations. Given the fact that without exception the SCOPUS classified journals are rather unknown, the visibility and impact of research is very low.

Funding for research from international programs is very low, only 20 k€ and there are little prospects to increase it in foreseeable future.

The UoA tells that its focus is studies in sustainability and welfare studies, in particular in Baltic area. However, from self-report and during the site-visit it remained somewhat unclear what this focus actually
means in practice. One problem is that the research is quite fragmented and the UoA does is not functioning as collaborating, integrated unit. It is also difficult to see that the many disciplines actually form a multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary basis for research or teaching. During the site-visit it was apparent that the staff identifies themselves rather as teachers than researchers. However, it is questionable if the UoA as a unit of higher education can successfully build on such a thin and fragmented basis of research. The time share of FTE to R&D (33 %) would be enough for good quality research, 33% for research is not uncommon in many European universities but with considerably higher outcome of research results.

The researchers and teachers, during the site-visit, were not very optimistic about their possibilities to significantly improve the quality of research and appeared to have doubts about the necessity to increase the internationalisation and intensity of research. However, no specific areas of strength in research were recognised.

In the overall score 1 the emphasis has been on quality of research, impact on science on national level, and on development potential researchers and PhD (development potential of PhD students is certainly higher than overall score indicates but it is only a part of the overall evaluation and alone cannot raise the score).

**Quality of the research performance and Impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

Research topics of UoA are diverse, in principle the combination of educational science, sociology and psychology would be an ideal combination. However, the different areas are not supporting each other and the result is very a fragmented collection of topics with little integration. Combination of different areas in the UoA is artificial and no real collaboration between the areas exists. In addition to this, research management and administration is attempting to push the unit on more productive and collaborative path but on basis of the site visit these initiatives are probably not supported by the staff. The identity of the staff is strongly anchored in teaching, not in research. However, for a university unit such attitude is perilous.

The UoA realizes its strength in focusing to Baltic area problems and in particular to sustainability and welfare. One of the goals is to apply the research results in solving societal problems and apply results in improving the welfare of the society. Consequently, the research carried out in the UoA is introducing some current research in Lithuanian context, but by nature reproductive/comparative rather than based on original research, which produces and progresses new knowledge. The UoA, however, has somewhat unfocused ideas how Baltic focus should be realized and what sustainability and welfare means in practice. These ideas do not therefore crystallize to coherent research strategies and the generalization of ideas arising from local problems so that they would be of wider scientific interest may not be possible. In addition, UoA has no specific area of strengths in its research, focus is lacking and although there are plans to find better focus of research, the plans are still unrealized. A serious drawback is lack of clear strategy to consolidate the research agenda and to increase the collaboration.

The research done in the UoA is definitely not the leading edge research or of high originality and breakthrough potential is lacking. This is reflected as low number of publications in international peer-reviewed journals, none in a leading journal. The publications submitted for review also reflect the unfocused research. The best publication is on soil hazards (average level international), the other publications which might have potential to be published in international journals are on management. In education, the papers submitted for review are rather position papers or reflective summaries than original research of scientific interest. On the other hand, UoA publishes a number of publications and contributions on national forums, and even through own university publishing house. It is mentioned that the efforts are made to increase publication in high-impact journals but on basis of site-visit researchers appeared to favour the “in-house” publishing also as a future strategy in dissemination of the results. The international visibility of research may with this strategy remain quite low. Given the fact that the UoA is struggling to gain international recognition, continuing a strategy to emphasize “in-house” publishing cannot be recommended.
In summary, the research of the UoA is unfocused, its quality is not very high, visibility is low and research lacks a long term strategic plans. Therefore, UoA’s potential to advance high quality or perhaps even moderate quality of research is questionable.

**The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania**

There is evidence of research based development of practices, and evidence of attempts to collaborate with different stakeholders. However, the self-evaluation report and site-visit does not provide very concrete evidence of impacts in local region (concrete results of improvement in sustainability, welfare or education, related to research output). In addition, taken the fact that education is 40% of the UoA’s activity, evidence of close and productive collaboration between the researchers and the stakeholders in charge of national school system is a bit scarce. The description of the impacts are too ambiguous and general to judge the real impact of the research. Therefore, it is not clear, what actually is the impact of the research on its intended area of applications. There is a substantial risk that useful research results have lesser impact on practices than they could have. In education, the papers submitted for review (except one) have relatively little impact on practical problems of education.

**The physical infrastructure of the UoA**

The research environment of UoA is quite moderate and in need of renovations. Access to library facilities appears to be adequate, though. The infrastructure appears to need modernisation in many respects, although basic facilities may well correspond what one expects from an adequate research environment. The management have plans for modernisation and renovation of infrastructure (e.g. new library), but realization of the plans seems to be unsure. From the report and site-visits nothing arises that indicates some special competitive advance of UoA as a research environment. The overall impression is that that a researcher coming to the environment should not expect expressly modern or stimulating and competitive research environment.

**Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA**

The research management plan of UoA pays attention on publication plans of the staff, which is important factor, but on the same time, self-evaluation report lacks a description a strategic plan for research, how it focuses and what are its priorities and how these priorities are pursued. Without such a plan paying attention only on number of publications is not sufficient action. Research management had plans to improve the focus of research, to develop more holistic research strategy and increase the internationalisation, but during the site-visit it became not clear if the research staff actually support or will make effort to fulfil the plans. The task of the research management is challenging and it probably does not have means to carry out the necessary changes.

In regard to management of human resources it must be noted that workload of the UoA and the ratio of research to teaching is comparable to most other similar institutions. There is thus adequate time (of 30% or working time) for research and with this timeshare, many comparable institutions manage to produce high quality research. However, the number of students attending the research is low in comparison to similarly focused research units in Western Europe.

The human management plans takes into account the early career concerns and there is a plan how young researchers in their early career are supported. The plan is basically good, but given the low funding, it is questionable how well it can be realised. Anyway, the early career problems are notified and there are plans how to improve the situation. Of the career advancement and support of more senior researchers little is mentioned (only requirements are mentioned in very overall level). The strategy and principles of recruiting senior staff and professors is not explained in any detail.
The self-evaluation report shows that UoA’s exchange of researchers between other universities in Lithuania and between foreign universities is active, but here again the lack of research focus and strategy is seen as proliferation of contact to units not so central in their area of research. Given the focus of education and social sciences major Western universities, in particular European and North-European units, could be advisable direction to go which should deserve more attention.

The development potential of the UoA

The structure of the UoA needs consolidation and the nature of interdisciplinary of the UoA must be clarified. At present the UoA lacks coherence and focus of research. The connections between educational sciences, sociology and psychology could be a competitive advantage of the unit, but in current form, the potential is not realized. Now the different groups appear to function rather isolated and not really supporting each other.

Research management has plans of new type of research approaches with own identity (as mentioned in self-evaluation report and discussed during the site-visit), also visions and plans in regard to modernisation of spaces for research and teaching and equipment, and increase in international collaboration. Crucial question is whether or not the research staff has competence to meet these plans and whether or not they are engaged to carry out the necessary changes. There appears to be some tension between the plans and current reality.

The UoA’s view of its problems and possibilities to solve the problems is not very optimistic, but in this sense realistic. The main obstacle to consolidate the research and research teams is the deeply running fragmentation and artificiality of the unit. For these reasons, the development potential is not very promising.

The most valuable potential lies on the doctoral students, which on basis of the site-visit are quite enthusiastic, ready to make effort to develop their competence as researchers and to participate in research of international level and quality. However, it is questionable whether or not the UoA can develop so that it provides a proper environment for these doctoral students to fulfill their potential.

Conclusions and recommendations

The UoA tells that its focus is studies in sustainability and welfare studies, in particular in Baltic area. However, from self-report and during the site-visit it remained somewhat unclear what this focus actually means in practice. One problem is that the research is quite fragmented and the UoA does not functioning as collaborating, integrated unit. It is also difficult to see that the many disciplines actually form a multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary basis for research or teaching. During the site-visit it was apparent that the staff identifies themselves rather as teachers than researchers. However, it is questionable if the UoA as a unit of higher education can successfully build on such a thin and fragmented basis of research. The collection of research publications the UoA provided for evaluations does not contain very good quality work, which is taken as indication that this may be general trend also in publications in Lithuanian (which we were unable to assess).

The researchers and teachers, during the site-visit, were not very optimistic about their possibilities to significantly improve the quality of research. Many of the appeared to have doubts about the necessity to increase the internationalisation and raise the visibility if their research in international level. This raises some doubts about the development potential of the unit.

In the research conducted in the UoA no specific areas of strength were recognised. Nevertheless, the UoA has motivated group of doctoral students, who recognised the necessity of international contacts and importance of networking as part of international research communities. Most of the future development potential of the UoA appears to be on the doctoral students, and much hinges on the success of UoA in using this potential.
The current situation and the development potential of the UoA is not very promising and there are severe threats for the realization of the future plans. Perhaps the most problematic aspect is the disintegration of the unit and low motivation (perhaps even resistance in some cases) of research staff to engage with the necessary changes. Research management attempts to initiate necessary improvements, but in regard to severity of problems the means it has to realize the change are probably not adequate.

Although it is relatively easy to say what needs to be improved (coherence of research strategy, focus of research, integration of different groups to more coherent research units, quality of research in general and internationalisation) it is very difficult to see how change could happen and through what kind of arrangements.

The UoA is too artificial agglomeration of different groups, in regard of research topics disintegrated even to level of single individual workers. Complete restructuring should be advisable. There is no group with enough researcher able to significantly improve their performance. It could be possible to locate some healthy groups which could work more effectively when integrated as part of some other units and through joining these groups to larger existing research units in other Universities better intellectual environment and research conditions could be created. Within the UoA such reorganisations are not easily foreseen because of the severe fragmentation.

In publications and dissemination plans there is apparently lot to improve. This is particularly important when the research in other ways seem to meet the international standards. More ambitious publishing plans are clearly needed. Instead of focusing on national and local publication forums (or inviting researchers abroad to publish more in such forums) the UoA should more determinedly seek to publish their work in international, high-visibility forums. However, in order that this is possible, UoA should create a convincing research strategy.
Kazimieras Simonavičius University, Kazimieras Simonavičius University

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<th>Name of the UoA</th>
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<tr>
<td>Name of institution being assessed</td>
<td>Kazimieras Simonavičius University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total no. FTE researchers</td>
<td>5,48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Composition of the Unit of Assessment (UoA)</td>
<td>Faculty of Law; Creative Society and Economy Institute; Business School; Department of Internet Engineering; Research and Development Centre</td>
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**Quality of the research performance and impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

- The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania: 1
- The physical infrastructure of the UoA: 1
- Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA: 1
- The development potential of the UoA: 1

**OVERALL SCORE**

1

**Overall score**

The overall score of this unit research activity was 1. However one has to bear in mind that KSU is a private academic institution established few years ago. It has rather serious disadvantage position vis a vis other public universities. Its future depends essentially on its educational activities. Research is of secondary importance, taking into consideration the fact that the state funding for that activity is almost non-existing. Nevertheless one has to acknowledge that KSU is attempting to create a network of research partners and has a good chance to establish itself in a future as a meaningful national research institution. However at present it reminds more business-research platform, but not a university.

**Quality of the research performance and impact on the scientific research discipline of the UoA**

KSU as a small, young, private academic institution so far has not been able to gain a reputation of a meaningful partner within national scientific community. It seems that the UoA is in a process of searching for attractive research topics in order to become a partner in an international network of research institution. So far it is presenting some research works done by its staff members in their respective areas of competence.
— law, economics, sociology, linguistic, etc. However, those results cannot be contributed to the KSU as such but rather to personal activities of researches. Note that almost none of them is fully employed at the UoA. Therefore, the fact that number of articles in Scopus journals published by researchers seems to be sufficient does not prove that effect of UoA research policy is positive. On the other hand, it illustrates the potential that can be used in the future.

The economic and social impact of the research in Lithuania

So far, the national level impact of the research of the UoA to Lithuanian economy and society is rather limited. While there are few individuals whose research work has a meaningful impact in their respective academic fields, the institution as a whole is not visible. Mentioned by the UoA activities in its self-evaluation report—consultancy services, educational programs—do not have research character. It has to be noted that research policy of the KSU is aimed at developing commercial and practical solutions. The entrepreneurial principles are strongly integrated in the vision of developing the UoA’s R&D capacity. That policy, plus a flexible approach, may produce positive impact in the future.

The physical infrastructure of the UoA

The KSU is in a process to improve, modernize, and enlarge its physical infrastructure. At the present stage, it is able to offer some limited equipment necessary to conduct some projects. The infrastructural resources that have been put in place can support the future development of the unit. Very original and promising is the Virtual Research Lab that can potentially significantly support interactions with other academic and non-academic institutions.

Research management (including career development and human resource management) of the UoA

The research management of the UoA is coping with difficult conditions bearing in mind that private universities in Lithuania do not have equal chances to compete for national research funds with public academic institutions. Nevertheless, the UoA has a good understanding of how it intends to develop R&D activities that can generate a significant impact. There is a strong awareness of the importance of building a research capacity primarily through early-career researchers. The KSU management has managed to attract some prosperous young researchers and has started to develop PhD studies. The research strategy is project-based. It offers a quite flexible framework and aims at attracting social partners. It is commendable that the management supports also interdisciplinary approach.

The development potential of the UoA

The management of the KSU in its self-evaluation report highlights the ambition to become a relevant academic international player. However, at the moment, some 10 years after foundation, its research output is still of low academic relevance and the unit remains mainly national both in scope and funding. The focus on applied research appears to be correct one. Also, emphasis put on multidisciplinary character of research projects may pay off in the future. The development potential of the KSU to be a strong national player depends on its ability to attract interesting projects financed from national and international sources.

Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the presented by the KSU information and discussions held with management and researches, conclusion can be drawn that the UoA is at the very early stage on the road to becoming a meaningful national player within the research national community. It is pursuing a policy, as far as research activity is concerned, that may give it a chance to acquire that position. The KSU should be encouraged to continue the policy of identification of the research niches to focus on. It is also very important to actively seek collaboration of social partners not only at the national but also international level.
Summary of the Institutional Assessments

SOCIAL SCIENCES: SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

Many of the problems that we have found assessing Social Sciences research in Lithuania are not specific of this country and are common to Social Sciences everywhere. Consequently, it is worth to make some initial remarks about Social Sciences in general which will help to understand better some of the results of this Research Assessment Exercise in Lithuania.

A pot with many and diverse ingredients

The proportion of academic staff in Social Sciences represents in most countries between one third and half of the total higher education academic staff. The proportion of students is even higher and Social Sciences students are more than 50% of the student population in many countries.

On the other hand, Social Sciences include many disciplines that to a great extent have almost nothing in common. For instance, Education, Law and Business are included in the same pot but from a methodological point of view, even more from a cultural point of view, the distance between a researcher in children education and other in international finances is enormous. The research methodologies, the outcomes and the social impact of these researchers are extremely different. Nevertheless, assessment exercises (like this case in Lithuania), calls for research proposals or many other research related activities are using similar criteria and protocols for all the disciplines under the umbrella of Social Sciences. The obvious consequence is that not all disciplines are always fairly treated. In the case of our assessment this problem is evident when we check the assessment scores of the different units in this panel. In general, the more focused is a unit in a concrete discipline the better is the overall score of this unit.

Politically and socially undervalued

Aspects of society are central to almost all the grand challenges facing people in the contemporary world. This is quite evident everywhere but currently social, economic and political problems are critical in Europe and in most European countries. In the document “Overview of development of research system in Lithuania” three out of the four main challenges that Lithuania is facing (see page 13 of that document) are related to Social Sciences. The pressing challenges we are facing demand evidence, expertise and insight from social scientists working collaboratively with colleagues from the natural sciences, engineering, arts and humanities.

Nevertheless, there is a general feeling everywhere among social scientists that their achievements are undervalued, especially when compared with the work of those in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. With so much emphasis on STEM, Social Sciences can sometimes appear to take a back seat. Perhaps STEM subjects seem more tangible, immediate and impressive. However, Social Sciences touch all our lives in so many different ways, and ought to be much more centre stage in terms of policy debates.

A general feeling is that politicians do not pay enough attention to the latest social science research when coming up with policies. Certainly social scientists could do more to bring relevant research to the attention of policy-makers, but if that evidence is then ignored, it is not much of an incentive.

These facts are quite universal. Recently, a British social scientist affirmed: “The main problem is not that the government is ignoring or undervaluing the social sciences but that it is attempting to control what social scientists do. The government and its agencies claim to support research that has an ‘impact’ on society and, in consequence, social scientists compete for funds to do ‘useful’ work. Not only do government agencies decide the topics of such research, they also have a very narrow view of what constitutes ‘useful’, ‘impactful’ work. The danger is that the role of social scientists as independent, critical, thinkers is being
seriously eroded.” We can add that these words are extensible to many other countries and especially to the research policy of the EU.

**Underfunded**

The value of social science is obvious, but this unfortunately is not the case for everyone. There are frequent and aggressive political attacks on social science funding because not all see the importance of public policy informed by rigorous research.

The main consequence is the scarce funding for Social Science. Obviously the costs of Social Science research are lower than research costs in technology or natural sciences but the differences in funding are not proportional. For instance, the 7th Framework Programme of the EU dedicated only 1.9% of the total funding to Social Science and Humanities. This figure perhaps explains the lack of ideas for solving the current European problems. Europe has certainly technological challenges but it is quite obvious that now the critical problems are social, political and economic. The scarce investment in Social Sciences for many years has not helped to provide enough insights to solve the current conflicts.

**A logical tendency to be local**

Many of the problems addressed by Social Sciences have a local character. Economists, experts in education, sociologists often investigate problems related to the community in which they live. These problems, despite being relevant, in some cases have only a local interest. However, sometimes a problem, despite being local, may have interest to the international scientific community. Therefore, research in Social Sciences, although valuable, does not always have international projection. This is something intrinsic to the social sciences which should be taken into account when research assessments are made. Criteria valid in other sciences that are intrinsically universal, such as Physics or Biology, do not apply equally to Social Sciences.

This problem is even more relevant in small countries where research in Social Sciences may have much less international projection despite their possible intrinsic value. Making the scientific community interested in the local issues of a small community is certainly more complicated than in other cases. This is an important fact that should be considered in this assessment exercise.
MAIN CONCLUSIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT

Overview: benefits and consequences

The current assessment exercise is an excellent idea undertaken by the Lithuanian educational authorities. This will have relevant effects on the future of research for two reasons:

1. Preparing the Self-assessment Report has been a deep reflection for researchers and institutional leaders about what they are doing. Sometime the mere fact of doing a reflection like this becomes a turning point for individuals and units involved.
2. The external panel will provide some ideas that hopefully will reinforce the internal reflection and eventually will help to the improvement of research in the assessed units.

However, the main consequence of this assessment should be the improvement of the quality and management of research in the assessed units. Units should use the results of this exercise to develop plans for developing and improving research. Discussing these plans with public authorities for obtaining their support would be the best way for reaching the proposed goals.

On the other hand, at this stage, using the outcomes of this assessment for making some kind of rankings or for punishing units with the lowest scores would be unfair. In most cases, the lowest scores are due to structural problems in the unit (that have to be solved, obviously) and not to the lack of commitment of people involved.

General situation of research

This panel has assessed 20 research units. In summary, these are the main results:

1. Research in the 3 units focused on Education has been assessed as good. The three are strong national players in the discipline with some international recognition. The field of Education has a solid and homogenous basis for reaching higher levels of quality and international relevance mostly if they cooperate for this goal.
2. The overall assessment of research in the 11 units of the area of Economics, Business and Management has been considered good or acceptable. There is more diversity than in education but all reach an acceptable level.
3. Research in a unit of Communication and in another of Public Management is considered by the panel as acceptable.
4. Research in four units has been assessed as poor. Two of them are a mix a disciplines with not too much in common. The others are institutions where research is a new activity.
5. None unit has been considered a relevant international player in the discipline. To some extent this is a consequence of the intrinsic difficulties for Social Sciences in a small country but we believe that this situation can improve if some measures are undertaken.

Using international standards, the overall situation of Social Science in Lithuania is acceptable but it is obvious that there is room for improvements.

More detailed aspects will be discussed next but from a general point of view we have the feeling that there are many centres, faculties or departments working in the same discipline. For instance, 11 faculties (or equivalent centres) dedicated to research in Economics in a country like Lithuania seems excessive. Probably this amount of centres could be explained for the teaching demand but research needs a critical mass and a certain level of talent concentration. Reorganising research in common inter-institutional programmes would increase the quality and impact of Social Sciences. These joint research programmes should be an initiative of universities but authorities should support this process with financial incentives and other stimulus. Promoting joint doctoral programmes for each discipline should be part of this reorganisation.
Quality of research

Quality of research has been scored as good in 6 cases (all 3 of Education, 2 of Economics and 1 in Public Policy), in 11 units research has been considered as adequate and in only 3 cases as poor (units with some structural problems).

For improving the quality of research some problems should be addressed. The panel has detected the following problems as most relevant:

1. The overall productivity, with independence of quality, is not too high. The number of papers is low and the activity in other related activities as applied research, consultancy and knowledge transfer does not seem too significant. The most likely explanation is that dedication to teaching activities takes most of the time and energies of academic staff. On the other hand, many academics work part-time and sometime in several universities. Obviously this is not the most adequate climate for developing research at international standards. A comprehensive review of the academic career would be necessary for establishing solid foundations for developing research.

2. One of the main outputs of research, publications, has a scarce international dimension. Most of the publications are in national journals or in proceeding of conferences with scarce influence in the discipline. The quality of these outputs could be excellent but the impact on the discipline in necessarily weak. Most faculties in Lithuania have their own journal and there is an obvious tendency to publish in these journals. The idea that being in Scopus or other database is synonymous of quality or internationalisation is wrong. Keeping an own system for publishing “working papers” could be interesting as a first step, but real quality research has to be published in international journals who everybody in the discipline knows. In a country like Lithuania perhaps there is room for a couple of journals in Social Sciences, but not more.

3. Most researchers mention the difficulty of publishing in international journals. Certainly is more difficult than publishing in your own journal but it is not impossible. As we have mentioned before a lot of research in Social Sciences have a local or national scope. This is an additional difficulty for making local research interesting for an international audience but in many cases it is feasible overcome this barrier. In some cases, a research on local issues could have peculiarities, as a specific case study, which could be interesting for everybody at international level. In other cases, the researcher may have the ability of drawing from local matters general conclusions valid everywhere and interesting for a broad audience. Moving from local studies to universal conclusions is difficult but it is a challenge for good researchers. Focusing in Lithuania problems is a difficulty but cannot be an excuse for playing in the international arena.

4. It is surprising the lack of participation in international projects, especially those financed by the EU. There is no mention to any participation as partners in research projects of the 7th Framework Programme but not to other programmes as the LLL projects (focused on education) or even in cooperation programmes such as Tempus or Alfa (mostly oriented to Social Sciences aspects). This is a serious problem because nowadays participating in these international networks is one of the best ways of improving the quality of research and also of making research visible. As a consequence of this lack of participation in international networks, many researchers in Lithuania are isolated of international trends. Visiting foreign universities or bringing foreign researcher is also useful but being involved in networks and teams is the best way for avoiding isolation. A negative consequence of this isolation is that in some themes research it is sometimes old fashioned, not following the latest trends.

5. The isolation of researchers is not only at international level. It seems that most researcher work alone. The existence of research teams is not the norm. Academics have in many cases part time positions and do not have a stable desk in the research unit. This does not facilitate the intercommunication among researchers themselves and with doctoral students. Doctoral students, for instance, are developing research alone. They are not part of teams working in similar areas or in
joint projects. The effectiveness and efficiency of this way of working, especially in the case of young researchers, is very limited.

**Knowledge transfer: impact of research on the community**

The social and economic impact of the assessed units on the local and national community is slightly better than the general quality of research. Ten units have been assessed as good in this aspect (all 3 of Education, and 7 of Economics) and only 2 were assessed as poor.

Academic staff is relatively active in the economic and social live of Lithuania. Many people are involved in diverse type of committees, others are active in media and in public life, and others undertake consultancy activities or develop studies for local and national authorities.

Nevertheless some aspect should be pointed out:

1. Transfer activities are developed in an individualistic way. In many cases, institutions as such do not take responsibility of the external activities developed by staff. In some cases consultancy is made using the university as umbrella but the institution does not participate in any way. It is true that the so called third mission of universities depends on the initiative of more entrepreneurial individuals. Nevertheless institutions should promote these activities, they should be part of the institutional activities and institutions should receive some financial compensation (overheads).

2. Although the evaluated units have an impact on the community, we believe that they could be rather more active. Universities all around the world are developing new bonds with business, private and public, in order to collaborate more closely in the development of the knowledge economy. It is not evident that the Social Science units that we have assessed are conscious of the relevance of this mission.

**Infrastructures, funding and management**

In general, infrastructures are appropriate for research and in some cases are even very good. Provisions of software and databases are adequate and libraries are well equipped. Infrastructures were assesses as good in 11 cases and as very good in 2. However, we believe that they miss enough spaces for permanent intercommunication between researchers. The buildings were built thinking in their teaching functions and spaces for research was to some extent relegated probably under the assumption that research in Social Sciences concerns to the individual sphere as it really happens in most units. This is understandable given the prevailing situation of part-time researchers, but this is not a good situation to create a really productive research environment.

We do not have a clear idea of the funding scheme in Lithuania for higher education in general and for research in particular. Consequently, it is difficult to assess the adequacy of funds available for research. Reading self-assessment reports and visiting units, we have the perception that resources available for research are not abundant. On the other hand, it seems not difficult to raise funds presenting projects to the Research Council. As mentioned above, participation in European projects is almost non-existent, which should be an important source of financing. In short, the feeling is that perhaps the specific funds for research are not abundant, but the level of demand and competition for them is lower.

Among the different aspects that we have assessed in this assessment exercise, the weakest is “research management”. In only 6 units research management was considered good and in 5 it was assessed as poor. The quality of research management deserves further comments:

1. In several cases (units assessed as poor) the main problem, as we have mentioned before, is mostly structural. Some units participating in this exercise are in fact a conglomerate of elements where research management is almost impossible. Before defining any research strategy, they would need a deep structural reform.
2. In the rest of units, research management is based in centralised norms that seem somewhat bureaucratic. However, research strategies are not well defined in most units and in some cases do not exist at all. In some units it is difficult to see specific research plans in terms of research topics, publication strategies, etc. Planning research strategically is something that most units have to improve.

3. The lack of shared strategies is evident by several facts. First, the strong tendency to fragmentation and individual work. Each individual is doing research on his own and teams and joint projects are not frequent. Second, doctoral students are working alone in themes selected individually and with sporadic supervision of one professor. Team working is not a common strategy. This working styles reflects the lack of common strategies for research and training researchers.

Human resources

We have the feeling that main problems of Social Science research in Lithuania are related with human resources. The labour situation, the management, the training, the incentives and the attitude of researchers are not the adequate for a vibrant and internationally competitive research. Some aspects that we have observed are the following:

1. Academic staff has in many cases a partial dedication to the institution and it is common to share work in more than one institutions. It is difficult to have a stable and solid research activity in these circumstances.

2. In principle, all academic staff has to carry out research but the number of hours available for that is quite low. Teaching is the main dedication of staff. Perhaps it would be sensible to reorganise the academic career: not everybody has to be a researcher but those dedicated to research have to dedicate more time and efforts to this activity.

3. The lack of mobility at national and international level is a severe problem. Mobility of academic staff is a need for avoiding parochialism, developing national and international networks and researching in the cutting edge of the discipline. The Research Council should promote mobility and networking financing projects including members of several Lithuanian and foreign universities.

Looking at the future

One of the aspects we have assessed in the “development potential of the unit”. In seven cases this potential has been assessed as higher than the overall score and only in one case has been considered lower. That means that the panel perceives that most units have a positive future, obviously if some reforms are undertaken.

Nevertheless, in general the self-assessment reports and many people we have met are not so optimistic. We perceive a certain atmosphere of pessimism perhaps as consequence of the reduction in the number of students in Lithuanian universities and the consequent reduction of funding. This attitude of lack of ambition and confidence is a severe problem that it is eroding research. Changing this mood should be one of the first objectives of any future reform.

The current situation of higher education in Lithuania should be considered as an opportunity instead as a threat. The stability in the growth of institutions is an excellent moment for reorganising the system, committing more efforts to research and third mission activities (knowledge transfer, continuing education, social engagement) that can transform institutions in more active agents of the knowledge economy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The panel has formulated a broad list of recommendations which are presented in each institutional report. Here we present a summary of these recommendations aggregated in 10 themes. All of them are focused in these two main aspects:
1. The need of improving the whole organisation of the research system (specially, human resources matters) for increasing its effectiveness and visibility.
2. The need of making the Lithuanian research system in Social Sciences more international.

**Changing the research atmosphere: A more proactive attitude.**

A major attention has to be put on creating a vibrant and engaging research and academic atmosphere. Generally speaking, Social Science researchers have a fairly accommodative and relaxed attitude, where research does not seem to have the necessary stimuli to become a central activity in their academic life. It is necessary to build up a motivation scheme for researchers and PhD students, leading to increasing research production in quantity but mostly in quality, increasing cooperation at national but mostly at international level and publishing in highly recognized international journals.

It is a priority to move the system in this direction. A proactive attitude towards research requires a change of mentality in the academic staff. This should be the consequence of a set of measures that authorities and institutions have to promote improving research conditions but mostly creating stimuli for researchers and future researchers.

**Defining clear objectives and developing strategic plans**

As we have mentioned, research management is one of the weakest aspects of the research system in Lithuania, at least in Social Sciences. The system needs define clear objectives and then the strategies for reaching these objectives. Resources are limited in Lithuania, as everywhere, and this requires sharpening and focusing the research strategy.

To become more distinctive and less fragmented, objectives have to be redefined in an integrative way. The means to achieve the research objectives have to be clearly identified and prioritised, indicating an action plan to implement and assess them over time. The research activities should be clearly defined distinguishing their nature and focus by balancing between basic and applied research as well as by defining in accordance with the peculiar features of the different groups the kind of impacts that are expected.

Research needs a critical mass. Concentrate efforts and doing research in bigger groups with stronger international connections could be the way for reaching a solid level of research. Each research unit has to specify research topics in which the unit could be excellent from the international point of view or which are attractive for the business sphere within Lithuania or abroad. It is important to have a better perception of what the units are and stand in the international context and in this relation to clearly identify a niche research area to focus on.

It seems also important to develop a benchmarking exercise adopting a global perspective. To support the research growth dynamics, it is important that units benchmark the practices of some of the key ‘competitors’. As part of this exercise it is fundamental to fully identify the key features that can ground the raising of the units international profile.

Major efforts have to be put in place in order to rationalise and publish the research results, particularly through a better elaboration of a strategic plan and related actions to enhance the staff’s research capacity. This should include a better understanding of how to support young researchers.

It is fundamental the definition and implementation of indicators and particularly of key performance indicators. This involves an understanding of how the selected indicators will be used to assess and reward staff. Indicators should consider and account not only the quantity, but more importantly the quality and impact of the research activities carried out.

In spite of the traditional tendency of social scientist to work alone, working in teams should be promoted and facilitated. Infrastructures have to facilitate team-working.
**A more stimulant model of human resources management**

Human resources are a critical aspect for improving research. This is especially evident in Lithuania. Improving human resources management policies for staff and for doctoral students is extremely urgent. Career of researchers should be more attractive and demanding at the same time.

A first step could be reconsidering the balance between teaching and research. Some academic staff could be more dedicated to teaching activities than others, but those with interest and capacity for research would need more dedication to research. In the same direction, part timers could be taken for teaching activities but research requires full time professionals.

A second step could be the establishment of clear stimuli for making academic career a permanent challenge. Monetary stimuli certainly work but not only. Promotion, prestige and increased opportunities are powerful stimuli in the academia.

The average age of academic staff needs to decrease. In this sense, the enrolment and training of PhD students should represent a priority.

**Developing a mobility plan for staff and doctoral students**

International mobility of researchers should be promoted beyond short visits abroad. This mobility should start with doctoral students and continuing with post-doc grants for young researchers. An internationalization mechanism of mobility is perhaps the best way for transforming research at the medium and long term. International experience demonstrates with no doubts that mobility transforms institutions, research and even teaching.

Mobility should be also stimulated in the reverse sense, establishing fellowships for attracting international researchers (visible internationally young or established professors).

**Developing incentives for institutions and individuals**

Institutions, research groups as well as individual researchers need to be stimulated actively in the challenging effort of improving research. The system and the institutions should consider formulating a management incentive system, not necessarily monetary based, that would take the institution in this direction.

It is also important that units recognize the key persons and researchers who have potential and competence to lead the research development and provides them good working conditions and competitive career opportunities.

The funding system of higher education and research, the quality assurance system and the promotion model for academics, working together can establish a whole system of incentives extremely powerful with not too much cost and a relevant increase in efficiency.

**More and better funding**

Research needs an appropriate funding. The amount of funding is important but the way funds are allocated is even more important. State allocations should be related to performance or to strategic needs using clear criteria.

A part of state allocations, external international funding of research (i.e. participation in EU-research programs) should be promoted. A major effort has to be put into the participation of consortium applying for international funding.

Finally, as part of the development strategy a major attention should be paid to raise funding from contracted action-based research studies funded by public and private organisations.
Developing internationalisation

Internationalisation of research should be a main goal. The international orientation must increase, partly as a means towards quality improvement, partly to increase the international visibility.

A planned and coordinated effort has to be put in the important goal of internationalisation of research. This requires first of all a substantial increase of international networking and funding (EU-Framework programs, European Research Council, international business and industry).

Internationalisation also implies intensifying publishing in a broader variety of international peer-reviewed journals, participating more actively in EU-research programmes and projects, international academic staff exchange, as well as recruiting international doctoral students and international staff.

A major attention should be paid on the internationalisation by further developing the existing agreements with international universities and supporting longer-term incoming and outgoing international visits.

Reorganising doctoral training

Social Sciences in Lithuania need young researchers but this is not a question of quantity, it is mostly a question of quality. Doctoral training should be reorganise with the objective a raising the average quality of new researchers.

In a small country does not make too much sense to have several doctoral programmes in the same discipline. Creating joint doctoral programmes (as it happens already in some cases) is a good solution. Perhaps it would be feasible to create a national PhD school in charge of the overall organisation of doctoral studies. This school could also train supervisors organise visit to foreign universities and invite foreign researchers.

Doctoral students should have an international experience. It should be obligatory to spend at least 6 month abroad during doctoral studies. Yet, doctoral students should be encouraged to complete their thesis in English, or at a minimum, complete part of the thesis (1-2 articles) in English.

Increasing the socio-economic impact of research

Units should develop a better strategic focus of how they manage external relationships with public and private organisations. At the moment the relationships appear mainly fragmented and not responding to a research agenda.

Units have to develop more empirical research that can potentially raise the interest not only of local actors, but most importantly of international stakeholders. The applied research activities have to increase and should be more embedded in de units. The institutions should invest more in attracting applied contract research at the national level, especially given the research expertise and interests of those in the unit.

Units should develop a more structured approach towards national private and public organisations. For this reason a dedicated strategy plan is advised. This should include actions addressed to explore how to create stable or quasi-stable relationships in order to develop and support joint research, knowledge transfer, initiatives and projects.

Collaboration with business and industry in the fields of consultancy, continuing education, commissioned courses should be reinforced. This can be a venue to significantly contribute to the impact in Lithuania both at social and economic level.

A Knowledge Transfer Office at institutional level could manage the external activities of all research units. This office could be a relevant source of income for institutions.
Defining strategies for visibility

Research units should develop a clear research visibility strategy. The international dimension, increased exchange and collaboration with similar research units, can be a vehicle in realizing this.

It is necessary to increase publishing in visible international peer-reviewed journal. This also requires enhancing the level of collaboration with international experts by co-authoring papers and publications. Participating in international networks is the best and easy way of reaching these goals.

The explosion of in house journals is worrisome. This is not best practice internationally. Researchers should be focussing on publishing in ISI journals, not on editing and creating their own journals. The rewarding system of researchers should be changed so that success in long term research, with output in high quality journals is rewarded instead of guiding effort to increase the number of low quality publications in low visibility local journals. In house publishing, if not well motivated by national reasons, should be discouraged.

Although the attendance of conferences and similar scientific events to present completed or ongoing research projects is a good practice, much more attention has to be paid on turning such research outputs into journal papers making sure that they reach wider international scientific audience.