

LITHUANIA: COMPARATIVE EXPERT ASSESSMENT OF R&D ACTIVITIES  
| 2018

Panel S: Social Sciences

## Table of Content

Introduction	3
Assessment of the Unit	5
Economics and management, Aleksandras Stulginskis University	6
Social Sciences, European Humanities University	9
ISM University of Management and Economics, ISM University of Management and Economics	12
Kazimieras Simonavičius University, Kazimieras Simonavičius university	15
Economics and Management, Kaunas University of Technology	19
Social Sciences, Kaunas University of Technology	22
Social Sciences 1, Klaipeda University	25
Social Sciences 2, Klaipeda University	30
Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics, Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics	33
Social Science, LCC International University	36
Energy Economy, Lithuanian Energy Institute	38
Social sciences, Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences	40
The General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania, The General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania	43
Lithuanian Social Research Centre, Lithuanian Social Research Centre	46
Faculty of Sport Education, Lithuanian Sports University	49
Law Institute of Lithuania , Law Institute of Lithuania	52
Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work, Mykolas Romeris University	54
Faculty of Economics and Business, Mykolas Romeris University	57
Institute of Psychology, Mykolas Romeris University	60
Faculty of Law, Mykolas Romeris University	62
Faculty of Public Security, Mykolas Romeris University	65
Faculty of Public Governance, Mykolas Romeris University	68
Economics and Management, Siauliai University	71
Education and Special Pedagogy, Šiauliai University	74
Vytautas Magnus University, VMU Economics and Management (VMU FEM)	76
VMU Communication Research, Vytautas Magnus University	79
VMU Political Science, Vytautas Magnus University	82
VMU Psychology and Education, Vytautas Magnus University	85
VMU Sociology, Vytautas Magnus University	88
Social Sciences, Vilnius Gediminas technical university	90
VMU Law, Vytautas Magnus University	94
Law, Vilnius University	96
Political Sciences, Vilnius University	99
Communication and Information, Vilnius University	102
Educology, Sociology, Psychology, Vilnius University	105
Economics and Business management, Vilnius University	108
Panel Report Summary	110

## INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND

The overall objectives of Comparative expert assessment (CEA) of research and development in Lithuania were:

To provide the Lithuanian public, policy-makers and decision-makers and the academic community with the expert-based evaluation of the status and competitiveness of Lithuanian research in comparison to the national and international practice.

Comparative assessment of research and development is an integral part of R&D evaluation system. In 2017 a renewed two-stage evaluation system was introduced, where the first stage (quantitative assessment) is implemented by the Research Council of Lithuania (LMT) and the second stage (qualitative assessment) is organised by the Research and Higher Education Monitoring and Analysis Centre (MOSTA). The aim of assessment is to evaluate all participating Units of Assessment (UoA) using three criteria: research quality, economic and social impact and development potential. The results of CEA will enable the Ministry of Education and Science to allocate 60% of basic funding for R&D. CEA will be organized every 5 years starting from 2018.

The assessment shall produce 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 development prospects of research activities. 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 Higher education institutions and their constituent faculties/departments/research groups or State research institutes were evaluated. The institutions, involved in the assessment process, formed their Units of Assessment (UoA) engaged in one area of research (agricultural sciences, humanities, biomedical sciences, physical sciences, social sciences or technological sciences). One Institution could have more than one UoA.

Altogether six expert panels (61 experts in total) were appointed to perform the evaluation. This document is the report of Panel S: Social Sciences.

### SCOPE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES PANEL & INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED

The Panel was asked to evaluate the research using the following criteria: the quality of R&D activities, economic and social impact of R&D activities and development potential of R&D activities and to score each Unit on a five-point scale\*, namely, ranging from excellent [5] to poor [1] or no R&D [0] The evaluation period was 2013 – 2017.

The quality of R&D activities was evaluated in one of two levels – either in research area (broad field) or a research field (narrow field) depending on the size of the research field considering researcher's FTE and the study fields in which the UoA operates or hold a PhD right. Economic and social impact as well as development potential were evaluated only in research area.

Panel S was asked to assess 36 UoAs in 19 institutions. The scientific disciplines of these institutions include Law, Political sciences, Management and administration, Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Education, Communication and information. The institutions were as follows:

#### Universities:

1. Aleksandras Stulginskis University
2. European Humanities University
3. ISM University of Management and Economics
4. Kazimieras Simonavičius university
5. Kaunas University of Technology

\* The scale of each criterion can be found in the regulation of CEA methodology approved by the Minister of Education and Science in Lithuanian at: <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/6de23010a2c011e78a4c904b1afa0332/OLQDQXSWpB>

6. Klaipeda University
7. Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences
8. The General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania
9. Lithuanian Sports University
10. Mykolas Romeris University
11. Šiauliai University
12. Vytautas Magnus University
13. Vilnius Gediminas technical university
14. Vilnius University
15. LCC International University<sup>†</sup>

Research institutes:

1. Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics
2. Lithuanian Energy Institute
3. Lithuanian Social Research Centre
4. Law Institute of Lithuania

## MATERIAL ON WHICH ASSESSMENT WAS MADE

The evaluation by the Panel was based on the material prepared by the UoA, R&D activities evaluation results provided by the Research Council of Lithuania (RCL) for the years 2013–2016, publicly available information via the websites of the research institutions and other official sources as well as site visits and meetings with the representatives of the UoA. The Panel and the organisers of the CEA do not take any responsibility for the quality and accuracy of the information submitted by the individual UoA.

## ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Experts from Panel S visited Lithuania on September 17 – 21, 2018 and during this period they made site visits to all UoA. The final Panel S assessments were based on data provided for the experts with contextual information about Lithuanian higher education and research system, as well as information and documents necessary for the evaluation of the UoA and evidence gathered during site visits. At least three Panel members were present at each visit. All provided materials by UoA were read in detail by at least three Panel members and then discussed by the whole Panel on at least two occasions, namely, before and after the Panel visits to the Units.

Expert assessment is carried out following the principles of transparency, equality, mutual recognition, diversity, clarity, reliability, consistency, proportionality and non-discrimination.

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<sup>†</sup> Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania asked to include LCC International University to participate in the CEA only to evaluate its quality of R&D activities.

## ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

## Economics and management, Aleksandras Stulginskis University

UoA abbreviation	ASU_EV
Name of the UoA	Economics and management
Name of institution	Aleksandras Stulginskis University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	-
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	30,4

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Management and administration (03S)	2	-	17,6
Economics (04S)	3	-	12,8

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Management and administration (03S)

In this research field, the UoA is relatively small in terms of research capacity. It does have the potential advantage of working in a rather specific research area, but what the exact niche is that this group operates in, unfortunately, remains unclear; there seems to be little cohesion in the content focus of the publications. Overall the research output is acceptable but could be much better connected to the international research community. With the exception of one article in Sustainability, research is published exclusively by means of conference proceedings (predominantly in the CEE region) and/or in-house outlets. The research is applied, focusing mainly on the Lithuanian/Baltic case. Comparative research and/or theory development is lacking. The number of dissertations is low; a majority of them is published in Lithuanian, which does not allow for international recognition of the underlying research. The academic rewards listed in the self-assessment are rewards by (national) stakeholders, rather than by (inter)national peers. There has been some involvement in international research consortia funded under FP7, but no recent/ongoing involvement. The MSCA night, listed as an example of competitive research funding, is primarily an outreach event, not an example of research funding. Results of both formal and expert evaluations performed by RCL are around the average in most of the years 2013-2017 for the whole UoA.

According to the above-mentioned points, the research carried out by the UoA in the field of management is assessed satisfactorily at the national level.

#### Economics (04S)

Taking into account the limited research capacity in this field, the research output of the UoA in this research field is good, with some original publications in high-quality international journals (e. g. Applied Energy, Land Use Policy). Conference participation shows a truly international (rather than national or regional) orientation. The number of dissertations is acceptable, given the small size of this UoA; unfortunately, the dissertations are published in Lithuanian, which does not allow for international recognition of the underlying research. The academic rewards listed in the self-assessment are a mix of rewards by (national) stakeholders, and of rewards by (national) peers. There has been some involvement in international research consortia funded under FP7 and some new proposals of H2020 have been prepared recently. Overall, this UoA is beyond the point of being a strong national player; it has developed

an international profile, with some encouraging signs of international recognition. Its main challenge is to ensure it keeps its links to the larger ERA through international project involvement. Results of both formal and expert evaluations performed by RCL (amount of points) are around the average in most years between 2013-2017 for the whole UoA.

According to the above-mentioned points, the research carried out by the UoA is of high-level at the national level with a limited international recognition.

## **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The UoA executes a fair amount of commissioned research and consultancy, with the Lithuanian Ministry of Agriculture as its main client. The impacts of the various projects are well described and can be considered to be significant and important on the national scale (e.g., the results of RETHINK and INTEGRAL projects). Still, the amounts of funding involved in these activities seem to be rather small, in particular from the business sphere and fluctuate considerably over the years. The group members are well connected to stakeholders on the national level by means of membership of working groups and committees, but not so at the international and EU governance level. There is sufficient outreach beyond the academic community by means of the organisation of conferences (especially the international conference on the rural development) and other events, as well as events and publications reaching out to the larger public. Participation in editorial boards is limited to in-house journals (at ASU itself or in the larger region) and does not involve journals with high international scientific impact. Membership of international academic networks, associations and expert groups is sufficient but could be enhanced, also in a geographical sense. The participation in a COST project is interesting and should have been described in the report and self-assessment in more detail as part of the involvement in international competitive funding.

Overall, the impact of the R&D activities of the UoA outside the academic community seems to be considerable, with the UoA being an important national player in the field.

## **Development potential of UoA**

The main challenges the UoA faces are firstly to keep connected to the ERA by means of participation in international research consortia, and secondly to enhance the quality of the research output by means of publications in international journals with high impact and/or monographs with established international publishers. To that end, the R&D infrastructure consisting of all the necessary equipment (computers, specialized agricultural software, statistical software, books in the library, access to the general databases like Web of Science and some specialised databases) seems to be adequate. There are also sufficient links with peers abroad to (further) develop research cooperation schemes. The age composition of the research groups is balanced, with a good share of younger researchers. Considerable attention has been paid over the last years to the development of research management and HR schemes. The university policy has some incentives for achieving high-profile scientific results. The strengths listed in the SWOT-analysis are to be taken as relative: the research output is sufficient and shows a steady increase, but only on a national level. Furthermore, no employee had worked abroad before hiring. Also in light of the upcoming merger, the UoA should reconsider its research focus; the research themes that are currently developed are interesting and relevant (also internationally), but need more focus and specialisation (they now cover ten topics), to ensure a critical mass of researchers working on the same theme/topic. Overall, there is a potential for improvement with some limitations to become strongly internationally visible and publish in journals that have a wide international readership. There is a good scope for doing societally relevant work and for contributing to more applied projects within the Lithuanian or European context.

## **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

The research quality of the unit has increased during the recent years. There are some achievements reached by the UoA compared to the pilot assessment (increasing quality of publications especially in the Economics field, stronger international openness including PhD students from abroad, broader international co-operation, the higher impact of unit's research on the national policy).

Some steps made by the management in the recent years are right steps forward (incentives for researchers, especially the "cash-for-publication" scheme and other bonuses, providing money for translations or



proofreading, supporting international training mobility, less teaching workload for researchers who prepare and investigate international research projects, organizing of highly-recognized conferences).

The focus of the UoA's research has changed from the rural economy to bioeconomy which has a good potential for the research quality, international co-operation and the social and economic impact of the research as well.

Researchers are well-motivated for preparing articles in top-level journals but the teaching and administrative workload of the best researchers should be reduced. As the grant acquisition is a very competitive area (success rate is relatively low in general), some training focused on this area should be developed.

For broader internationalization of research, exchange programmes (especially for long-term research visits of researchers from abroad) should be developed. In order to become visible for the broader researcher community, PhD students should be encouraged to publish in English.

## Social Sciences, European Humanities University

UoA abbreviation	EHU_S
Name of the UoA	Social Sciences
Name of institution	European Humanities University
Type of institution	University/Institute
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	-
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	20,3

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Law (01S)	3	-	7,07
Sociology (05S)	2	-	6,97
Political sciences, Economics, Psychology, Communication and information (02S, 04S, 06S, 08S)	2	-	-

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	2
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Law (01S)

In the area of Law the group is formed by 13 teaching staff (a total of 7.1 FTE). The unit seems to be at an early stage of development. The Law department of EHU consists of a rather small number of researchers, however, they are quite active and have managed to produce a significant number of publications. The list of publications does not contain publications in "A" international journals or book editorials, with only two book exceptions in "B" (Ashgate and Routledge). Only a few works appear in journals listed by the ISI web of knowledge or other international classifications of journals by research impact. The research impact of the work is regional and domestic. There are multiple publications in Russian and also in the journal and the editorial that the institution develops. Even if these publications aspire to be internationally recognised, they still do not have the capacity to reach a large scientific audience. Scientific output with international relevance is almost non-existent. The department specialized in research in constitutional law and human rights law. The members of the institution do not participate in the most relevant conferences in the fields of constitutional law or international law, with very few exceptions (e.g. a conference organised by the European Society of International law). It is also important to mention that in some years there are very few publications in indexed journals. Research funding is very low. Efficiency of international cooperation (except with Belarus) is currently quite low.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research in this unit as good with limited (but increasing) international recognition.

#### Sociology (05S)

In the area of Sociology the group is formed by 17 teaching staff (a total of 7.0 full time equivalent). One of the focuses of the research activities in the EHU is Belarus (mainly gender and urban studies). Internationalisation is a clear priority for the Unit and for the EHU in general, but still is in a rather initial phase. The Unit has a clear research focus and a narrow specialisation of the research topics. Research topics of the Unit are relevant from a viewpoint of international research community. A lot of publications are in Russian. However, in recent years some researchers are publishing also in English (Sasunkevich's

book published in Ashgate and articles in European Regional and European Urban and Regional Studies). There is currently, however, clearly insufficient quantity of publications published in internationally recognized journals and publishing houses. The list of publications quoted shows a quite clear research strategy. The weakness is an absence of doctoral programs (for example in urban or gender studies). Research funding is practically non-existent. There is international collaboration but it also needs to be strengthened. Participation in conferences is good but none occurred at the most relevant international conferences, workshops and roundtables in sociology. Bearing in mind fact limited number of those researches one may be satisfied with their international activities. It seems that the Unit has a potential for further development.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research in this unit satisfactory at national level.

### **Political sciences, Economics, Psychology, Communication and information (02S, 04S, 06S, 08S)**

In the area of Political sciences, Economics, Psychology, Communication and information the group is formed by 10 teaching staff (a total of 6.3 full time equivalent). The Unit is active in the field of political sciences and presented effects of their research are interesting. However, in the other fields mentioned like economics, psychology, communication and information the Unit is not conducting any research. However, the topic of some publications mentioned for the sociology unit are interdisciplinary or even more connected to political sciences or economics (Cope's article about Euro in Poland, Sasunkevich's book about informal trade etc.). As for other units, the weakness is an insufficient quantity of publications published in internationally recognised journals. The role of the university in the political science is more relevant. In this sense the political and academic activities in Belarus need to be recognised, promoted and awarded because of the relevance and transcendence of this kind of activity in a very unstable political climate.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research in this unit satisfactory at national level.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

In the assessment process of economic and social impact of the EHU one needs to take into account fact that it is an university on exile and is not receiving financial support from governmental sources. The EHU has close connections not with Lithuania's professional and scholarly community but instead with the society in Belarus concentrating their research on Belorussian issues. The SWOT analysis indicates the complex situation of the university in exile. It currently has insufficient integration into Lithuanian society, which means that the economic and social impact in Lithuania is also low. However, the EHU is involved in a very interesting project in Belarus with apparently an interesting social impact in very difficult conditions. Its publications are having an impact on society in Belarus and are helping to develop independent, though limited, research activities. It is also very valuable their collaboration with the Council of Europe and their achievement in collaborating in a Horizon 2020 project. The participation of researchers in commissions set up by state authorities is also testimonial. There is, among the membership of the EHU, an individual with an exceptional recognition but none of his works are mentioned. There are members participating as members of editorial boards (Russian Law Journal; Art Margins and comparative constitutional review).

The EHU carries out important scientific research and is an important partner in R&D outside the academic community. Scientific research is important for society (especially for Belorussian society). The relationship with business, decision-makers and the society is appropriate to a recognised institution carrying out academic activities.

### **Development potential of UoA**

It is not easy to properly assess the development potential of the EHU. Some of the challenges that the EHU is facing are affecting the potentiality of the EHU. A possible solution can be to narrow the fields of knowledge that the institution is developing and to focus in those, in which so far the institution has been relatively successful. The university could concentrate their research on border issues, specific environmental studies, human rights, urban studies etc. It seems that the university has found their specific research topics. The clear strength of the EHU is an interdisciplinary team. The EHU has developed a new research strategy. The focus is to publish in Russian because of a geopolitical goal. The EHU plays an important role since it offers Belarussian students the possibility to obtain objective and sound knowledge based on solid research activities. The lack of financing for research activity requires, as a pre-requisite to

offer good external funding projects. The EHU has been successful in achieving some contracts and collaborations with the Council of Europe and the program Horizon 2020, and therefore has already gained some experience that can be used as a starting point. The specific position of the EHU in the Lithuanian research community complicates the situation with funding for research, development, support of researchers' mobility etc. The EHU is a part of an international network with partner universities: Bard College in the USA, Herzen State Pedagogical University in Russia and Vytautas Magnus University in Lithuania. Participation in international networks could open-up opportunities to participate in comparative research projects. Currently, professors and researchers are extremely over obligated in their teaching requirements, having 15 courses per year. If the EHU does not reduce this obligation, it is unfeasible to improve research quality and results. The quality of the staff is not doubted, but they need time and stability to simply reach their potential. If the EHU manages to integrate itself into Lithuanian academic society and is able to organize more joint research projects, its position will be much stronger. It seems that the EHU may wish to be a sort of regional player.

The EHU has the potential to maintain satisfactory rating.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

There are several aspects that may be further improved.

- The EHU needs a long-term strategy to obtain external funding and to place more members of the staff in universities and research centres abroad. Development of a good strategic plan and collaboration seems to be a way to obtain better results.
- Narrowing the fields of knowledge that the institution is developing and to focus in those, in which so far the institution has been relatively successful. 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.
- The achievement of high quality research calls for increased participation of researchers in international projects, and the publication of the results of their research in internationally recognised journals and publishing houses.
- It is also necessary to continue the efforts to develop collaboration with foreign colleagues and to increase membership in international networks and organizations in order to improve the international profile.
- The management should continue encouraging and supporting publication in internationally recognised journals and publishing houses. 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.
- Researchers have to increase their international visibility and networks through greater participation in major conferences.
- Intensifying inner research activities through regular research seminars.
- Explore ways to reduce teaching loads of good researchers to allow more possibilities to focus on high-level research.
- Integration of the EHU into Lithuanian society as well as into the Lithuanian research commu.
- Development of the doctoral program in some of the specific research areas that are the strength of the university (human rights, urban studies etc).

## ISM University of Management and Economics, ISM University of Management and Economics

UoA abbreviation	ISM_ISM
Name of the UoA	ISM University of Management and Economics
Name of institution	ISM University of Management and Economics
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	3,56
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	29,07

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Management and administration (03S)	4	2,18	16,25
Economics (04S)	4	1,38	12,82

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities

#### Management and administration (03S)

The unit has a good continuity in the production of research outputs. The quality of the research outputs has improved starting in 2015. In 2013 and 2014 the research outlets addressed were of modest international recognition. Starting from 2015 the publication of articles in ranked journals, such as “Technological Forecasting and Social Change”, have improved, and this trend has continued in 2016 and 2017 with publications in other prestigious outlets such as “Journal of Business Research”. Researchers have attended and presented research papers at international events that are considered relevant in the field of management and administration science, such as the British Academy of Management (BAM) and the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management. The research group working in management and administration has received some awards for R&D activities among which the Emerald Citations of Excellence for 2015 and five PhD scholarships. The unit enrolled a good number of PhD students. The cohort of PhD students is of high-quality, and they are strongly motivated to produce research thesis that can contribute both to the advancement of theory and impact on practice. All students, both part-time and full-time, successfully defended their research work with dissertations supported by articles published in scientific outlets and presented on international events. However, the quality of the editorial outlets that the students addressed is generally modest. The dissertations, with the exception of one in 2013, were in English. The PhD students have a high degree of freedom to choose the research questions that most interest them. The research capacity is strengthened by a clear strategy of participation in international events and associations. The unit has identified the key international events that can represent an important source for stimulating publications and building networks. The list of the best research outputs shows that the unit is carrying out research activities of high quality and internationally recognised. In the research domain of consumer behaviour, the unit is aiming at becoming a leader at the international level.

The unit has established a dedicated research lab for conducting experiments. The publication in the Journal of Vocational Behavior can be considered as an indicator of this ongoing developing capacity. The research activities are informed by a strategy which uses international recognised assessment standards,

such as the list of journals of the ABS (Association of Business Schools). The unit secured almost half million euro from the participation in competitive R&D projects of national funding schemes.

Overall, the field is assessed as strong at the international level. Research carried out is of high-level and internationally recognized.

### **Economics (04S)**

The unit focusing on the research activities in economics has developed research outputs at an international level. The continuity and quantity of the publications in the period 2013-2017 are satisfactory, however, the list of the best research outputs does not include international top journals, and the targeted outlets, such as the Journal of Business Economics and Management, are medium ranked journals, not in the centre of Economics. The unit attended and presented papers at international conferences. However, except the International Business Research Conference and the conferences of the European Real Estate Society (ERES), the attended international events cannot be considered as leading international conferences in economics. The number of R&D awards secured by the unit is limited. The most important award is the “2017 Kazimieras Meškauskas Prize for young scientists’ research in economics”. However, the unit has shown a strong capacity of attracting external research funding. Indeed, the unit secured about 1ML eur of competitive R&D projects. In particular, the unit has successfully applied for a project in the programme H2020 – Research and Innovation Actions. The number of PhD students in Economics is quite limited. The research activities appear oriented toward the achievement of a balanced impact on research and social visibility. The themes of the research projects, such as “Long-term Care in Denmark and Lithuania”, show a focus on topics that can be relevant for the economic and cultural-societal development of Lithuania.

Overall, the field is assessed as strong at the international level. Research carried out is of high-level and internationally recognized.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The unit is strongly involved in developing research activities with public and private entities. They have developed a strong network with many organisations both in the public sector and in the private industries. This network is the result of a combination of three main actions: executive educational activities that enable to connect with managers and leaders from various organisations and industries; applied research projects; and the development and management of the alumni network. The executive education is used as a channel to connect the research activities with the practice.

The unit have developed initiatives that connect their research activities to the societal and organisational challenges of Lithuania. The network of alumni is strategically developed as a way to manage the relationships with key national stakeholders. Most of the graduates of the unit occupy important managerial positions in public and private organisations. By managing the ties with the alumni, the unit can get access to important resources for research purposes as well as to make sure that the research is relevant to address economic, societal and cultural issues.

The unit also collaborates with national and international academic institutions, and they perceive their primary role as making an impact on the growth of the country. The level of influence can be considered very high and highly relevant. The academic staff members are recognised as experts in their field of research. They work with different industry sectors ranging from health care, energy and public administration in general and researchers take part in working groups providing their expertise to authorities and municipalities, for instance the Vice-President of the Lithuanian Political Science Association; and the Vice-Chair of Central Electoral Commission.

The unit is also engaged in the organisation of international events and conferences with an impact on society, and the unit’s researchers are involved in the editorial board of international scientific outlets. In particular, the unit plays an important role in managing the “Baltic Journal of Management” published by Emerald. The participation of the unit’s researchers in international working groups is satisfactory.

The popularisation of science activities is mainly based on educational activities that can be considered appropriate for the recognition of the institution at the national level. They use a mix of channels, such as Facebook (they have 43000 followers), educational initiatives such as Economics Olympiad and various talks and events, and opinion leadership by providing opinions on TV, radio and press. The unit has signed important research-business cooperation agreements that offer potentials for research growth.

Overall: scientific research is important for society. The unit is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers, and society.

## The development potential of UoA

The unit has adequate infrastructure to support and develop research activities in social sciences ranging from software to run quantitative and qualitative studies, to the web-based platform to enable communication and research using scientific resources databases. The library and cubicles support both the research and educational activities. In the next 5 to 10 years the unit is capable of maintaining the actual level of performance and has potential to enhance it. The restructuring of the research activities with a clear definition of the research management roles and priorities of the research areas, offer great potential to achieve a leading international position at least in some research areas and to establish the institution as a recognised international partner for international projects. The unit has invested in access to international databases. The age distribution of the research staff is appropriate, and it balances academic staff more focused on the administrative role and those more engaged in research activities and teaching. The practices of HRM, from recruitment to reward system, are oriented to spur continuous improvement of performance by using incentives such as monetary rewards for publications in top journals. They are involved in the scientific network such as the CRANET and participates in networking projects. The unit has set up a clear strategy to enhance the research capacity and become university-based research. Indeed, the unit acknowledges that after an emphasis on high-quality teaching the priority is to reach a leadership position in the international research arena. In some research domains, such as consumer behaviour, they are aiming to become a leader at the international level. The unit is strategically focusing on establishing themselves as a gatekeeper between international research players and the nation at large.

The research themes are identified and justified by the strategic intent to support the development of the university as a research-based institution. They have defined a research strategy matrix which identifies three main focuses: 1) sustainability and health; 2) smart innovations, and 3) internationalisation. They represent important research areas on which the European Commission is investing resources and define domains that have high potentials of impact both at international and at the national level. Very importantly, the atmosphere and the culture of the institution is very positive and oriented towards excellence. Researchers see constraints as challenges to be faced rather than simply as problems. There is a proactive and positive approach to develop future opportunities. In this regard, the internationalisation is seen as the key path to pursue.

Overall: The UoA has great potential to achieve or maintain very good and excellent ratings.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

It is acknowledged that the unit has fully adopted international standards to carry out and develop research activities. However, it is recommended to maintain a focus on internationalisation as a key driver of the research investments. The achievement of the highest possible international recognition is considered a key strategic dimension for future development and sustainability of the unit. To support the unit in its development, some possible recommendations are listed below.

- Researchers as part of their publication strategy should be encouraged to address and develop a capacity for proposing special issues with high-level international journals. The reason for this is that by editing special issues they will enhance both their international visibility and editorial skills, and at the same time work on a publication(s) for high ranked journal(s).
- Researchers should identify the key conferences to attend and to make sure that they not only are part of the community, but play an active role by proposing special tracks and panels. The reason for this is the creation of a network of international colleagues to work on joint papers and joint project proposal for funding. In this way they can build a reputation in a specific field.
- Researchers should look more into developing a network of colleagues to work with at the national and international level to enhance their research outputs. By working with other colleagues it is easier to submit paper to journals. It also facilitates cross-fertilisation of research ideas which can drive new research outputs.
- It is suggested that supervisors should be more involved in the publication of research outputs of PhD students. Indeed, the practice of engaging supervisors as co-author of the PhD students could be more encouraged. By engaging supervisors in collaborating in writing papers allows the PhD students to grow quickly in terms of their expertise as well as enable senior research to get more capacity to publish research ideas.
- A period of three months spend abroad by PhD students should be made mandatory. This ensures that PhD students get substantial international exposure, which contributes to their academic career.

## Kazimieras Simonavičius University, Kazimieras Simonavičius university

UoA abbreviation	KSU
Name of the UoA	Kazimieras Simonavičius University
Name of institution	Kazimieras Simonavičius university
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	4,4
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	7,99

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Communication and information (08S)	2	1	3,8
Law (01S)	2	1,25	2,59
Management and administration (03S)	2	2,15	1,2
Political sciences, Economics (02S, 04S)	2	-	0,4

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	2
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities

The quality of R&D activities of the social science fields of Kazimieras Simonavičius University is assessed satisfactorily at national level with the potential of strengthening its position. The research group is small and covers not less than four research fields.

#### Communication and information (08S)

The quality of R&D activities of the research field Communication and information of Kazimieras Simonavičius University is assessed satisfactorily at national level. The research capacity of this field is limited (1.0 FTE research staff and 3.8 FTE teaching staff). As the research interest of the group cover a broad spectrum, including philosophy, linguistics, creative society, social transformations, social media and augmented reality, the research is fragmented. It seems as if each researcher has their own topic and there are no indications that the staff operate as a research *team*. Publications are essayistic, social sciences' empirical studies – currently dominant in the international literature in this field – are almost lacking. Publication outlets are often internal (KSU), with some papers published internationally including a Scopus journal publication. One author dominates the lists of best papers. The rather limited quality of R&D activities in this field is also shown by the fact that the researchers have not presented their papers abroad. In the past five years, the group received one academic award, from the Research Council of Lithuania for academic achievements. National and international funded R&D projects are lacking or insignificant. This field has no doctoral programme.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit as satisfactorily at national level.

#### Law (01S)

The quality of R&D activities of the research field Law of Kazimieras Simonavičius University is assessed satisfactorily at national level. The research capacity of this field is limited (1.25 FTE research staff and 2.59 FTE teaching staff). The research interest of the group cover a broad spectrum, including the

European Union, international arbitration, Civil Service System, conflict resolution in business, children's rights, and are focused on the Lithuanian and Baltic context. The list of topics is not coherent and a systematic research agenda seems to be lacking. The publications -in English and Lithuanian- have some relevance at the national level, but rather limited relevance at the international level. The list of the best research outputs includes book chapters, text books, internal publications, and journal papers. International high quality publications, such as in Clarivate/Scopus journals are scarce. The field scores low on the criterion "presentations delivered at conferences abroad", as only two presentations (in 2016 in Poland and Italy) are delivered. This field did not receive any academic award in the past five years. The rather limited quality of the R&D activities in this field is also shown by the fact that they did were not active, or not successful, in acquiring national and international funded R&D. The field has no doctoral programme.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit as satisfactorily at national level.

### **Management and administration (03S)**

The quality of R&D activities of the research field Management and administration of Kazimieras Simonavičius University is assessed satisfactorily at national level. The research capacity of this field is limited (2.15 FTE research staff and 1.2 FTE teaching staff). The listed best papers show a variety of topics (interaction with employees, business communication and negotiations, influence of personal income tax on municipalities, technology transfer policy, and smart specialisation strategy). The list of topics is not coherent and a systematic research agenda seems to be lacking. Although some papers were published in journals (although not in top Clarivate/Scopus journals), internal publications dominate the lists of best papers. Publications that survived a rigorous review process by international peers are scarce. The researchers of this field have not presented their work at international conferences. The field does not have a doctoral programme and the field has not received any academic award in the past five years. On the positive side: in 2014 the group received a European FP7 grant (for the project Driving force of social change) and a Erasmus+ grant. There were no national funded R&D projects.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit as satisfactorily at national level.

### **Political sciences, Economics (02S, 04S)**

The quality of R&D activities of the research field Political sciences and Economics of Kazimieras Simonavičius University is assessed satisfactory at national level. The research group is extremely small (no research staff and only 0.4 FTE teaching staff). The themes of this research field, including topics such as neurodynamics and self-excitatory oscillations, are not central in the international political sciences and economics literature. Publications have some proven quality as they are published in book chapters and journals (also SCOPUS journals) and have undergone a review process by peers. But the list is small, for instance there are no papers listed for 2016, only one paper in 2015 and the four papers listed for 2017 include two internal publications and a book chapter that was also listed for the field Communication & Information. The researchers of this field have participated in one competitive R&D project (until 2015). There is no doctoral programme. The field of Political sciences, Economics has not received any academic award in the past five years.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit as satisfactorily at national level.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The UoA carries out important research activities but the interaction with business, decision-makers, and society is weak. The general picture is that the number of external funded R&D projects is extremely small: the list of research outputs and R&D contracts with private sector entities includes only one project (new regional identity creation). Furthermore, participation of the researchers in national organisations is limited to one person, in one year. On the positive side, the unit cooperates with business in a European funded project, and in 'in-kind input' projects at the national level such as with the AB Avia Solutions Group, and Vilnius international airport. The unit also participates in several projects with universities abroad, such as in the European programmes FP7 and Erasmus+. The unit organised several international conferences in Vilnius. The list of the most important results of science popularisation activities includes an international event with international speakers and several public events at the national level, in particular in the research field law. These events discussed topics on lawyer careers, the protection of personal data, and mediation. Other publications popularise science. The number of consultations provided to public or private entities, however, is small. The researchers of the Unit are not involved with editorial

boards or scientific committees. The science popularisation activities are mainly focused on open lectures and roundtables. One researcher participates in an expert group on the Posting Directive for the State Labor Inspectorate.

Overall the panel is of the opinion that the UoA carries out important research activities but interaction with the private sector, decision-makers, and the society is limited.

## Development potential of UoA

The UoA has the potential to improve its ratings. On the positive side: the goals of the management strategy are well-chosen. The management puts a major emphasis on promoting research and is willing to invest time and money for research. The university's strategy emphasizes the need for research plans and the need to increase research effectiveness. The management also aims at more diverse and interdisciplinary research and wants to attract more researchers with advanced scientific ideas and leadership skills. The management also accentuates the importance of R&D commercialisation and transfer of knowledge and technology. The management also aims at more international cooperation, and at contributions to innovation development and regional knowledge. The administration actively looks for niches, such as currently a big data project in cooperation with Latvians, Swedes, and Finns. The unit has also started a research and study program in aviation management, and hired an international expert from Greece. The development of a doctoral program in law, together with Turība University (Latvia), takes shape. The HRM policy of the unit is adequate.

On the other hand, the strategy planning lists important goals, but they lack clarity and operationalisation, particularly about how to enhance research quality and internationalisation. A justification of the key R&D themes for the future is missing. Furthermore, the research covers four disciplinary fields while the research capacity is small, and a large number of appointments are only part-time. This seriously complicates the development of a strong and coherent research program, national and international cooperation, funding and impact. Infrastructure for R&D activities is limited.

Overall, the panel expects that the unit is capable of improving the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments within the next 5-10 years.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

The quality of R&D activities of the social science fields of Kazimieras Simonavičius University is assessed satisfactorily at national level. The interaction of the UoA with business, decision-makers, and society is weak. The unit has the potential of strengthening its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments within the next 5-10 years.

The panel advises the unit to develop -in consultation with the research staff- detailed, realistic and solid plans of action, including a time schedule, that show how the strategic plans of the management as laid down in the assessment documents can be realised.

Important is a reduction of the fragmentation of the research, the development of a focused research profile, and the integration of the research programmes of the four -small- fields into a cohesive and multidisciplinary programme to be carried out by a group of researchers that acts as a *team*.

With respect to the selection of topics for the new -integrated- research programme: the current strategy of the management to look for niches is supported. It is also recommended to further detail and consolidate the research agenda in line with the European research agenda and international developments as this enhances international collaboration, successful European grant applications, and in general "visibility" in the field.

The unit is also advised to develop other initiatives that improves international visibility and recognition, such a stronger focus on international English publications (in the better Clarivate/Scopus journals).

As R&D contracts with economic entities are almost insignificant, the unit is advised to develop plans to increase this source of funding, which will contribute to the financial potential of the unit.

With respect to HRM policy, the unit is advised to try to reduce of the number of the many small part-time (in terms of FTE) appointments and increase of the number of full-time (or large part-time) appointments.

It is also advised to realise one or more doctoral programs, including a strong training programme, possibly in collaboration with other universities in Lithuania or abroad, as is already intended for the law field. The



creation of a strong group of well-trained young scholars is vital for the research quality of the unit and other units in the field.

## Economics and Management, Kaunas University of Technology

<b>UoA abbreviation</b>	KTU_Ekon-vadyb
<b>Name of the UoA</b>	Economics and Management
<b>Name of institution</b>	Kaunas University of Technology
<b>Type of institution</b>	University
<b>No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017</b>	3,95
<b>No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017</b>	89

### The quality of R&D activities:

<b>Research field:</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017</b>	<b>No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017</b>
Economics	3	1,57	35,79
Management and administration	4	2,38	53,21

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

<b>Score</b>	3
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### Development potential of UoA

<b>Score</b>	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Economics

In the field of Economics the group counts 11 researchers and 44 teaching staff, which translates into 37.4 Full Time Equivalent. The best output reported locates in the medium class of Scopus reports, with few notable exceptions in the first quartile for energy policy. Presentations delivered at international conferences besides national and regional conferences also include prestigious and reputed annual congresses of such associations as European Accounting Association and the IEA. Among competitive projects one Horizon 2020 is listed and several nationally funded projects, which suggests a high competitiveness at national level and a limited exposure to international research teamwork. Both senior and junior staff members have received several awards at national level. This reflects a national recognition, and clear importance for domestic actors in Lithuania. However, international recognition is not reflected in awards such as best paper prizes, honorary memberships, prestigious positions in academic societies and similar awards. The doctoral training and related doctoral defences reveals systematic, but limited in numbers to single digit, promotion count during the reporting period. Yet, doctoral research is a valuable resource boosting publication potential and innovative capabilities of the Unit of Assessment, which currently seems underexploited. In general the research, publication and conference participation profile indicates an increasing trend of internationalization, both in terms of publications and involvement and output. The effectiveness in attracting national funds reflects a strong national recognition, given that the availability of domestic funds is restricted and competition for those funds steadily increases. Overall, the Economics field is academically strong with limited international recognition.

#### Management and administration

In this research field the group of researchers is quite large, counting 23 researchers and 73 teaching staff, which translates into 55.6 Full Time Equivalent. The research policy is clearly aimed at international audience, with a specific target on journals listed in the Association of Business Schools (ABS) lists such as the Journal of Cleaner Production, Journal of Managerial Psychology, or Journal of Business Research. The policy of focusing on ABS journals is in line with the international standard of business schools. It is also more restrictive, ambitious and focused as compared with the national Lithuanian Guidelines focus on Scopus or Clarivate Analytics. In sum, this reflects a clear strategy of international benchmarking and best

practice implementation for publishing policy unique in Lithuania. The best publications lists contain excellent publications, even if some are not directly linked to the field of management, but this seems to reflect an interdisciplinary orientation and a certain facility in linking typically managerial topics with psychology, sustainability or informatics. The best presentations have been delivered at the prestigious annual conferences of the European Academy of Management, the Academy of International Business and the Academy of Management. The faculty is well connected to international networks and associations. In terms of fund attraction the researchers from this Unit of Assessment are involved in two Horizon 2020 projects and have recently been awarded a Research Council of Lithuania large project. Given the national constraints in terms of funds availability, the recent RCL grant winning shows a strong competitiveness at the national level. Staff members have been awarded with best paper awards at international conferences, including two PhD students which demonstrates the quality of doctoral training and associated research. Reported doctoral training activity is systematic, although not very large in terms of student numbers, as it translates in single digits during the reporting period. Overall the research carried out in the field of management and administration is very strong academically, and demonstrates an increasing international recognition.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

This Unit of Assessment does not report any relationships with businesses as far as R&D activities are concerned. This reflects a policy of linking rather with institutional and regulatory decision makers, including the National Association of Gambling and Gaming, several national Ministries and the Office for Harmonization of Internal Markets of the European Commission. Some staff members are particularly active in this respect, and play an expert advisory role for many institutional actors. The current incentives for individual researchers clearly focus on academic output, disregarding linkages with businesses for R&D. This Unit of Assessment organizes regularly national conferences, and links to international conferences tracks, that is topically focused sessions on major international congresses. Researchers participate in several editorial boards, including those listed in Scopus and Clarivate Analytics. However, this activity is restricted in numbers, and involves in particular one researcher. There is a clear numerical potential currently underexploited in terms of community service in international outlets. The popularization activities carried out by this Unit of Assessment are mainly focused on academic papers, leaving some room for more diverse interaction with both domestic and international audience. In particular interaction with society, and the use of social media or organization of popularization events may significantly increase the visibility of this Unit of Assessment actual output and further increase its importance. Overall, the scientific research carried out by this Unit of Assessment is important for society, as reflected by appropriate established links to decision makers and businesses, yet the Unit has limited interaction with the wider society. It is a recognized academic institution carrying out academic activities.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The infrastructure of this Unit of Assessment is well developed. It consists of a reasonable library resource, including the widely recognized, and useful both for research related and purely educational activities, Bloomberg laboratory. A number of scholars from prestigious partnering universities have been reported as visiting, which fosters both knowledge transfer and co-authoring opportunities. Significant focus is attributed to networking with well-defined associations and academic partners. This Unit of Assessment displays a clear networking strategy and purposefully identifies actors important for its further development. Prestigious universities, top scholars and academic associations focused on accreditations and business research are linked to this Unit of Assessment by direct agreements, and foster vivid exchange. This includes also advanced preparations to international accreditation of education programs, which has not yet been completed but demonstrates a sustained commitment to matching highest international standards. Additionally, the strategic plan has been developed with clear responsibilities for implementation, targets and key performance indicators. A stable plan, well cascaded and clearly attributing responsibilities for achievement, clearly supports the sustained and mostly successful effort towards international level academic activities. Peak age class in the staff is 35-44 which opens ways both for rapid career advancement, and does not display a top-heavy structure. A number of former employees are employed by competitors, which suggests that the level of competence is highly valued. The human resource strategy is clear in terms of investing in both staff and doctoral students, with some international exposure so far. Overall, considering staff composition, external linkages, currently developed infrastructure and a clear strategy the development potential of this Unit of Assessment is assessed as great to achieve or maintain very good or excellent ratings in the next 5 to 10 years.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

This Unit of Assessment already performs quite well in terms of the evaluation criteria. Also, the initiatives launched in terms of accreditation and international networks' involvement may yield significant results in the near future. However, some additional activities may add to the success of this Unit of Assessment:

1. Current participation to international prestigious congresses is limited in number of this Unit of Assessment employees. An increase of international collaboration in terms of conference presentations numbers, and paper development in co-authorship is recommended. It opens ways for bilateral and networked collaboration opportunities, embeds scholars in academic networks and fosters dissemination of research outputs.
2. Current incentives for publishing are not very competitive as compared to international standards, and to salaries in Lithuania. Therefore, highest ranked publications are not a priority for researchers. A significant increase in the bonus per highly ranked publication either in monetary terms, or in hours equivalent is recommended to prioritize top-tier publications.
3. Currently doctoral dissertations are delivered as published monographs, which limits the outreach of these publications, impedes research labour market entry for doctoral students, and restricts the publication output of the Unit of Assessment. A shift to paper based dissertations is recommended as they have the triple merit of: providing the PhDs with a solid curriculum for the research job market; increasing the quality of output through international refereed journal feedback; increasing the visibility of the UoA through co-authorship.
4. Current involvement in international congresses is significant and increases over time as measured by membership. The next level of development, visibility and involvement in international academic networks might be connected with hosting major congresses of international academic associations.
5. Given the financial constraints at the Unit of Assessment, and national research financing level it is recommended to focus on nationally financed projects in order to prepare solid grounds for internationally financed projects participation and keep a high financing potential at the UoA level. This sequence allows for increased networking, data collection publication effort financing. Given that national funding is very competitive, an effort in developing capabilities of attracting national funds may reveal very useful in engaging with international projects.
6. Current linkage to businesses is limited. It is recommended to increase direct links to businesses both through teaching/training programmes, and through research projects. This has the merit of embedding current and future needs of the domestic economic players into teaching and research, which in turn may generate higher potential for funds attraction and a higher capability in playing a significant role in fostering economic development of Lithuania.
7. The current HR policy results in a focus on local academics, mostly locally trained. Hiring international scholars has the merit of increasing both the output of the Unit of Assessment, and fostering knowledge sharing within the Unit of Assessment.
8. Leveraging on current international exposure and exploiting its potential may also involve recruiting doctoral students from other universities or countries in order to increase international exposure and foster exchange of novel ideas.

## Social Sciences, Kaunas University of Technology

UoA abbreviation	KTU_Socio
Name of the UoA	Social Sciences
Name of institution	Kaunas University of Technology
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	6,16
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	24,54

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Political sciences (02S)	3	3,34	6,37
Sociology (05S)	3	2,39	4,51
Education (07S)	2	0,42	13,33
Communication and information (08S)	2	0,01	0,33

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Political sciences (02S)

The number of researchers of this UoA in this field is relatively small, and the 9.7 FTE compared to the 24 head count indicates large proportion of part-time workers. The researchers in this field are involved in qualitative and quantitative empirical research and in development of theory as well. In this field, the UoA has a relatively large amount of research output, with some high quality international monographs, chapters and/or articles. Most research output is original and internationally relevant. On the other hand, a large portion of the results is still published in in-house journals with low international scientific impact. Only one article in a journal with IF was published in the last five years and two books in Routledge (one of them is a dissertation that was defended abroad). Participation in conferences however shows a truly international orientation, the faculty members attend prestigious international conferences. These are excellent opportunities for networking what seems to impact the participation in international projects but so far modestly influences the number of publications with international co-authors. The unit has been involved in some important international projects (EES and ISSP) in this research field. Both projects represent the state-of-the-art comparative research programs and the participation is crucial for the development of Lithuanian social sciences and international collaboration. At the same time, the participation in these projects is not visible in the publications. Funding for other projects has been secured in the national funding competition. It seems that currently the UoA in this field is dependent on national competitive funding. Overall, in this research field, the UoA's output is internationally recognized, and the unit seems to be on its way of becoming an international player. No dissertations have been published in the assessment period; the number of ongoing PhD projects is low and no was dissertation defended since 2013.

#### Sociology (05S)

Sociology is the smallest field (not mentioning Communication) at this UoA and produces few outcomes. In this research field the vast majority of the research output is published in in-house journals (at KTU, in

Lithuania at large, or in the CEE region), with low international academic impact. Some international recognition is shown by chapters in edited books, but overall there is a rather limited level of such recognition, even though participation in conferences shows a truly international orientation. The publication strategy focuses primarily on book chapters and domestic journals. No article in a journal with IF has been published in the last 5 years. However, it is important that the group has produced several chapters in books published by well-known international academic publishers (e.g. Routledge). The unit has been involved in one international (H2020 funded) project, but it still seems to depend largely on national competitive funding, in which it is relatively successful. Importantly, the members of the department represent Lithuania in ISSP (jointly with the political sciences) and in CESSDA (pan-European research infrastructure). Both programs are crucial for the development of Lithuanian social sciences. The sociology PhD program is successful, despite a small number of researchers, 4 dissertations were defended in the last 5 years, although the number of PhD students decreases in the last couple of years. On the other hand, dissertations are published in Lithuanian, which does not allow for international recognition of the underlying research.

### **Education (07S)**

Faculty members of the field of education conduct interesting research on educational innovations and technologies, learning environments, education management and knowledge management and social education but several research themes of educational sciences (e.g. learning and instruction, cognitive development, curriculum, teaching methods etc.) are not or marginally represented in the portfolio of this group of researchers. Empirical studies are underrepresented in the scientific activity at this the field. The scientific output is low, the vast majority of the research output is published in in-house journals (at KTU, in Lithuania at large, or in the CEE region), with low international academic impact. Some book chapters and one article in a high quality journal as well as participation in conferences also show a growing international orientation. In this field the UoA is well connected to international research projects (FP7/H2020 and COST), which, in spite of the limited international publication profile, shows some international recognition. However, the potential offered by the international cooperation does not influence significantly the direct R&D outputs (publications). The members of the department have rarely co-authored articles or chapters with their international colleagues. At the same time, it is obvious that the group tries to reach international audience. It is necessary to appreciate that 11 dissertations were defended in the last 5 years, (given the small size of the unit in this research field), although they are published in Lithuanian.

### **Communication and information (08S)**

Given the very small size of the group (0.3 FTE), it is difficult to evaluate the R&D output. As the research capacity of the UoA in this research field is very small, it may account for the relatively small amount of research output, the limited participation in conferences, and the absence of dissertations. The research output is a mix of national and in-house publications and output with larger international scientific impact (book chapters, article). The share of international publications in the overall research output is acceptable, but the overall mass of the output is too little to ensure significant international recognition. Conference participation indicates significant international orientation. The themes of the publications are relevant both for research and practice. In this field the UoA has participated in two international projects, and three other ones secured under national competition, funded by the Lithuanian Research Council. However, it is difficult to judge, how with such a small capacity this group can contribute to the work of these large-scale projects.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

This UoA leads or participates in a number of research projects of regional or national significance. It is less active in business cooperation but it is understandable, taking into account the characteristics of its research fields. The impact of the UoS's R&D activities is substantial and appropriate to KTU's role as a publicly funded academic institution. Most of the project impacts listed and described are relevant and link up well to current challenges in the Lithuanian society. Research group members are sufficiently represented in (national) public and civil society organizations, and are well involved in relevant consultations and expert groups (also internationally). The UoA is involved in the organization of a significant number of academic events, on a regular basis. Membership in editorial boards is limited from the international perspective; it concerns in-house or regional journals mainly Still, the relevance of the UoA to society seems not to generate a substantial source of funding; R&D contracts with private entities

are very limited. All fields (education, political sciences, sociology, and communication) are actively involved in the dissemination of their research into the non-academic sector. Outreach to society by means of popularization activities is considerable and very appropriate. In the last 5 years, they provided expertise for various organizations such as Šviesa or European Commission. The offered expertise ranged from the area of public health to immigration, democracy, and citizenship. Researchers from KTU serve as experts for Mosta, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education, and trade unions, Lithuanian Research Council or Academy of Sciences. The staff from the evaluated fields also serves in several international bodies (ESS, UNESCO, ISSP, EC – evaluators for Horizon 2020) and organized international conferences/meetings.

## Development potential of UoA

As this is a technological university, social sciences don't belong neither to its main research areas nor its strengths. This UoA identifies very realistically the main problems which undermine the efforts for development the research quality (small salaries, low prestige). There is little chance for developing each field to international level. Taking into account their regional and social relevance as well, maybe education and perhaps sociology can be significantly improved, as education is the largest field and sociology is relatively successful in winning external projects. Some other units of the University (belonging to its major areas) develop rapidly; maybe their methods and experiences can be applied to social sciences as well. The SWOT analysis is well considered and addresses the most important issues for the UoA's future. The choices made in early 2018 regarding reform of the research fields and groups are well underpinned. The five priority areas are highly relevant (both nationally and internationally). In that sense, the KTU and the unit seem to be well aware of their current performance and of their potential. There is however the risk that implementation of the strategy centers too much around key performance output indicators, and too little attention is paid to the underlying conditions and activities needed to reach the desired output.

The assessed unit has a strong potential for development. It represents Lithuania in two key international comparative activities that span across various topics and sub-fields of social science. Thus, the unit is well integrated into the international scientific community and offers a crucial service to the national and international academic community. The staff is relatively young (approximately 60 percent under 45). The development potential is demonstrated by the increasing number of international projects that the unit received in the last 5 years and the corresponding increase in funds. Given the number of activities organized by the unit, the number of researchers is small. However, the cuts on the national level are a possible threat to the development of the unit. In total, the financial support declined by more than 30 percent between 2013 and 2017. Thus, some of the developmental plans might be threatened.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

1. As social sciences are not belonging to the main training domains of this university, focusing research on a few fields of social sciences may result in stronger groups. Researchers working at fields where a critical mass cannot be secured might be members of other, larger groups.
2. Consolidating human resources might be a priority. The large number of part-time workers is one of the most obvious indicators of the problem.
3. Strengthening empirical research, especially at the fields of education and sociology may help to reach results publishable in recognized journals.
4. The publication strategy should be revised, fewer articles with larger impact should be an explicit target (publishing in WoS referred, Scopus Q1 journals).
5. As for PhD training, by inviting guest professors from leading research universities the quality of training future scientist could be significantly improved. More international cooperation, more part-time studies at other universities may also help. More focus on methodological training and providing students with more help in publishing (e.g. language editing) may increase the quality as well.
6. Better international mobility may help attracting more PhD students, dissertations in English offer better international visibility for the young researchers.
7. These problems cannot be solved within the institution or the UoA, although they are searching the possibilities for attracting and maintaining talented young people and for compensating the productive researchers (e.g. with external projects).

## Social Sciences 1, Klaipeda University

UoA abbreviation	KU_S1
Name of the UoA	Social Sciences 1
Name of institution	Klaipeda University
Type of institution	University/Institute
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	5,7
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	34,7

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Political sciences (02S)	2	0,25	7,55
Management and administration (03S)	2	0,50	12,07
Economics (04S)	1	0,11	6,89
Sociology (05S)	2	4,82	5,89
Communication and information (08S)	1	-	2,35

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	2
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### The quality of R&D activities

Research topics of the Unit are diverse. The different areas do not support each other and the result is a highly fragmented collection of topics with little integration. Research administration and management are attempting to promote the publications in high level international journals (with high impact factor) but the researchers appeared to prefer publishing in Lithuanian and in journals with local importance or in-house journals. One of the goals is to apply the research results in solving societal problems in the Baltic Sea and Western Lithuanian regions as well as in Klaipeda. But there are now somewhat unfocused ideas as to how the Baltic focus should be realised. There is lack of a clear strategy how to consolidate the research topics and to increase the collaboration. Research management has plans to improve the focus of research and increase the internationalisation, but during the site visit it did not become clear if the research staff do actually support or make the effort to fulfil the plans. Now the research of the Unit is fragmentary, its quality is not very high, international visibility is low and the research strategy lacks coherence. The academic staff represents different and heterogeneous disciplinary backgrounds with a very low level of interaction and synergistic interaction.

#### Political sciences (02S)

In the area of Political Sciences, the research group is very small (1 researcher, 9 teaching staff; total of 7.8 full time equivalent). The research output is correspondingly not very large, although there is one excellent publication in 2013 in Public Administration Review (1/47 in Public Administration, JCR 2017). The best research outputs are published in national outlets, as monographs aimed at a local audience and with a low relevance of scientific impact. No JCR publications have been reported. No international co-authorships have been reported. The best conference presentations are peripheral. In the last 5 years, 1 PhD dissertation was defended, in 2017. The research topics are quite fragmented and cover public administration, civil service reform, small state libraries, local governments, and pre-school education. The

group has a low level of funding, with international funding being almost non-existent (although there is one EU project). Participation in international R&D programs lists one training programme, with no R&D component, which suggests no involvement in international R&D. The research field seems to have most international connections with research institutes in the Baltic Sea region.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research in this field as satisfactory at national level.

### **Management and administration (03S)**

In the field of Management and Administration the research group is formed by 1 researcher and 13 teaching staff (total of 12.6 full time equivalent). All publications submitted for evaluation are in English but most of them are published in 'in-house' journals or in other journals only with local relevance (in the Czech Republic and Romania), one single paper published in *Interscience*, a newly established journal. One researcher is represented in each listed publication, which suggests the significant role of this individual in the Unit's research activities. The research output in the last five years does not reach international standards, as most publications are in books, proceedings or papers not indexed in the Web of Science (and very few are indexed in Scopus). Competitive R&D funding is quite low (Lithuania-Poland Cross-Border Cooperation Programme, INOVADYBA). Both projects ended in 2015. Participation in international R&D programs is not reported. The best conference presentations are limited to national events, even though some have taken place in Latvia, Russia and Poland. The sole exception is connected to the Euromed second tier conference. Participation in international conferences needs to widen the scope and include the main conferences in the field of Management. Three doctoral theses were defended in the last five years, all in 2017.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research in this field as satisfactory at national level.

### **Economics (04S)**

In the field of Economics the group is small, with 2 researchers and 7 teaching staff (total of 7 full time equivalent). The research output in the last five years does not reach international standards, as most publications are in books, proceedings and some papers in journals not indexed in the Web of Science. Some publications are in Lithuanian journals, e.g. *Engineering Economics* (214/260 in Economics, JCR), but most publications are in non-JCR journals. Participation in international R&D programs is limited. The best conference presentations have been delivered abroad (in Serbia, Switzerland, Spain, Italy), however major congresses are missing from the reported list. Two doctoral dissertations were defended. The list of the best research outputs includes publications mainly addressed at the national audience and published accordingly in national outlets or outlets in neighbouring countries. This field has not participated in competitive projects. The field received very little competitive funding; only one project (3 months in 2016). There is no current project.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research in this field poorly at national level.

### **Sociology (05S)**

In the area of Sociology the group is formed by 6 researchers and 11 teaching staff (a total of 10.7 full time equivalent). Research work as reflected by the publication profile is similar to other disciplines in this Unit, which is mainly local, with scarce international outreach, and no JCR listed papers. Most publications are local (in Lithuanian journals, or books edited in Lithuania) and very few are indexed in the Web of Science (e.g. in *Polish Sociological Review* 2017 JCR IF=0.103) or published abroad (e.g. a book published by Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group). Nevertheless, there is a paper published in the journal *"Area"* (27/84 in Geography, Q2 in JCR) in 2018. This is a very good sign. The topics of the publications are quite fragmented (tourism, solidarity, drug crimes, ageing population, territorial identity, memory studies, identity of the generation born in the Soviet-time, etc.). The number of presentations at international conferences is reasonable. Participation in international R&D programs is limited to one Interreg initiative with a small budget, and a cross-border initiative including Poland and Russia with an even smaller budget. The field has been quite successful in national competitive funding: an interesting project about identity formation and intergroup relations in the Klaipeda region during the post-war period of 1946-1960 is financed by the Research Council of Lithuania. Another project financed by Research Council of Lithuania seeks to refine the arguments for the value of humanities in Lithuanian context. Both projects have the potential to produce papers in high-level journals as well as books published by well-known publishers. There is a significant capacity and opportunity for the Unit to produce research outputs that can attract the attention of the international community. In particular, the ongoing project about identity

formation as a research perspective appears particularly promising for the development of the Unit's research activities.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research in this field satisfactory at national level.

### **Communication and informatin (08S)**

In the field of Communication and Information, the research group is formed by 3 teaching staff (a total of 2.4 full time equivalent), so it is really small. It constitutes only a minor field in the portfolio of the KU. The outputs reported for the field are sometimes closer to other disciplines. In general, the field of communication and information is underdeveloped. Most publications are local, either in Lithuanian journals or edited by KU (Titai, Regional Formation and Development). The research concentrates on social media, internet users, and political communication. One very small national project, limited to one year and to promotional activities (Media and Informational Promotion Project) with a small budget has been carried out. The list of best research output is restricted to the national audience. Participation in competitive projects is incidental. A single project is reported, that aims at the development and implementation of a training program. Best conference presentations are not reported. No doctoral theses have been defended in the last 5 years.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research in this field poorly at national level.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The Unit is mainly concerned with the development of applied research and has a significant standing at regional level. The Unit has local impact through its teaching and the research activity of staff in different local projects. The Unit has strong connections with the region and the local infrastructure. The R&D activities of the unit have a high potential impact, in social and economic terms, due to the interest and relevance of the topics addressed: rural entrepreneurship, living and working conditions of migrants, sociological surveys of young people in Klaipeda, tourism in the South East Baltic Region, a marketing manual for start-ups, Lithuanian maritime economy, culture consumption, etc. Especially applied research carried out at the Unit as well as the expertise have high local and regional relevance. For example, youth problems revealed by the project 'Capacity Building for Strategic Youth Policy and Transnational Cooperation' have been identified as priorities in a newly developed Klaipeda City Strategy 2030: The Blue Breakthrough. The outcomes of the project about living and working conditions of labour migrants were used for the development of a long-term strategy for economic migration and implementation of immigration policy. The scientific research carried out by the unit is important for society. The project 'Spatial Analysis of Crime Dynamics in Klaipeda' identified changes in the crime structure in specific neighbourhoods and city areas and found out which social conditions functioned as crime preventing or promoting factors. The project 'Lagoons as crossroads for tourism and interactions of people of South-East Baltic: from the history to present' created a strategy of cultural tourism development in the Curonian and Visula Lagoon Regions and established international water tourism routes. The Unit is closely related to business and decision-makers. This is reflected by the participation of researchers in several bodies such as the Klaipeda City Municipality, the Lithuanian Association of Agricultural Cooperatives, Lithuanian Council for Culture, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Science and Education, etc. Membership of researchers in editorial boards focuses on journals of local importance, with no exposition to JCR listed outlets. Membership of researchers in expert bodies includes the EC expert panels, and a British body focused on eastern studies. Popularisation activities involve activities aimed at children, local science and art festivals, topical lectures, and blog. This activity is focused on the local environment, and quite limited in numbers.

The Unit carries out important scientific research and is an important partner in R&D outside the academic community. Scientific research is important for society. The relationship with business, decision-makers and the society is appropriate to a recognised institution carrying out academic activities.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The Unit is a relatively strong local and regional player, still with 'a fixation on domestic Lithuanian issues'. The Unit has a lot of possibilities that are not enough exploited perhaps because the lack of human and financial resources. The numbers of employees is triple digit, which makes this unit significant in terms of scale. The age distribution of employees displays a clear peak in the 35-44 years old class, closely followed by the 45-54 and 55-64 classes suggesting an even distribution. The age structure is promising

and offers good development potential. Principles of HR are closely aligned with the national regulations, with no specific talent acquisition or development strategy. The Unit has an interdisciplinary team of researchers. This strength of the Unit is currently unrealised. Now the different groups appear to function rather isolated and not really supporting each other. The Unit realizes its strength in focusing to Baltic area problems and in particular to sustainability and welfare. Focusing on this limited number of topics is a good choice. However, at present the Unit lacks coherence. Research themes are given as examples, not targets with clear allocation of necessary resources. Research themes have been set for particular disciplines in a disconnected way, rather than using the strength of a large and heterogeneous research team. The SWOT analysis indicates important weaknesses: broad fragmentation and diversification of individual research activities due to a small number of scholars in the same field and a small community; aging of international level leading researchers. Currently, the international visibility of research is low due to a publishing strategy that favours 'in-house' publications. However, there is a potential to concentrate on regional studies. 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 Unit has a motivated group of doctoral students, who recognise the necessity of international contacts and importance of networking as part of international research communities. The Unit can benefit much from this potential if it manages to provide prospects for future career. At present, it may be difficult for the Unit to be competitive in raising research funding.

Overall: The Unit has the potential to maintain satisfactory ratings.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

The Unit should invest, to a considerable extent, more in internationalisation of research. 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. For playing a relevant international role and increasing the impact on the community, research has to be reinforced in several aspects:

Increase internal cooperation, integration of different groups to more coherent research units and 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 Unit;

The Unit should sharpen its strategy of research. The concentration on issues of regional social development is the strength of the Unit and it produces its best research in this area. Relating the research themes to the social-developmental issues of the region is a promising endeavour, but embedding these works with great local relevance in larger/global research trends would improve the international relevance and acceptance of these works alike;

Increase the coherence between different research themes and decrease the fragmentation and diversification. First of all, to become a more distinctive and also less fragmented research unit, the objectives of the research programme of the Unit have to be redefined in a more coherent way;

Efforts should be directed to build an international network and improve the quality of the research increasing publications in peer-reviewed international journals. Currently, the international visibility of research is low due to a publishing strategy that favours 'in-house' publications;

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;

External international funding of research (i.e. participation in EU-research programs) should be promoted;

Intensifying the international activity (conference attendance, participation in international workshops) of young researchers and PhD students, more sabbatical periods with international visits for the senior scientists may be vital from the perspective of improving research quality;

PhD students should write their thesis more often in English or at least – as a standard procedure – create an international publication plan after graduation to increase the international visibility of the research;

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 joint investigations, knowledge transfer, initiatives and projects;

The Unit should invest more in attracting applied contract research at the regional and national level, especially given the research expertise and interests of those in the unit;

Special attention needs to be given to human resources management and career development of academic staff. It is crucial for the future success to secure the career possibilities of the PhD students and postdoctoral researchers.

In summary, the Unit 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 Unit should put much effort in increasing its collaboration with good international research units. On national level, the Unit should also recognise good strategic partners to improve quality of research together.

## Social Sciences 2, Klaipeda University

UoA abbreviation	KU_S2
Name of the UoA	Social Sciences 2
Name of institution	Klaipeda University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	4,15
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	52,52

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Management and administration (03S)	2	1,18	3,51
Sociology (05S)	2	1,04	8,1
Psychology (06S)	3	0,03	8,5
Education (07S)	2	1,9	32,41

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	2
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	2
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Management and administration (03S)

This is a small field and the number of annual publications is also small. The quality of publications is variable from one year to another; some papers are published in journals of an international importance, while some others are of a local importance only. Best research outputs are listed in the fields of tourism and public governance with respectable outcomes. Some international co-authorship appears by the end of the reporting period. Best conference presentations include a recognized public management association (IRSPM) and events held across Europe, yet, majority of those conferences are of a minor impact. The group is involved in multiple research projects and is a leading partner in a collaborative project with Sweden, Poland, and Denmark. Participation in international R&D programs includes two medium value (more than 300k euro) Interreg project, and one smaller international project focused on tourism, sustainability and social development. However, it seems that they do not fully use up this potential and focus primarily on domestic publications or publications in regional venues. This is an important weakness as publishing in the IF journals is considered to be a standard for this field. Defended dissertations are not listed.

#### Sociology (05S)

Research work is carried out with a focus on national, and to a limited extent international audience (especially Latvian). Typically social work is studied with a visible participation in international R&D programs. Sociology research has also been to some extent integrated with health sciences, which offers a good potential for publications. However, even though the group has succeeded to publish several papers in international journals (e.g. European Journal of Social Work) its scientific output is concentrated primarily in the domestic journals or books. Best research outputs focus on social work published in one JCR outlet (low IF). Researchers participate in international conferences, yet, majority of those conferences are of a minor impact. Best conference presentations include conference dedicated to social work, and the dolphin assisted therapies. The staff working in the sociology field is involved in international projects,

which could potentially lead to some collaboration and joint publications. The participation in competitive projects is limited to very small initiatives carried out with a Swedish partner and within the Erasmus+ program. The Unit sends its young scholars for PhD training abroad, what is promising for the future, but the lack of PhD training within and by the Unit's given field is at present a serious disadvantage.

### **Psychology (06S)**

Psychology in this UoA is a small but relatively strong field. A large number of publications appeared in international JCR listed outlets, with many co-authors from several European countries. Researchers of the psychology field are involved in extensive international cooperation, they collaborate on testing cross-national inventories and scales; the most significant publications are results of international collaborative work. However, the KU researchers were only rarely among the leading authors, remarkable exceptions are chapters in books published by international academic publishing houses where KU researchers are among the first authors. Researchers participate in international conferences, yet, few of those conferences are of a high impact. Best presentations were at conferences in Ukraine, Turkey and USA, listed for 2013 and 2014; there are no presentations at the major international conferences of large scientific associations. Participation in major competitive international R&D programs is not listed; participation in international projects is limited to one Erasmus+ initiative, finished in 2016, of small funding amount. Defended dissertations are not listed.

### **Education (07S)**

Education is the largest field in the UoA, but the research outcome is not proportional with its human resources. The members of the group show very little effort to reach international audience, there is not any significant international paper or book chapter among the five best publications. Best research outputs include monographs, chapters and papers published mainly in national or local outlets. No JCR papers are reported. Among the publications from the last 5 years, the only one international journal reported (International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences) is a classic example of a predatory journal. There are relevant conference presentations delivered by the researchers in education. Participation in conferences is better than publishing journal papers, many of the conferences are more significant scientific outlet than the journals/book chapters which researchers publish in. Best conference presentations have been delivered in Nordic countries, South Korea and USA, particularly relevant at the annual meetings of the American Education Research Association. The education field is strong in attracting funding and it is involved in several international research projects. Participation in competitive projects include one LLP low amount grant underway, another LLP finished in 2014 with a medium value, a Nordic collaborative network project (low amount), Erasmus+ with medium value, and one finished RCL grant of low value. The education field has an extensive PhD program; however the methodological preparation and the international orientation of the PhD training are not strong enough.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The UoA works on applied projects directly assessing needs of society, projects that might have an impact on the quality of life (e.g. launching of an outdoor fitness area, monitoring of alcohol and drug use), however there are years without any project during the assessment period. The staff of the UoA serves in various boards (Klaipėda city municipality, educational centres, Ministry of Interior), participation in commissions include several memberships in national commissions, one municipality commission head, and one university evaluation board head. Consultations provided to public entities include city, national park, and a national programme. Important events and conferences organized by the UoA focus on tourism, social work and music, with a national and partly international outreach. Membership of researchers in editorial boards includes five journals from four countries (Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria), and lists one editor in chief position, one regional editor and three editorial board memberships. Memberships of researchers in expert bodies for local and national authorities include five scholars, mostly members, with one exception of team leadership. Employees of this UoA hold membership in several international associations, but also a vice-president position (EUCC). KU seems to be successful in popularization activities („Tolerant school” conferences, events at science festivals, popularization articles and videos). Popularisation activities include links to websites, TV interviews, festivals, conferences and videos. The interaction of the UoA with business is weak; business sector orders are not reported; R&D orders from state institutions are listed as business sector orders as well as a research panel for the ESPAD initiative. List of research outputs for private sector entities is not reported.

## Development potential of UoA

Numbers of employees exceeds one hundred persons; however, they belong to the older age groups. Age distribution displays a peak for the 45-54 years, and similar numbers of 35-44 and 55-64 classes, while only one person is less than 35 years. Employees hired by competition are listed 32, with the exact same number of employees contracts terminated. The self-report correctly identifies the reasons of the main problems concerning attracting younger scholars (low salaries). Principles of HR are aligned on legal requirements and do not display a preference for any strategic direction regarding staff. Psychology and Education at the current stage have a greater potential for development, the size of the unit is a possible developmental strength, especially if the extent of human resources in Education is taken into account. There are impressive plans for promoting multidisciplinary research at the field of social sciences; further cross-disciplinary projects could be a solution – like fertilizing management studies by scholars from the fields of sociology or psychology. The ability to attract funding both on national (no projects in the last two years) and international level declines. The total financial support allocated to the unit dropped by 80 percent between 2013 and 2017; this threatens the stability of the staff and further development. The unit runs important research infrastructures (The Human Body Motorics Lab and Psychophysiology Lab) that offer good opportunities for the development of the interdisciplinary approach and might be among the main developmental strength of the unit; however the infrastructure mentioned in the self-report is not typically social science equipment (except the psychophysiology lab). Strategic plan of the institution is very broad with interdisciplinary objectives, but in the same time lacks focus and resource allocation mechanisms explanation. Research themes justification is convincing and builds on existing strengths in such areas as tourism, social work, education and self-realization of individuals; however there are no plans for strengthening the empirical research on education. The implementation of this strategy has not been precisely outlined; neither targets nor specific measures to targets are provided. In sum, the panel is of the opinion that the UoAs will be able to maintain the same level of national and international position in the next 5-10 years what is expressed in the score given.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

1. A strategy should be developed for orienting publications in higher ranking international journals. Psychology is somewhat more advanced in this respect; the other fields may benefit from its example.
2. The large number of part-time workers (especially in the field of education) may prohibit research activity; a strategy needs to be developed to move to full-time appointments.
3. Attracting more young scholars is vital for the development of social sciences. Participating in international projects and international mobility may made PhD training more attractive.
4. PhD students should receive more training in empirical research methods and should be encouraged in writing their thesis in English. They should be offered more opportunities for studies at leading research universities abroad.
5. Scientific research in education is important both from the perspective of evidence based education policy and research based teacher education; its scope should be broadened, its empirical foundations and international character should be strengthened.
6. More international activity should be encouraged, gradually taking over the role of leading scientists of projects.

## Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics, Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics

UoA abbreviation	LAEI-LAEI
Name of the UoA	Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics
Name of institution	Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics
Type of institution	Institute
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	12,0
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	0,0

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Management and administration	2	3,4	-
Economics	3	8,6	-

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities

The LAEI is a research institute focusing on agricultural economics and policy, and is mostly funded by structural support from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education and Science, both for basic (fundamental research) and applied research projects. As a research institute it does not have teaching staff. Part of its mission is to cooperate with business, government and the public. The UoA has two research fields: Management and Administration (03S), and Economics (04S).

#### Management and administration (03S)

In the area of Management and Administration, the Lithuanian Institute of Agrarian Economics has a relatively small group (4 researchers, with 3.4 full time equivalent). The research output is modest even considering the reduced size of the group; for the most part, it contains book chapters but there is a good publication in 2013 indexed in the Web of Science, Journal of Agricultural Science and Technology (Q2 in 2017). However, most publications do not reach international impact, as they are not top publications in the area of research. Apparently the UoA has directed its main efforts towards publications in journals edited locally, book chapters or monographs, instead of following a publication strategy that emphasizes quality and international visibility. The quality of international conferences is not very high and this aspect should be improved as a means to disseminate research results and gain recognition for the work of the research group. The UoA has received several awards, one from the Research Council of Lithuania in 2017 for the performance of the research institute. Concerning funding, the group seems well-financed; in particular, there is a project for the period 2015-2018 financed by the Research Council of Lithuania. No international funding is reported. No doctoral theses have been defended in the last five years.

Based on this evidence, the Panel evaluates the research in this field as satisfactory, with some international visibility, but not (yet) "strong".

#### Economics (04S)

The UoA has a sizable group in Economics (13 researchers, with 8.6 full time equivalent) that publishes well although the output is still modest. There is an upward trend in publications in international journals in this field, also in the Web of Science. One of the best research outputs in the evaluation period is in a

top-field journal (Applied Energy), and there are a few other publications in the upper segment. Nevertheless, the group does not have enough visibility in the field. The UoA has not put sufficient emphasis on top publications in the area of research; instead, it has directed its efforts towards publications in journals edited locally as well as monographs edited by the LAEI, book chapters, etc. The publications strategy has focused too much on quantity rather than quality. Presentations delivered at conferences abroad contain papers in good conferences. The group is well financed, having secured funding from the European Social Fund and the 7th Framework Programme, as well as one Baltic Sea project and, more recently, a large project from the Research Council of Lithuania was awarded regarding sustainability and agriculture. Apparently, the group does not attract doctoral students and only one PhD thesis was defended in the evaluation period. Scientists from this unit received several awards, both national and international.

The Panel evaluates the research of the UoA in this field as strong at the national level but (still) with limited international recognition. The group would need to improve the quality of publications to increase international visibility.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The Institute is very well connected to an international network of partner universities and institutes, and this leads to many fruitful (applied) research projects. Much of its research is instigated and/or supported by the Lithuanian Ministry of Agriculture and/or the Lithuanian Research Council. The results are highly relevant to policy makers, farmers' associations, the food industry, municipalities and rural communities. In this context, it is worth noting the consultation on the analysis of the impact of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Agreement between US and EU and the bilateral agreement EU-Japan. Also, the Ecovillages project is an impressive achievement with interesting results. Output from projects is typically published in English and/or Lithuanian and is made available to a wider audience (often in – electronic – books or reports). In the evaluation period, the unit organized several ad-hoc conferences. Researchers of the unit participate in editorial boards of some foreign peer-reviewed (not top-class) journals. The unit has agreed on co-operation with several business and public companies.

Given the mission of the institute, it is natural to expect a high economic impact of its work, and the evidence confirms this. The unit contributes much to our knowledge of the agricultural sector, including sustainability, rural development, food waste and efficiency in production and the food supply chain. It cooperates with partners from the Northern and Baltic states, but also with researchers from China, the Netherlands and Moldova. Accordingly, the unit is a very important partner outside the academic community, it is closely related to decision-makers and society, and its research is very relevant.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The institute is well-resourced and its facilities are adequate. Data facilities and data availability can also be considered appropriate. Thus, the UoA has available all the necessary infrastructure and resources required for their research, so this does not seem to be a limiting factor for the development of the unit's activities.

The UoA has a relatively young group of researchers who are ambitious, open-minded, and have the potential to further strengthen the Institute and gain international impact. Career incentives are clearly stated providing the necessary motivation. The Panel felt that the Institute's ambitions were widely shared by its researchers and PhD candidates, and this alignment of objectives should contribute to the development potential of the unit. It is also a very good sign that the unit is able to attract visiting researchers as this will improve its international network. Overall, there is a good scope for growth and improvement, since the unit has a clear strategy. In this respect, it is worth noting the increasing interest in energy issues, and other relevant topics, as reflected by publications, that will reinforce its interdisciplinarity. Moreover, this interdisciplinary nature of much of the institute's research is an important asset, which – in combination with its expanding international partner network – should help to become more successful in participating in competitive EU projects and to further improve on societal impact overall.

The institute reports participation in several international projects and collaborations with foreign partners, which should deliver results in the next few years. In the evaluation period, the Institute has increased interaction with the international community, as indicated by the number of articles in the Web of Science and the research stays by PhD students and researchers. This evolution shows the strong willingness to increase international visibility.

Given this evidence, the Panel is of the opinion that this unit has the potential to improve its ratings within the next 5-10 years.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

The Institute's activities should continue to pursue what are its main challenges, namely internationalization, interdisciplinarity, securing international funding and commercialisation of science. The UoA has already recognised the need to improve the academic impact of their work in an international context. To reach that objective, the Panel recommends taking additional measures in that direction:

1. The Panel's first recommendation is to continue the UoA's efforts to boost the international exposure of LAEI, through a weekly program of seminars by foreign researchers, experts in topics of interest for members of the UoA. These seminars could be useful to keep in touch with the more recent developments in the field and to identify relevant questions of analysis. The seminar series could be announced on the webpage.
2. Similarly, and together with the previous recommendation, the UoA should continue international academic exchanges to strengthen ties with institutions overseas. The Panel recommends a program of longer research stays by foreign researchers (for a semester or a year) in the UoA, that could intensify international networking. The call for applications for visiting researchers could be announced on the webpage.
3. As a complement to the previous two recommendations, the UoA should further promote outward mobility of its researchers, with visits to universities and institutions overseas to carry out collaborative research with leaders in frontier research in the relevant fields.
4. The Panel strongly recommends trying to recruit international researchers, or Lithuanian researchers with a PhD from international prestigious universities, as permanent staff for the UoA, so as to foster knowledge exchange and enable cross-fertilization.
5. The Panel recommends increasing the number of PhD students. For that purpose, the UoA should provide them with a supportive environment and intensify the cooperation with universities to enhance their training.
6. Since present regulation in Lithuania allows the PhD dissertations to be in English and in the format of scientific papers, the Panel strongly recommends that students be not only allowed but also encouraged to write their theses in English and in the form of articles that could later be sent for publication in journals. It is also recommended to increase involvement of foreign scholars in the PhD trajectory by leveraging upon the institute's partner network. This measure will lead the young researchers' efforts towards the most fruitful direction for their future academic career.
7. To reinforce the effect of the previous recommendation, the UoA should consider the possibility of establishing as an internal requirement that at least one paper of the PhD dissertation be published in the Web of Science before the defense can take place. This measure would signal the young researchers the direction and the requirements for their future academic development in an international context.
8. The UoA should implement an incentive scheme to further stimulate publications in higher-ranked international outlets.

## Social Science, LCC International University

UoA abbreviation	LCC_SM
Name of the UoA	Social Science (SM)
Name of institution	LCC International University (LCC)
Type of institution	
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	-
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	-

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Political sciences, Management and administration, Psychology, Communication and information (02S, 03S, 06S, 08S)	2	-	-

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	-
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	-
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### The quality of R&D activities

#### Political sciences, Management and administration, Psychology, Communication and information (02S, 03S, 06S, 08S)

One of the main distinguishing features of the unit is its international profile with different relationships with institutions, particularly, in North America. The ties that the unit has created with many scholars in the US and Canada is reflected by the international profile of the research outputs. Indeed, the unit had developed research activities that have produced research outputs published in international outlets, such as “Biological Psychiatry and Psychopharmacology”, “Marriage and Family Review” and “SAIS Europe Journal of Global Affairs”, as well as in books edited by international publishers, such as Routledge and Springer. However, the overall list of best publications of the unit is limited, in 2013 and 2014 only one publication per year has been reported. In relation to the list of best publications presented for the evaluation and, particularly, considering the list of the best research outputs, the unit shows a good capacity to produce high-quality research with international recognition. Also, the unit is engaged in participating in international events where academic staff presented research papers. The international focus of the unit is also shown by the fact that the unit has not listed any publication in Lithuanian. The unit has not received any national and international awards for R&D activities. Moreover, the unit does not have PhD students, and, also the unit has not participated in competitive R&D projects.

Taking into account the international profile of the research outputs and combining this with the other criteria to be considered for the evaluation of the research and development quality, the overall level of the research carried out by the unit is considered satisfactory.

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Not applicable.

### The development potential of UoA

Not applicable.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

On the basis of the evaluation, some recommendations can be outlined below:

- The institution should strengthen its publication record, both in terms of number of paper published and –most importantly– in relation to the allocation of papers in high-quality journals.
- The unit should produce research activities and outputs that are more ingrained in the texture of the national discourses. The unit should enhance its ties with the Lithuanian research community. This will connect the institution to the challenges and problems of the society in Lithuania and increase the visibility and impact of the institution.
- As the unit should enhance its visibility and impact in the local socio-cultural context (region and nation), the development of publications in Lithuanian is recommended.
- Considering the specific profile of the unit, it should play an important bridging role: they could provide value to, and benefit from other units by networking with other academic institutions at the national level. Indeed, the international profile of the unit could help those national units that need to enhance their international profile, and on the other hand, the unit could get benefits by linking to institutions that are more focused on national R&D issues. There are a lot of opportunities of cross-fertilisation and co-development. One of the options is to join forces with other national institution to participate in international competitive grant applications.
- In comparative terms with other Lithuanian institutions and research groups, the unit also needs to be more engaged in advising and counselling. This is important in order to make sure that the expertise and knowledge developed by the research unit could make a contribution to policy and decision making in Lithuania.
- The unit does not have PhD students; however, considering the strong ties that the unit has with international institutions, they may play an important role of activating and supporting collaborations between young national researchers with North American scholars.
- It is also suggested to adopt a more structured approach to the production and reporting of the research outputs to comply with the Lithuanian Research Council standards. This means that the unit should use the methodology provided by Mosta to better assess the quality of its outputs and its impacts.
- The unit should articulate their strategy and vision, and make a case for their role in Lithuania in the context of their research and education.

## Energy Economy, Lithuanian Energy Institute

UoA abbreviation	LEI_EE
Name of the UoA	Energy Economy
Name of institution	Lithuanian Energy Institute
Type of institution	Research Institute
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	21
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Economics (04S)	4	21	-

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities

#### Economics (04S)

The research quality of the economics unit of the LEI has significantly improved during the recent years and currently is of high level and internationally recognized. The UoA carries out both fundamental and applied energy-related research and provides the conceptual and methodological basis for planning in the energy sector. The focus of the research of the UoA is complementary to the research focus of the whole LEI which allows fruitful synergy. In the field of energy economics, the UoA primarily develops advanced methods of energy planning, simulation and management of power systems. Significant improvement of the research quality is proved by the share of the publications in CA WoS Q1 (more than 60% in 2016; three of them are a part of TOP-10 publications), increasing number of publications prepared with international partners (more than 80% in 2017), the share of the international funding of the unit (20% in the period 2013–2017) and increasing number of important international research projects. The unit participated in five H2020 projects and some other international projects. Two of the H2020 project have been coordinated by the LEI, which proves its strong international recognition. Best presentations delivered at conferences abroad contain papers at prestigious conferences. Best received national and international awards including honorary awards from national bodies (parliament and ministry) awarded/granted to a few scholars, as well as a regular recognition by the local branch of the World Energy Council granted to a few scholars. The UoA strongly took into account the results of the pilot assessment provided by MOSTA in 2015 and made strong changes in research and development management and organisation.

Overall, research carried out currently is of high level and internationally recognized.

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

The UoA strongly cooperates with the Ministry of Energy (on the developing of the new National Energy Strategy), Ministry of Environment (by methodological guidance and providing applied research), Ministry of Transport (by consulting the transport strategy) and other ministries, municipalities, business entities etc. The unit is fully capable to transform the achievement of its research to the practice of national and international institutions and to business. The impact of UoA on social and economic developments is important in many ways. Important events and conferences organized by the UoA are mostly specialized, the UoA also organizes an international event of young researchers twice a year. Membership of

researchers in editorial boards is limited to Lithuanian, Slovak, and Polish journals. Membership of researchers in expert bodies includes four memberships in international associations. The UoA is an institutional member of key international and regional organisations like the Baltic Energy Security Research Platform, the European Energy Research Alliance and the International Associations for Energy Economics. The unit also contributes to the popularization of science and research by providing excursions to LEI (20-40 excursions per year). The UoA delivers high-ranked experts which provide consultations to decision makers and who are in touch with national and international media. The social and economic impact of the unit has significantly increased since the pilot assessment. The cooperation with the government bodies has improved. The research of the UoA is funded by the business sector by 21% which is a high share for a state research institute. Overall, the UoA carries out very important scientific research and is a very important partner in R&D outside the academic community. The UoA is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers, and the society.

Overall, the UoA carries out very important scientific research and is a very important partner in R&D outside the academic community.

### **Development potential of UoA**

R&D infrastructure of the unit consists of the well-equipped workplaces for every researcher, access to all relevant databases and research software. Some software has been bought using sources from the international projects. The unit also has an exciting number of advanced in-house developed research tools, both standalone models and additional tools used as supplements to the software obtained from the third parties. The infrastructure also consists of the National Open Access Scientific Research Centre for Future Energy Technologies. Number of employees is 21, among which 14 hold a doctoral degree. Age distribution of employees displays a peak in the 35-44 age group and relatively close numbers in remaining groups, with the exception of the youngest group of employees. Employees hired by competition are none since no employee has been hired in the reporting period. Principles of HR are claimed to be clear, there is a five-year period of evaluation of the staff. Training plan for improving competencies of researchers is set up. There is a good environment for attracting new people. The researchers have sufficient time allocated for their research work, they have good administrative support from the unit. As the unit is relatively small, the internal processes are swift and smooth. Research staff is well motivated and incentivised for preparing proposals to the top-level research programmes (like H2020). The unit's research is focused on very topical issues (from the international point of view) which have a great potential for further development. All PhD theses have been written in English, which is not the rule but the choice of PhD candidates. PhD students are well supported by the supervisors, other researchers and by the administrative staff. There was a very pleasant and open atmosphere during all the meetings. The LEI recently received one more position for PhD studies. As the number of PhD positions is regulated by the Ministry, an increasing quota of PhD positions is assessed as the recognition of the unit's recent research. Higher number of PhD students would also contribute to future research output of the UoA.

Overall, the UoA is fully capable to achieve excellent ratings in the next 5-10 years.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

The unit has significantly improved its research quality during the recent years. As the main achievements, the unit has strongly improved international research co-operation, strongly increased the number of international research projects (like H2020) and strengthened the social and economic impact of its research (e.g., the unit substantially contributes to the national independent strategy).

Recent steps of the management are the right steps forward, in particular incentives for researchers (e.g. for preparing the project proposals), swift and smooth internal processes, administrative support including in-house proofreading, regular 5-year-period evaluation of researchers („tenders“), system of attracting new staff, scholarships for foreign students, good supervision of PhD students.

Some of the steps have been triggered by the rather negative evaluation of the unit in the pilot assessment, the motivation of the researchers has strongly increased.

It is recommended to continue the processes of internationalisation of research and the aspirations on publications in the top-level journals.

Furthermore, it is recommended to continue and further improve the co-operation with the ministries, municipalities and business, preferably also outside Lithuania and the Baltic region.

## Social sciences, Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences

UoA abbreviation	LEU_S
Name of the UoA	Social sciences
Name of institution	Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	13,7
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	76,32

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Sociology (05S)	2	0,5	4,8
Psychology (06S)	4	1,2	6,8
Education (07S)	3	9,1	59,32
Management and administration, Economics, Communication and information (03S, 04S, 08S)	3	2,9	5,4

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Sociology (05S)

Sociology is the smallest group in this UoA. The quality of the research is satisfactory at the national level. Among the five best publications, there are international journal articles which are regional ones; publications in prestigious international journals are still missing. The broad range of areas covered range from youth studies, gerontology, to foster children, indicating expertise in a number of important sub-fields. There is good participation in international conferences, though these are not the higher profile conferences. International awards indicate that scholars are well regarded not only within the Baltic region but also beyond. Participation in international and competitive R&D projects is good; despite its small size, the field is very successful in attracting research funding from various sources. Researchers working at the field of sociology won a major Norwegian grant for capacity building and have carried out another large-scale national project. The range of projects demonstrates the field's ability to be flexible in applying and winning both large-scale, long-term projects as well as smaller and shorter term ones. Some projects involve international cooperation where researchers have participated both as lead partner as well as partner. This involvement is unfortunately not translated into high-quality publications. No Ph.D. training is affiliated with the field.

#### Psychology (06S)

Psychology is one of the best achieving fields in this UoA is of a high level and internationally recognized. Among the publications, there are papers published in referenced international journals emerging from international collaborations, co-authored with international scholars. The members of the group were successful, particularly in cases where the multidisciplinary approach was applied. However, their works do not generally aim for the top rank journals, which would be a typical strategy in international psychology. Publication of a chapter in a leading international handbook on young children's thinking is a very good output. Presentations of research papers at well-established international conferences demonstrate global

visibility of the research. Scholars have received a number of national and international awards of high acclaim. The awards recognise both scientific and social contributions of this scholarship. Competition in R&D projects is very good. A very interesting range of projects have won several large grants and deal with some timely topics, relevant also for education (e.g. life-long learning, formal and informal teaching, self-regulated learning). Partners in projects range from more proximal (Baltic States) to more distant (Ireland, UK, Austria, China).

### **Education (07S)**

This is a large field, as it is part of a university where education is the main area of training. However, the quality of research does not always meet the expectations of such a central domain. Given the large size of the group in terms of FTE, there is potential for expansion of the R&D activities, particularly in terms of quality. Among the best publications, there is no paper published in top international journals; however, researchers have co-authored several papers or chapters with international scholars. International publications were generally in the form of conference proceedings or in international edited collections and other books with a comparative studies orientation. Though good, more could be done to target this work for high impact journal publication. Several current themes of modern education research are not represented in the research portfolio of this UoA. The education field is, however, involved in several research projects, including international ones. A range of topics have been presented in different international conferences in a number of countries. It is good to see that awards include 3 to young scholars. Other awards are for contributions to the social field and for the contribution to international progress (as with the Olympic rings). Participation in international and competitive R&D is strong, with a high international component. Project partners come from Baltic and European states, Asia and China. Funds obtained were not always high but outputs in relation to funds are extremely valuable; they include developing Masters' courses, giving Open Access to publications, updating of curricular content in Central Asia curricula, amongst others. It is a strength that, the field offers successful Ph.D. studies. In total, 29 dissertations were defended from 2013 to 2017. Conclusion: The research carried out at this UoA is of high-level /strong, recognized at national level, with limited international recognition.

### **Management and administration, Economics, Communication and information (03S, 04S, 08S)**

The fields of management, administration, economics, communication, and information represent very small fields in the LEU context, which needs to be considered. Given the size of the group, it is unrealistic to expect a high number of high-level outputs. At the same time, all these fields belong to disciplines that typically focus on publications in international journals with (high) impact factor. Such publications are generally missing in the portfolio of the LEU staff. The group focuses mainly on domestic journals or books, with less use of international languages. Even if the size of the group is taken into account, there is clearly a space for improvement. Research has been presented in a number of relevant international conferences in the field of global competitiveness and comparative economics. Prestigious and international awards have been awarded; one top scholar has gained 2 out of the 5. A strength is participation in international R&D projects (e.g. Interreg IV and V, Baltic Region, Europrize) with considerable scientific outputs such as publications and conference presentations. These range from smaller scale to larger projects with very good funding. Scholars are lead partners in some of these.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

LEU\_S has high impact in a number of fields. Scholars are board members of national and international journals. LEU has organized international conferences and its staff serves in several international bodies or expert working groups. Employees of the UoA participate in committees of the Ministry of Education and Science as well as the Bank of Lithuania/ Lithuanian Central Credit Union. The UoA cooperates with several representatives of the business sector, though one company (JSC-UAB ) seems the preferred partner. Projects with this partner have high social and economic impact. The self-assessment report presents several monographs published by teachers of UoA. These books deal with themes which have national relevance, e.g. exploring teachers' competences. Some very good impact outputs come from a 7-year international cooperative project as part of the NEPL project, which involves teacher trainees, parents as well as young children. The work on inclusive schools also has high social and economic impact both nationally and internationally. Local projects (such as projects on history games, on self-regulation) have very good social and economic impact. There is very good impact in science popularisation activities in a range of media, engaging different stakeholders.

## Development potential of UoA

The UoA is doing well; it is capable of improving the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments by 2 points within the next 5-10 years'. The majority of the employees of this UoA belong to the older generations; it is a possible weakness that 18 persons are over 64 years of age and only 5 are under 35. On the other hand, the management has a strong strategy to further improve the quality of this unit; quality international research has become a priority. Scholars have contacts with scholars in 28 countries; 50 international scholars have visited the UoA recently. The strategic plan with its 3 main components and R&D thematic research areas indicate good potential; the themes have come from the bottom up and reflect global and European concerns. They correspond well to the expertise potential of LEU\_SLEU\_S has clearly worked hard to set up laboratories, centres/institutes, courses and experimental schools (amongst others) to provide support to scholars and students and to promote innovative research. The establishment of the Educational Research Institute is especially promising. The kindergarten provides a unique 'natural setting' laboratory for scientific research as well as an opportunity for 'best practice' teacher training. There has been investment in libraries, in specialised software and in electronic journals. New salary incentives for the adaptation of study material to electronic materials are forward-looking. The merger with VMU is being taken on as an opportunity for more internationalisation of research through the identification of the strongest areas for development. A number of sound strategies to raise the international profile of the unit were mentioned during the site visit. The UoA is trying to turn its social and economic impact, as with its SMART project, into opportunities for more national funding. Doctoral students are attracted to the unit because of its expertise in specialised subjects, such as music education, computer games education and social inclusion. There are 3 international doctoral students out of 28 registered. Although the diversity of the fields of doctoral studies may prohibit common core methodological courses, it is of some concern that little core methodology training is offered. On the plus side, doctoral students report very good supervisory relationships as well as opportunities to consult with international scholars with expertise in the methodologies of these diverse disciplines, usually through study visits to other universities (e.g. Copenhagen, Friburg, London. They report opportunities to work on projects and co-author with supervisors.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

1. Given that Education has an extremely large number of part-time workers which may prohibit research activity, a strategy needs to be developed to move to full-time appointments.
2. The Sociology, Education and Management fields need a more aggressive strategy of targeting publications in higher ranking international journals and better strategies for turning scientific results of participation in R&D projects into publications.
3. Rather than publish in conference proceeding outlets, scholars should target high impact journals. The University needs to evaluate outputs over a longer period of time to allow scholars the time necessary to achieve this goal.
4. A core methodological training course should be provided for Doctoral students.
5. A strategy for using social and economic impact activities to garner more national (including private) funds should be elaborated.
6. In the first phase of the merger with VMU, the search for a more contained list of joint research areas will have to be balanced against the risk of losing others in which both institutions have very good fundamental and applied impact. Whilst the proposed joint Education Research Institute is a good first step, a strategy to integrate other areas of overlap or compatibility needs to be articulated.
7. Both the Narrative Play Laboratory and the 'model kindergarten' can be more proactively marketed to attract the interest of international scholars.

## The General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania, The General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania

UoA abbreviation	LKA_LKA
Name of the UoA	The General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania
Name of institution	The General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	3
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	15,24

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Political sciences (02S)	2	1,5	5
Law, Management and administration, Economics, Sociology (01S, 03S, 04S, 05S)	1	1,5	10,24

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	4
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Political sciences (02S)

Based on the institution's annual R&D performance assessment for each of the last five years, in particular: data on research work and on participation in international R&D projects; the list of the best research outputs and best presentations delivered at conferences abroad best research outputs; participation in competitive R&D projects; the most important national and international awards; as well as the number of defended dissertation and the number of doctoral students from abroad, the Unit of Assessment is evaluated as satisfactorily at national level and the level of research carried out is satisfactory. It has established that the UoA's primary focus is teaching (training undergraduate cadets, and lifelong learning for army officers), and policy analysis on the national level. Even though the research agenda is set forth by the Ministry of Defence, the scope of research goes beyond the narrowly defined defence and national security area, and includes boarder assessment of energy polices, such as family planning, retirement, occupational sociology. Despite its involvement with international defence institutions, its international academic activity is limited (even if IOS, University of Latvia and HIIA publications are noted). The research output of the UoA in this field mainly concerns in-house outlets (at LKA itself or in the broader region). Only a few publications concern truly international outlets, but still with limited academic impact. The UoA produces a number of research outlets, i.e. a monograph-series along two journals. Despite the qualifications of the faculty and the availability of a strong network of international defence institutions, along the UoA's unique access to military data, its presence at high level international academic conferences is also limited and below its current potential. Academic rewards are also mostly national (Lithuanian Research Council) or in-house, which does not signal international academic recognition. The doctoral training is also in need of an expansive broadening. Only one dissertation has been defended in the assessment period (and in Lithuanian); the number of ongoing PhD projects is very low. Involvement in international competitive R&D projects also needs further improvement.

#### Law, Management and administration, Economics, Sociology (01S, 03S, 04S, 05S)

Based on the institution's annual R&D performance assessment for each of the last five years, in particular: data on research work and on participation in international R&D projects; the list of the best research

outputs and best presentations delivered at conferences abroad best research outputs; participation in competitive R&D projects; the most important national and international awards; as well as the number of defended dissertation and the number of doctoral students from abroad, the Unit of Assessment is assessed poorly at national level and the level of research carried out is low at this research field. It has established that the UoA's primary focus is teaching (training undergraduate cadets, and lifelong learning for army officers), and policy analysis on the national level. Even though the research agenda is set forth by the Ministry of Defence, the scope of research goes beyond the narrowly defined defence and national security area, and includes boarder assessment of energy polices, such as family planning, retirement, occupational sociology. Despite its involvement with international defence institutions, its international academic activity is limited (even if IOS, University of Latvia and HIIA publications are noted). The research output of the UoA in this field is made up entirely of publications through in-house outlets (at LKA itself or in the broader region), and of some articles in (open access) repositories/journals, but with very limited international impact. This is to some extent at odds with the volume of participation in international conferences; apparently it is hard to transfer these conference contributions into articles with high academic international impact. No dissertations have been defended in the assessment period; apparently there are no ongoing PhD projects. There has been no involvement in international competitive R&D projects. Overall, given the capacity available (11.7 FTE) the research performance of the UoA in this field has to be assessed as poor.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

Based on the assessment of the last five years' R&D performance in the light of: business and public sector (Lithuanian and foreign) R&D orders; the assessment of the social and economic impact of research outputs and R&D contracts with private sector entities; the participation of researchers, in national and international working groups, associations and expert groups; consultations provided to the public or economic entities; attendance at domestic and international academic conferences and events; organising academic conferences and events; membership in editorial boards of academic journals; and science popularisation activities, it has been established that the UoA carries out research which is important for society, and the UoA is an important partner in R&D outside the academic community and the relationship with business, decision-makers and the society is appropriate to a recognised institution carrying out academic activities. It has also been found that (not surprisingly) commissioned research seems to be executed mainly for the Lithuanian MoD. This is also true for many of the consultations provided, and in this sense the UoA is an important player for its main stakeholder. Membership in international committees and expert groups is, however, limited. The UoA organises conferences on a regular basis, and is sufficiently active regarding popularisation activities (events, publications). Membership in editorial boards, however, is mostly limited to LKA in-house journals, or local fora. Membership of academic associations concerns ERGOMAS mainly, with limited participation in mainstream political science networks and/or expert groups. All in all, the links of the UoA with (potential) stakeholders beyond the MoD seem to be rather weak.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The assessment, based on: reviewing the composition of faculty and staff; the R&D infrastructure; the planned directions for development; indicated participation in national and international R&D infrastructures; the principles of human resource management; the strategic plan of the UoA, as well as global trends in its area of science, found that the UoA has the potential to significantly improve its ratings, and the evaluators have been convinced that the UoA is capable to improve the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments by 4 points within the next 5-10 years.

The evaluators took note of significant HR commitments to promote high quality research and the new strategic plan. There is evidence for research resource consolidation, and progress for in-house journals to be included in Scopus. The fact that submissions and working papers are also taken into consideration (not only published or accepted articles) may be the foundation of a successful incentivizing scheme. A caveat though: short term evaluation cycles carry the risk of researchers choosing lower quality (but fast turnover-producing) targets.

Also, the UoA has a unique access to data, domestic and international and research insight from the military (along funding and research contracting) that creates and unparalleled niche for cutting edge and competitive research outputs. Although the budget and the framework for research (along recurring specific research requests) is provided by the defence ministry, no direct infringement on academic

freedom has been reported. Being a hierarchical, military organisation, much depends on the incentives and vision of the commander, and for now there appears to be a firm commitment to significantly raising the UoA's research profile. Also, faculty and management appear to be motivated, engaged and enthusiastic about this new mission and vision. Overall, conditions (travel possibilities, teaching load) seem to be better than in public universities. Although reports of recent developments (such as participation in new projects like H2020, SPARTA and new avenues for ERASMUS+) cannot and have not been taken into consideration during the assessment, it indicates that change can indeed go rapidly. Also, the fact that not all state funded doctoral positions are filled shows a clear determination for selectivity and quality control.

Given the above, there is substantial potential for the UoA to enhance its research performance, given the foreseen establishment of a dedicated research centre, and the expansion of research staff.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

1. Besides generally recommending to keep up the above indicated commitments to reach the envisaged research potential, the question of confidential, classified research (which cannot be published, and hence, taken into consideration for performance assessment) has been raised. Arguably, some form of formal recognition of these outputs can be factored into the performance assessment scheme.
2. Also, the question of integrating doctoral work into military command needs to improve. All the doctoral students the expert committee met had full time military engagements, which meant that all research, including conference travel was on accounts of their paid or unpaid leave and holidays. This needs to be addressed formally for a sustainable high quality doctoral training.
3. Also, as the expert committee learned that officially only members of the military can be admitted to the doctoral program, yes at several instances exceptions had been made to accommodate and admit civilians. This is a practice to be encouraged, and by all means a transparent legal situation needs to be worked out in this regards.
4. The renovation of the library is advised to continue.
5. A center for international academic writing (including language editing) is advised to be established.
6. Transparent guidelines for mobility (conference and research travel) grants should be established.
7. When evaluating the research performance of the UoA, it should be taken into consideration that only the civilian faculty's (amounting to only about 70 per cent of faculty, as the expert committee has been told) job description involves the 30 % research-allocation.

## Lithuanian Social Research Centre, Lithuanian Social Research Centre

UoA abbreviation	LSTC
Name of the UoA	Lithuanian Social Research Centre
Name of institution	Lithuanian Social Research Centre
Type of institution	Research Institute
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	25,98
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Economics (04S)	2	2,92	-
Sociology (05S)	3	23,06	-

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Economics (04S)

Economics constitutes only a minor field in the portfolio of the Unit of Assessment and the full-time equivalent dedicated to this field is small. The outputs reported for the field of economics are sometimes closer to other disciplines. Even though publications in the international journals with impact factor (Web of Science, Clarivate Analytics) are typically considered to be the main and relevant outputs in the field of economics, the unit carries out multidisciplinary research and it is not its intention to develop the field of economics in the traditional sense. Hence, the research work is focusing more on the issues of welfare, tax morale, and inequality. The panel agrees that although the unit is evaluated in the field of economics, a broader concept of economic approach to science might be used in this case.

The UoA admits that it is not an international player in the field of economics. The level of internalization is low. Almost a half of publications mentioned in Annual Data Report are in Lithuanian. Even some publications written in English are published in Lithuanian journals. However, on the national level, the unit covers social-economics-related areas that are unique in the Lithuanian research area and are not pursued in other institutions. Moreover, the number of international publications has been increasing in recent years. UoA is also leading the comparative project about the challenges to welfare state systems in Lithuania and Sweden. Conference presentations have been delivered at the good, but not most prestigious conferences. Research performed by the UoA is oriented mainly on the national issues. Although the UoA is unique in the offering the only program in social entrepreneurship in Lithuania, the field is still underdeveloped.

#### Sociology (05S)

In the field of sociology, the UoA is a strong player on the national level and also gained some international recognition. The UoA researches important social issues concerning social welfare, geography, demography, ethnicity, labor market, and others. The number of publications shows relatively good productivity of the UoA. Most presented publications are written in English and some of them were published in good journals (e.g., Sociological Forum, Nationalities Papers, Journal of Baltic Studies, Journal of Divorce & Remarriage). The Unit of Assessment seems to have close cooperation with

demographic institutes that are strong players on the international scene (for example Max Planck Institute of Demographic Research) as well as institutes of migration and regional development. The sociology field is involved in numerous international collaborations that lead to joint publications. At the same time, the staff members are capable of being also the sole authors of important publications. The scientific production focuses on journals, which is positive given the current shift of the field and the growing emphasis on publications in indexed journals. At the same time, UoA also reports chapters in books published by major international academic publishers. The LSTC has been very successful in attracting resources from the national competitive calls, but the funding from international programmes have decreased in recent years. Moreover, the Unit of Assessment rarely acts as a leading partner in the international projects. Overall, the production of the UoA in the field of sociology is good and gained some international recognition although it rarely reaches the most prestigious outlets.

## **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The scientific research of the UoA is highly important for society. The research topics are relevant for social policy and policy development. The UoA is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers, and the society. The LSTC contributes to the training of future researchers and experts in social issues. The Centre has a wide network of collaboration with public authorities and social partner organizations. In many instances, researchers from LSTC also serve as experts for the government, ministries and other public institutions or provide consultations for the members of the Parliament. The Unit of Assessment participated in the preparation of multiple legislative drafts (e.g. labour code, state social insurance, sickness and maternity social insurance, unemployment social insurance and several other legislative drafts). The applied research carried out at the Centre as well as the expertise have high local and regional relevance is of special relevance as it addresses crucial issues such as depopulation of some regions, territorial exclusion, and inequality. Furthermore, the UoA has a collaboration agreement with the NATO Force Integration Unit Lithuania. Thus, LSTC plays an important role in supporting Lithuanian social and economic policies. The staff of the UoA also has a visible presence in media and public debate. The UoA publishes policy briefs for wider audience; it also reaches public via radio programmes, interviews, and press releases. Overall, scientific research is important for society. The UoA is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers, and the society.

## **Development potential of UoA**

The age structure of the research staff is relatively young (over half under the age of 45), which is promising and offers good development potential. The UoA has a good virtual and physical infrastructure (computers, software, databases). Although LSTC does not operate its own (physical) library, there are other academic libraries around available to the researchers that provide access to the needed resources. The unit is successful in obtaining national funding programs (stable in terms of the number of projects but declining in terms of total funds). At the same time, success in obtaining international grants has been declining (both in terms of the number of projects and the amount of funds received). However, the staff is actively searching for new opportunities (e.g., new projects with Scandinavian partners). Given the size of the unit and the experience of the research staff, there is a potential for an increase in production regarding both the quality and quantity. The LSTC has the potential to become an international contributor in social science if the necessary steps are taken to support and improve skills in international publishing. The management is well aware of the weaknesses (e.g., inconsistent funding and insufficient participation in international projects, modest opportunities for staff training) and searches for strategies to address them. The UoA is capable of improving the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments by 2 points within the next 5-10 years.

## **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

- The level of internationalization can be improved and the UoA can become more visible on the international scene. In order to achieve higher levels of internationalization, several strategies could be used. First, PhD. students should be encouraged to write their PhD thesis in English. Such strategy would help to publish the results of their doctoral research in English, preferable in the international outlets. Second, it would be advisable to dedicate more funds for the international mobility for PhD students. To increase internationalization of research and study program, it is necessary for students to learn to present at international conferences, attend summer schools and to build new contacts. The

support for international mobility might also help to incentivized PhD students to write dissertations and publish in English. A course in academic writing might be a good means to support researchers in more international publishing.

- The UoA is well-aware of potential threats in the stability of funding and is actively searching for new opportunities and international collaboration, particularly in terms of Horizon 2020. At the same time, it would be advisable to search and try for new sources of funding. Given the research and development potential of the Unit of Assessment, the senior staff should be encouraged to apply for the ERC grants. It would be helpful to develop – potentially in collaboration with other research institutions – project writing mentoring program for aiming at international grants. It might be also useful to get involved in the ERC evaluation process.

## Faculty of Sport Education, Lithuanian Sports University

UoA abbreviation	LSU_SEF
Name of the UoA	Faculty of Sport Education
Name of institution	Lithuanian Sports University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	4
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	51,47

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Management and administration (03S)	3	0,5	4,79
Economics (04S)	3	1	3,78
Education (07S)	3	2,5	42,9

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Management and administration (03S)

This relatively small education and research unit carries out intensive research work of high-level. Researchers publish their results in good international journals of their field, including the Journal of Business Ethics. The five best publications are published in journals registered in the Web of Science. The focus on sports management, which is a niche area within management and administration. Articles are in collaboration with scholars in other LSU departments as well as other universities. Although there is no participation in international R&D (such as FP 7), participation in competitive R&D is very good. It is mainly in efficient and effective small-scale projects, which -though national-, have outputs which have been disseminated internationally. A medium scale project on mobbing has resulted in important publications and conferences which contribute to the field at a global level. Conference presentations in a number areas of expertise have been made at relevant and high-standing international conferences across Europe.

#### Economics (04S)

Although this is the smallest field of the UoA, it carries out intensive research work of a satisfactory level. The five best outputs demonstrate that researchers publish most of their results in recognized international journals. Out of the five best publications, four are published in journals registered in the Web of Science. Members of the group attend recognized conferences, though not high-level international conferences. However, these are good papers which showcase a range of research interests, some of which appear somewhat tangential to a Sports University (the Karachi stock exchange research). Three of the five papers listed are from the same scholar. The Annual Report registered a notable increase of publications for this Economics unit. The UoA has carried out only two, relatively small, projects. No national or international awards have been listed.

## Education (07S)

This is the largest field of the UoA; it is engaged in acceptable level of research work focusing on some well-defined themes related to the main mission of the university. Their publications appear mostly in recognized international journals though fewer in journals covered by the Web of Science. Members of the group attend prestigious conferences of their field. The UoA has not participated in international R & D projects; however, competitive R & D projects include a range of small to medium-size national projects, from which a number of important outputs, both fundamental and applied, have been achieved and with findings which are internationally transferable. These include research on physical activity and people with special needs, school children fitness assessment and health-related physical fitness of young children. Scholars have presented interesting papers at leading international conferences (2 are from the same scholar). One prestigious international award has been awarded to an esteemed scholar of the UoA.

## The economic and social impact of R&D activities

This UoA is engaged in cooperation with several players in the private sector on topics like tourism and health education which results in relevant scientific publications. The quality of research outputs and R & D contracts is uneven; some seem to be fulfilling basic information gathering functions for the organization whilst others such as on the commercialization of research of Lithuanian natural environment, is of very good social and economic impact. The projects on school children's health indicators have the potential to be very good for social and economic impact by reducing health related problems amongst school children. There is very good participation of researchers in working groups/commissions, like the National Olympic Committee, the Commission for Youth and Sport Affairs, as well as expert evaluators for the municipality. There is a good record of consultancies to local and national public or economic entities. Researchers and teachers of the UoA are active both in governmental and academic committees. It is well connected to the business sector as well, as with projects in the tourism and leisure industry. Some members of the unit play roles on editorial boards in decent international journals. Conference organizing activities have rather regional relevance; however, they are on a range of research areas of high social impact (e.g. physical activity in old age, sport management). The Physical Education Teachers Association held their annual conference here for the first time last year. A 'Saturday school' open to the public is organized for the second consecutive year; around 100 people attend regularly.

The Panel concludes that the Unit carries out very important scientific research and is a very important partner in R&D outside the academic community.

## Development potential of UoA

The UoA has good potential to maintain good ratings and to make a modest improvement over the next 5-10 years. It has well-qualified staff. With the exception of Education, there is a good spread of staff among grades and good replacement possibilities. The age distribution of teachers and researchers is somewhat favourable compared to other institutions as there are some young faculty members in the unit. The UoA operates a progressive human resources management system and seems successful in recruiting personnel, although some turnover in employees has been observed. The UoA employs work flexibility measures for staff well-being. It employs persons with a disability amongst staff in a research lab for Para-Olympic sport studies. It has been awarded for HR excellence in academic institutions by the EU Commission. There is a 'coaching' or mentoring' system in place for all grades of research-active staff, including for doctoral students. English courses and editing/proofreading are paid by the university (Australian company).

The UoA has recently restructured to better consolidate R & D capacity. It has the ambition to be among the top 100 sports universities in the Shanghai Ranking. During the site visit, the UoA administration outlined a strategic plan to increase scientific publications in sport sciences which includes the integration of several research fields (5) important in sports. Innovative ideas such creating a mobile sports research unit are very good. The R & D themes have been developed on the basis of expert knowledge of challenges facing Lithuania, on its capacity to produce elite sports people for international competitions and on knowledge of global trends in the sub-fields of sport. Research projects on bullying in sport, on violence and exclusion in sport and on the health of soldiers are likely to garner more EU funding. The UoA possess the infrastructure required for its research activities. It has also invested in Physiotherapy Units, in laboratories for measuring performance of athletes with a disability and others.

Students do meet other professors of the Joint Doctoral Consortium; however, since the supervisor/ sport coach who gives daily training is most proximal, this may be restrictive. Doctoral students are offered scholarships funded internally as an incentive. They are involved in networks with scholars in Japan, China and the US. Since dissertations are in English, students have the assistance of proof readers from Cambridge.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

1. There are good chances that this UoA maintains its national and international positions but the educational sciences require more attention and support.
2. The development of a strategy to improve internationalisation through capacity building in the use of English, the judicious targeting of conference presentations and networking, as well as efforts to participate more in international journal editorial boards is required. Doctoral students in the field seem less ambitious than other students elsewhere; they had no clear career plans. There was a dilemma between going to the applied sport field or the scientific stream, which would only be resolved with posts as academic staff. It may improve research ambitions if doctoral students meet other scholars in cognate disciplines, as well as their coach, on a regular basis.
3. The UoA should explore doctoral dissertation by published papers which would boost its research profile.
4. The emphasis on Inclusion in sport is well-placed and could benefit from more input in the field of disability studies (a social science field).
5. The accessibility of the infrastructure for persons with a disability needs to be upgraded to attract more athletes in the Para-Olympic field (a niche market).
6. Apparently, Estonia and Latvia are closing down their own state run sports universities; however, students from those countries are not, to date, attracted to Kaunas. Aggressive plans should be made to attract doctoral students from the neighboring Baltic States which are losing their sports universities.
7. Undergraduate international students (Indian and Chinese) are registered here; they could be a target market for doctoral studies.
8. The Economics unit does not seem well-integrated enough with other units.

## Law Institute of Lithuania , Law Institute of Lithuania

UoA abbreviation	LTI_LTI
Name of the UoA	Law Institute of Lithuania
Name of institution	Law Institute of Lithuania
Type of institution	Institute
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	-

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Law (01S)	3	15,61	-

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Law (01S)

Law Institute of Lithuania has managed to carry out important research projects of high quality. However, the main scope of research is limited to the broadly defined criminal law and criminology. Certain other areas, such as private law, comparative law, public international law, human rights law or constitutional law seem to be given less attention.

The UoA appears to be a strong research institution in the area of legal studies in the country. At the same time its international profile is rather limited. Although publications in the International Journal of Intellectual Property, Cambridge UP, the Journal of Private International Law, the International Journal of Sports Law Journal, JCMS, the International Journal of IT are well noted, nevertheless, most of the English language publications appear in regional, if not national journals, with subject matters of local character, and mostly second or lower-tier publishing houses. For a research institute, where the UoA's mandate is exclusively research, and no time and resources are devoted into teaching, the performance is certainly satisfactorily, but cannot be seen as strong internationally.

Researches of the UoA are actively participating in international conferences and joint projects. However, the quality and degree of interaction with international institutions cannot be described as satisfactory. Those joint projects are more of utilitarian rather than academic character. The UoA's researcher's presence at top tier international conferences, workshops in leading universities or research institutions outside the region is limited.

The publication list, provided by the Institute does not contain papers in any prestigious international journal, databases (Scopus, ISI) or international book publisher or outlet. The arguments offered by the institution to justify this lack are not justifiable. The conditions to publish in outstanding journals are equal for everybody in questions of time, and reviews are "blind". This is particular difficult to justify in a research institution.

All the above proves that the Law Institute is strong research unit however, with limited international recognition. Research carried out by the UoA is of good quality and recognized at national level.

## The economic and social impact of R&D activities

The UoA plays an important role out in R&D outside the academic community, in particular in aiding the government and legislature in preparing new laws. It is obvious that LTI has significant impact on the legal community and decisions makers in Lithuania. It runs several important research projects and therefore has significantly contributed to the development of the Lithuanian legal system.

LTI provides valuable consultancy to various government departments, the Constitutional Court, the Seimas – even areas transcending those where internationally exposed academic work is published, i.e. civil procedure, the rights of the child, assisted reproduction, etc. Its research publications are reasonably accessible for the broader public. Given their qualifications, which would make them eligible for these positions, the international impact and visibility of the researchers of the UoA's in expert groups, editorial boards of top-tier journals needs improvement. Although the researchers' involvement in international professional networking (EUCPN, ILA, EuroCrim, GRECO, Council of Europe and EU expert and working groups,) is noted, there is still room for more active engagement.

The UoA managed to attract well-qualified legal scholars also from young generation and arguably plays a stable role in Lithuanian academia in the field of legal studies. The evidence shows also some remarkable international consultations. According to the files the LTI is now starting to have an international reputation that needs to be promoted not only by the Lithuanian institutions but also by the EU funding.

In conclusion it is justify to point out that Scientific research conducted by the LTI is important for society. The UoA is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers, and the society.

## Development potential of UoA

The Law Institute of Lithuania has strong potential not only to maintain its position as a leading research unit in certain fields of legal sciences in Lithuania. It also has a very good chance to be stronger player at the regional international level and more visible participant at broader international scene. Already the UoA has developed valuable international contacts and what is very important promotes interdisciplinary research projects.

It is clear that the UoA has the potential to significantly improve its ratings. Its research staff is largely composed of promising young scholars and supported by experienced academics. Leadership of the LTI is fully aware of its weaknesses and its potential. It seems that they have good strategy how to cope with it. Certainly the UoA is capable to improve the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments within the next 5-10 years. Its international research and publication achievements and international presence (FP7, two Twinnig projects, working groups, expert-invitations such as the ILA, UNODC) have already improved since the last assessment. The physical and technological infrastructure of the UoA is promising, career development and human resource management is noteworthy in its flexibility (for home office) and there is a workable system of financial encouragements of high-quality research. Further avenues for improvement of social and economic impact would be to channel the UoA into doctoral programs and creating funding to increase academic mobility for research and conference travel for researchers along facilitating visits from top-tier researchers. It can be achieved through more active search for EU founding.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement:

1. LTI needs to put more efforts to be involved in joint international academic oriented research projects through more active involvement and creation of its international academic network.
2. While acknowledging efforts made by the UoA to publish effects of its research, to upgrade level of that publications is needed.
3. Social and economic impact would be significantly improved if the UoA will establish doctoral programs.
4. Creating funding to increase academic mobility for research and conference travel for researchers and to facilitate visits from top-tier researchers.
5. Broaden scope of its research activities to cover such important subjects like for example: constitutional law, human rights law, comparative law.

## Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work, Mykolas Romeris University

UoA abbreviation	MRU_ESDI
Name of the UoA	Institute of Educational Sciences and Social Work
Name of institution	Mykolas Romeris University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	1,71
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	22,99

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Education (07S)	3	1,67	18,01
Sociology (05S)	3	0,04	4,98

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Education (07S)

Education is the main training domain of this UoA and this is the largest field in it. Research topics include higher education and social work. The research output targets mainly domestic audience and major international publications are missing. Although all the work is published in English, the existing international publications are mostly published in other Central and Eastern European countries. The first item on the list of the five best publications was published by the Vilnius University; the group shows relatively low effort to reach a major international audience. Faculty members of this field attend international conferences on regular bases but not typically at the meetings of large educational research associations. Neither the publications nor the conference presentations focus on original empirical studies. The field is relatively successful in attracting structural and investment funds even though the potential is not always directly translated into academic outputs. The most promising work in progress is an EU funded project on critical thinking in higher education which includes experimental methods. Faculty members of the field of education participate in several Cost Actions too. Out of the five recognitions the UoA reported, four were given at national level while there is one given by the social Sciences Network in Europe. The UoA conducts doctoral studies in the field of Education. The number of PhD students is acceptable (altogether 18 students in 2017), but given the relatively large number of staff working in the education field, the number of defended dissertations is relatively small (2 in 2016 and 1 in 2017). Based on these indicators, the panel found the Education field is strong at national level with limited international recognition.

#### Sociology (05S)

Sociology is not the main field of training of this UoA but this group achieves relatively well in research. A significant proportion of the results of their work are published with international publishers as journal article or book chapter. Outputs listed include four chapters in important international edited collections by major international academic publishers (Routledge, Palgrave) which indicate that the scholarship is high-level and internationally recognized. One journal article is similarly in a leading journal in the field. They attend international conferences regularly. Some very good presentations have been made in leading

international conferences in sociology (Conference of European Sociological Association, World Congress of Sociology); however, two scholars have made four out of five cited. Scholars of this field are engaged in one major and four minor projects, thus participation in international and competitive R&D is very good in terms of international recognition but low on funds garnered; however. The sociology field is successful in international collaboration; it has benefited from EU structural funds for a large project and they participated in four Cost Actions in the last five years which also offer also a higher potential for co-authoring and further involvement in more research-oriented projects. No PhD students are involved in research from the field of sociology. The scores given to the Sociology field in this unit indicates that it is strong at national level with limited international recognition.

## The economic and social impact of R&D activities

This UoA is engaged in several cooperative enterprises both with private business companies and governmental agencies. Their publications have documented impact on the quality of teacher education as well as other training opportunities. The work of this UoA helped treating social issues such as gambling. They are active in several comities supporting educational innovations and reforms. The university has hosted several international conferences. The unit of assessment has extensive collaboration with the commercial sphere. In the last 5 years, it has been involved in several projects with business partners (Sprendimai, Ltd; Sergel, Ltd., Monte Pacis Ltd, Švieša Ltd. etc.). Furthermore, a project funded by the Gambling Supervisory Authority resulted in multiple practical outcomes, including a seminar at the Lithuanian Parliament. Besides serving on various bodies established by the Presidential Office, Ministry of Education etc., the MRU\_ESDI staff provided expert work for both public sectors and schools. Some non-monetary agreements are producing high social and economic impact outputs. Education scholars from the UoA have been appointed to important national working groups or commissions as education experts; there is no evidence that sociology scholars have been called upon to contribute to national commissions. The UoA has also some interaction with the business sector and commercial institutions (e.g. Electrobalt Ltd., Electric Box Ltd., Dental Clinic). Two of five of these contracts are with the same company for the same project (Innovative Cheques). However, research-business cooperation agreements indicate that the academic community is considered a valuable partner. The UoA has provided some very good national and international consultations to public and business entities. It has been instrumental in organizing some important international conferences in socially vital fields. Scholars are editors and members of the board of regional and national journals. They are members of a very good range of national, regional and international working groups and associations. Science popularization activities are of high-quality. In sum, scientific research of this UoA is important for society; it is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers as well.

## Development potential of UoA

The UoA has excellent potential to achieve or maintain good ratings. The MRU\_ESDI is a mid-size unit with young age structure (nearly 70 percent under the age of 45) thus the age distribution of the employees is good, there are enough young and middle-aged faculty members. The basic funding of the unit has been increasing over the evaluated years. The unit has also been successful in obtaining funds from the national funding programmes (in terms of the sum). However, its ability to attract competitive funds for research and development in the international funding programs has been dramatically declining. The strength of the unit is in the applied research and the collaboration with the business entities (nearly 20 percent of the financial resources in 2017 came from the contracts with businesses and public institutions). This UoA has invested extensively in new buildings, new hardware and new software. It possesses excellent infrastructure for research in social sciences, including working places, laboratories, library services, IT, software, data-bases, etc. There is support for internationalization of innovative research. The library is excellent with subscriptions to e-journals, databases and other important resources for scholars. New tools (as with Elsevier Fingerprint Engine) have raised the potential to identify research partners. It is not clear why 6 people have terminated employment (not due to retirement). The UoA operates a progressive human resource management system. HR principles for recruitment, promotions etc are sound and competitive; financial and other (time) incentives exist for publication, which are generous, except for publications in Lithuanian, which seem to be relatively negatively evaluated (this may be a detriment to R&D). The Strategic Plan of the UoA is realistic; the themes of the proposed research program are impressive and build on R&D strengths. Thematic areas are well-justified in terms of global and national areas of interest.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

1. This unit should broaden the scope of research activities in the field of education to cover further important subjects, such as the ones more closely related to primary and secondary education (e.g. early childhood education, educational assessment etc.).
2. More encouragement is needed to increase the proportion of empirical studies. This may lead to results publishable in high quality international journals. PhD students and young post-docs should receive more substantial training in empirical research methods including large-scale data-collection and sophisticated data analysis methods.
3. Conference participation should be better focused on the meetings of large academic associations. PhD students and young post-doc should be encouraged and supported participating conferences in order of networking and finding collaborative research partners.
4. Support publications in international journals with a higher citation rate. Providing training in academic writing in English, as well as organizing and operating a native-speaker proof-reading service would significantly increase the rate of international publications.
5. Encourage PhD students to publish internationally, as well as to write their thesis in English. The traditional monograph-type theses should be gradually replaced by multi-study type publications-based theses.
6. Rather than publish in conference proceeding outlets, scholars should target high impact journals. The University needs to evaluate outputs over a longer period of time to allow scholars the time necessary to achieve this goal.
7. Inviting visiting professors from leading universities for shorter or longer periods to give courses at domains that are not known by the faculty would be beneficial.
8. The number of doctoral students needs to be increased. One of the way for this is attracting more international students.

## Faculty of Economics and Business, Mykolas Romeris University

UoA abbreviation	MRU_EVF
Name of the UoA	Faculty of Economics and Business
Name of institution	Mykolas Romeris University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	1,2
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	40,9

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Economics	2	0,7	20,0
Management and administration	2	0,5	16,8
Law, Political Sciences, Education, Communication and Information	3	0,1	4,2

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Economics

In economics, the research of this unit is satisfactory at the national level. Despite the size of the group, the research output in terms of publications in Clarivate/Scopus journals is limited. There are some international publications in peer-reviewed journals, but not in very impactful ones. Where most listed papers contain interesting analyses, they are typically not very deep or very innovative. Best conference presentations typically involve regional events; major economics associations events (e.g., meetings of the European Economic Association) are missing from the list. Best received national and international awards include local recognition at the university level, national recognition of three scholars, two international medals from Brno University of Technology, as well as a silver NASDAQ recognition award. Most of these were awarded in 2013. The unit is quite successful in attracting external funding, mostly in the areas of human resources and shadow economy. Despite the presence of a university-wide policy to increase the number of publications in high-impact journals (from the Clarivate/Scopus lists), the panel did not observe an upward trend in terms of the quality of outlets over the evaluation period. Among the researchers, there appeared to be some awareness of the broader ambition of MRU to become a leading international university, but this does not appear to have resulted yet in widely-shared ambitions and clear publication targets in the field of economics. The PhD programme is relatively large, with an adequate course programme, but students are not encouraged to write in English. International reviewers participate in the PhD defence on the basis of an English summary. As in many places, PhD students that are able to focus full-time on their thesis are rare (if only due to financial constraints).

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit in this field as satisfactory with some international visibility, but not (yet) "strong".

#### Management and administration

The research of this unit is satisfactory at the national level. Despite the size of the group, the research output in terms of publications in Clarivate/Scopus journals is very limited. There are some international publications in peer-reviewed journals, but not in very impactful ones. Best conference presentations

typically involve regional events; most recognized conferences in the field of management and administration (e.g. EGOS, EURAM) are missing. Awards given to this group are mostly national. So far, the unit has experienced little success in achieving competitive external funding. Despite the presence of a university-wide policy to increase the number of publications in high-impact journals (from the Clarivate/Scopus lists), the panel did not observe a clear trend in terms of the quality of outlets over the evaluation period. Among the researchers, there appeared to be some awareness of the broader ambition of MRU to become a leading international university, but this does not appear to have resulted yet in widely-shared ambitions and publication targets in the field of management and administration. The PhD programme is relatively large, with an adequate course programme, but students are not encouraged to write in English. International reviewers participate in the PhD defence on the basis of an English summary.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit in this field as satisfactory, with very limited international visibility and not (yet) “strong”.

### **Law, Political Sciences, Education, Communication and Information**

The research of this unit in this field is strong with limited international recognition. Despite the relatively small size of the group, the research output in terms of publications in the Web of Science is good. They have several publications indexed in Clarivate/Scopus, including relatively high-ranked outlets such as the Journal of Business Research and Computer Law & Security Review. Participation in international conferences is excellent. The group reports three European projects and some local financing. In line with the university-wide policy to increase the number of publications in high-impact journals (from the Clarivate/Scopus lists), the panel observed a strong tendency to publish in high-quality outlets. The PhD programme is relatively small, and students are not encouraged to write in English.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit on this field as good. There is international recognition, but the top echelon of journals is not yet reached. Research carried out is of high-level and recognized at national level.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The impact of this unit’s R&D activities is good. Its researchers contribute and make an impact on national developments in economics, financial management, cyber security and quality of life. For example, results of its research on cybersecurity have played a crucial role in the development of cybersecurity regulations and policies in Lithuania. More generally, the priority areas of the unit are innovative and reflect the most recent national and European research agendas and societal challenges. The unit carries out important research and is an important partner outside the academic community. Of particular interest is the research on cybersecurity and tax fraud prevention, partly in collaborative projects with the Ministry of National Defense, Customs, the Lithuanian Chamber of Auditors, and a workgroup formed by the Prime Minister. The participation of this unit’s employees in commissions is extensive and lists several UoA employees during the reporting period, as researchers, board members, experts, members etc. Consultations provided to public and private entities involve consultation for insurance firms (Lithuania and Poland), municipality employees, business owners, ministry. This activity is intensive. Important events and conferences organized by this unit include mostly regional events, with the exception of the International Anti-Fraud Training in 2016, and the European Conference on Social Media, held in Vilnius in 2017. Membership of researchers in editorial boards involve journals in Lithuania, Ukraine, Romania, Russia, Poland. No major journal editorial boards are listed. Membership of researchers in expert bodies involve several memberships in international bodies. Popularisation activities listed in the report are mainly focused on conferences, an investors' club, and some digital content publishing in social media. In sum, the panel concludes that the scientific research of this unit is important for society. Its relationship with business, decision-makers and society is appropriate, but provides scope for improvement.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The unit has the potential to improve its rating within the next 5-10 years. Importantly, it is part of a university that has a well-defined strategy towards improving its international standing, focussing on interdisciplinary research projects, high-level international publishing and top international conferences. This university strategy does not yet appear to have been fully embraced by the research and teaching staff of this unit. The unit is well equipped with good infrastructure and facilities. The presence and active

support of a Project Office in the application and post-award stages of competitive grants and projects is applauded. Similarly, a Knowledge and Technology Transfer Office provides important support on the dissemination of research results. The location of the unit in Vilnius provides more opportunities to strengthen ties with ministries and other stakeholders. The age distribution of staff members is healthy, with some overrepresentation of older scholars. Financing instruments, such as H2020, FP9 and Erasmus+ provide interesting opportunities to expand research activities, increase participating in international networks and to obtain more competitive research funding. Attracting more young scholars, also those who have obtained their PhD degree elsewhere, is an important step towards more cross-fertilization and knowledge exchange within the unit, and towards stronger focus on internationalization and top-quality research. Given the interdisciplinary focus of the unit, the panel sees good potential to further improve on societal impact. Overall, the panel expects that this unit will be able to improve its quality of research and economic and social impact in the next 5-10 years.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

The unit's effort should be directed to the quality of its research output, with more emphasis on publications in the top international journals, more international cooperation in terms of competitive European research projects and scholarly publications. The management of the unit should embrace the internationalisation ambitions of MRU and set out strategic lines for the different fields on how to improve on research quality and impact. This requires incentives, support, coaching and a change of culture. More specifically, the panel has the following recommendations:

1. Effort should be made to improve alignment of the professional ambitions of the researchers in the unit with the broader ambitions of the university. This requires, among others, thoughtful incentives, more involvement of staff members in setting the broader research agenda, coaching and mentoring, and the use of "role models".
2. Improving international visibility and recognition is crucial. This requires a stronger focus on international English publications (in the better Clarivate/Scopus journals), and more co-authorships with foreign scholars. Ideally, the unit should try to hire international scholars in order to increase chances of attracting competitive national and international funds, foster knowledge exchange within the unit and to develop co-authorship networks.
3. The research fields in this unit are encouraged to identify a clear own strategy in the long term, with coherent targets and resource allocation system, in line with the overall university strategy to identify how they are going contribute to the overall ambitions.
4. To emphasize the unit's international and quality ambitions, it would be fruitful for researchers to have some possibilities to attend top-level international conferences (e.g. European Economic Association, Academy of Management) to increase their networks, to see cutting-edge research being presented, and to become inspired.
5. Developing a clear list of target journals for the unit's fields, considering coverage of topics and the quality of the journals (citation impact, standing in the field), e.g. on the basis of the ABS journal list for business schools.
6. Encourage writing of PhD theses in English; encourage the use of article-based dissertations rather than monographs (where possible).

## Institute of Psychology, Mykolas Romeris University

UoA abbreviation	MRU_PI
Name of the UoA	Institute of Psychology
Name of institution	Mykolas Romeris University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	2,9
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	15,27

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Psychology (06S)	4	2,9	15,27

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Psychology (06S)

Research tradition in this field is focused on developmental psychology, longitudinal, and large-scale studies. This tradition has produced a strong publication record – many papers have been published in top-level journals. There is good quality research with international collaboration networks and good critical mass. Conveyed by the self-assessment report and publications provided, multiple researchers of the Unit have active and productive international collaborations with colleagues in respected institutions (Stockholm University, Vermont University, Hiroshima University, Bologna University, Utrecht University, Clark University etc). The Unit has excellent R&D results publishing record: articles are published in high-level international journals (Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology: IF=2.00; Journal of Youth and Adolescence: IF=1.59; American Journal of Community Psychology: IF=1.46; Psychology of Aesthetics Creativity and the Arts: IF= 1.42; Journal of Environmental Psychology: IF=2.09). A lot of publications are co-authored with international authors. Visits abroad (including long-term visits) are relatively frequent. The Unit has clearly identified research topics (environmental psychology, developmental psychology). Growing number of research projects are financed since 2013. But the Unit has not been very successful in applying international R&D funding. Also, many staff members serve in editorial boards of international journals. The number of PhD students defending their thesis is relatively high. Yet, there are only few leaders of the whole scientific process. Taken together, it concludes that the research carried out at the UoA is of high-level and internationally recognized.

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Researchers of Institute of Psychology have been relatively active in socially important projects. The unit of assessment (MRU\_PI) emphasizes the socio-economic impact of the scientific projects it conducts. In particular, it focuses on the issues of the quality of life and pro-environmental behavior. No contract or direct collaboration with the public sector was reported. Staff members also serve in decision making bodies of the national importance, for instance, the researchers participate in various bodies established by the Research Council, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Security and other public institutions. The unit also reports a direct collaboration with business sector (e.g., focus groups and cognitive interviews for a business entity). Only limited popularization activities were present (a small number of popularization articles). The research in the Unit provides a very good basis for the education of professionals. There is the critical mass and quality of research to achieve this at high level. the joint program of Doctoral Studies

in Psychology together with the Department of Psychology at Vytautas Magnus University, which enables students to carry out research in a wider social context. Taken together the arguments provided in this section, it is concluded that scientific research done at the UoA is important for society, as well as the relationship with business, decision-makers and the society is appropriate to a recognised institution carrying out academic activities. There is less of a direct impact on Lithuanian economy and society due to a specificity of main research topics.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The following list of arguments is based on the information provided by the UoA, the information gathered during the visit and other official sources. The MRU\_PI has a strong developmental potential. The unit has an excellent publishing record. The age structure of the researchers is very young (over 70 percent of research and teaching staff is under the age of 45), which means that there are many researchers at stages of early career (with PhD degrees) to grow into new leaders. The excellence of the unit is visible on the ability to attract funding on both national and international level. As a result, the total financial support for the unit has increased by nearly 60 percent. The developmental opportunities and sustainability could be strengthened by attracting more contracts with business entities. Also, the unit has access to 16 interdisciplinary laboratories; yet, the lab equipment is not used in a full potential. Greater participation in EU funded calls is in order. Based on the self-assessment report and conversations with the staff members, it is evident that the Unit has developed a clear and systematic research strategy about research priority areas and effective measures to reach the goal. Given that there already are several publications in high-quality specialized journals and there are very relevant research and high-level international collaboration in multiple areas, there clearly is the potential to attain an even higher level of research quality and to become a leading international player in their areas of research. Taken together, the UoA has a great potential to achieve very good and excellent ratings.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

1. To facilitate the development of more internationally strong research groups. This would eliminate the risks rising from concentrating all the efforts and resources in only few research areas, for instance, not winning a grant competition. Also, it would make it possible to cover a wider range of research topics, to be more flexible in terms of reacting to the society's needs.
2. The lab equipment should be used more, both for fundamental and applied research. This would also make it possible to be more flexible in reacting to the society's needs.
3. Developing a clear motivational system for publishing articles in high impact international journals, this will not only rise the bibliometric score of the UoA, but will also change the culture within the UoA
4. PhD students should be encouraged in writing their thesis in English. By this the UoA will obtain both better bibliometric score and will change the writing culture within the UoA. Also, it will add the readership for the scientific tradition of the UoA,
5. Guidelines for mobility (conference and research travel) grants, particularly for PhD students, should be established, this will lower the level of subjective uncertainty among the students, since on the one hand they are strongly encouraged to present their findings at international conferences, while they do not always have funds available for this aim on the other hand.
6. Working more on international EU funded calls should be encouraged, since there is a very good potential - the leading researchers already have achieved a high status of recognition internationally, thus it should not be impossible not only to participate in international research team, but also to lead them

## Faculty of Law, Mykolas Romeris University

UoA abbreviation	MRU_TF
Name of the UoA	Faculty of Law
Name of institution	Mykolas Romeris University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	0,4
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	68,4

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
LAW	3	0,36	68,36

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

The publication list provided by the UoA, the foreign researchers and research and collaboration projects with international universities evidence that the MRU\_TF is strong in the national level, but it lacks international recognition. It must be said that the UoA has some publications in peer review journals (in the Baltic Journal of Law & Politics), a journal that it doesn't have a strong assessment or a relevant impact factor in the international arena. In relation to the internationalization of the research inputs, the UoA presents some book chapters in French but the vast majority of publications are in domestic editors and journals. The staff of the MRU\_TF has an impressive record of national awards, but none in the international sphere. Conference presentations have been delivered at good, but not most prestigious conferences or workshops. Some publications written in English are published in Lithuanian journals, a fact that does not help to achieve international dissemination. Research performed by the UoA is oriented mainly on the national issues. In its special relevant to overcome the domestic accent that has the current line of research of the UoA. The management of the faculty and the university need to increase the strategy to achieve international dissemination of the research. In this sense, it is missed more co-authored papers and books with international (visiting and not visiting) professors, written in English and dealing with some of the topics that the faculty develops but in a more comparative perspective or remarking an international or transnational dimension. Some of the research domains developed by the faculty members have a cross-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary nature providing more potentialities to explore international avenues of collaborative research and publications. It also an important deficit the lack of comments and participation in international blogs and other digital journals that allow the creation of international networks and research dissemination.

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

The UoA performs a prolific scientific research in multiple projects but the contributions are mainly articles published, in some cases, by Lithuanian editors and journals, therefore, the social and economic impact is limited, relative and national. The scientific dissemination of the unit is in comparative terms poor and limited; the conferences and events organized are not internationally relevant and the participation of the faculty staff in the major events, conferences and workshops abroad inexistent. This fact has also repercussions in the economic and social impact of the R&D activities and its grading.

On the one hand, the staff of the MRU\_TF is performing a very relevant task in representing, advising and collaborating with high public offices of the Republic of Lithuania. According to this outstanding (mainly domestic) task, the grade of this section is high but there is a clear decompensation of the different elements under the scope. On the other hand, the economic impact of the R&D activities is low. This decompensation can be easily overcome in the national level where the UoA is already an actor but in terms of internationalization, this task needs to be applied with a different strategy to obtain major inputs, publications and research projects. Certainly, the advising task also opens possibilities to apply in private domains the kind of expertise that the faculty is acquiring which also permits to apply for more private funding. There is also a notable progression in the contributions to the public economic entities. The representation of the UoA's researchers in important boards and High political offices but the output of these representation must be improved in order to rise the social and economic impact.

## **Development potential of UoA**

The UoA has a strong potential to improve its ratings. It needs to have more articles and dissemination in peer review international journals, ISI, SCOPUS and not only focus in a journal and domestic publications. The institution has also strong potential to apply for international external funding (ERC, HORIZON 2020, European Union and European Council funding). The UoA has already demonstrated experience and success in obtaining external funding and some international recognition. The unit has correctly identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and from this analysis, the development potential is large, particularly because it seems to be able to attract professionals with a very good training and there is funding and aim to attract foreign researchers. The domestic awards, advice and collaboration with high public institutions and offices of the Republic of Lithuania evidence a kind of knowledge, expertise and proficiency that can be "exported" abroad.

The unit has progressive and young but well-experienced management which creates incentive research environment. Researchers have sufficient opportunities for doing interdisciplinary research. The UoA is able to attract PhD candidates from abroad. The potential of the unit in takes into account the number of academic staff, doctoral students, infrastructures, ageing of the staff and the strategic plan explained by representatives of the Institution and it is promising and justifies the best possible grade.

## **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

The recommendations to this UoA summarise the opinions of the expert panels on the UoA potential for future development. The specific recommendations will consist in the need to improve the development of a management strategy in order to provide guidance and support to staff members (professors and researchers) to participate in the calls for obtaining international funding. This strategy needs to be "integral" meaning that it has to encompass all the different stages that researchers go through in the submission of a proposal. It would be convenient that the management includes an internal member that informs of the opening of the international calls, deadlines, technicalities and specific casuistry of each call. It follows by giving support to the proposal also materially, implying different reviewers of the draft and the text under submission. The management needs to channel the final presentation and researchers need to fill the guidance in the whole process.

The UoA is working in a high interdisciplinary domain and it has not human and material capacities to encompass all these domains. It will be pertinent to focus in the fields where it has been more successful in terms of publications, international networks and has more potential to promote the excellency and more social impact.

It seems essential that the faculty provides to the UoA researchers and staff members this kind of training and support. The drafting of a proposal to obtain international funding and participate in the concurrence exceeds the technical abilities and material quality of the proposal. It requires formal and administrative help. In this sense, some of the universities and research centres have internal members informing and helping with the casuistry, requirements and technicalities of each call.

It is also important in terms of international dissemination that faculty members and researchers participate in blogs and digital journals and courses. So far there has been not participation in this domain. This fact will show in very accessible international outlets the awareness of the faculty in hot and relevant topics of the domain.

Another recommendation is addressed to encourage the members of the staff to lead international research networks. The UoA has already demonstrated the participation in a consolidated international network, now it needs to place staff members leading edited books and participating as members of boards of international journals. It is also convenient, in order to obtain major dissemination, that the faculty leads as P.I. collective projects and not simply participate as partners.

In order to improve a better grade of a future assessment it is required to increase the impact factor and internationalization excellence of the UoA publications; Scopus, ISI. The strategy of reward economically or exempting teaching obligations of the researcher can be a way to stimulate this aspect.

## Faculty of Public Security, Mykolas Romeris University

<b>UoA abbreviation</b>	MRU_VSF
<b>Name of the UoA</b>	Faculty of Public Security
<b>Name of institution</b>	Mykolas Romeris University
<b>Type of institution</b>	University
<b>No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017</b>	0.4
<b>No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017</b>	31.9

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Law (01S)	3	0,35	21,32
Management and administration, Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Education (03S, 04S, 05S, 06S, 07S)	2	-	10,56

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

<b>Score</b>	3
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### Development potential of UoA

<b>Score</b>	3
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Law (01S)

The MRU\_VSF Law has shown a strong profile in a relatively narrow but multidisciplinary subject, public security. As the self-evaluation of the unit states, it has a strong cooperation with law enforcement institutions in the Republic of Lithuania and participates in international programs with several partners and networks. Cybercrime prevention and cyber-security are novel and innovative research domains which help attract research funds but the results of them are not visible in the research outcomes yet. The record of publication has been improving in the last years, and in comparative terms with other Lithuanian institutions, it has a good rate of indexed publications. However, the list of publications is not impressive neither outstanding. In this sense and due to the strong international network and the work of the staff member of the UoA, the task of dissemination in outstanding journals and peer-reviewed books is expectable and desirable. There is a need for improvement in the quality publications, targeting higher ranking journals is desirable to reach a larger research community and in order of receiving more international citations of the works of the members of the faculty and researchers. Based on the report on the delivered presentations and according to the interviews it seems that there is a strategy to reinforce the internationalization of the research and to participate in major grant funding calls. The research performed by the UoA covers both national and international issues; however, the same nature of the public security field and the professional-oriented performances of the unit complicate a balance of efforts and a clarification of goals. More co-authored publications (papers and books) with international professors written in English and dealing with the topics that the faculty of law is performing would significantly improve the impact of the unit. Some of the research domains of the faculty of law are cross-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary which opens the possibilities to explore new international collaborations and possibilities to publish in the most relevant international outlets. Recognitions of the researchers of Law at MRU received are at national level and include awards given by the General Commission of the Lithuanian Police and Chairperson of the Supreme Administrative Court of Lithuania. The score the unit received indicates that the field is strong at national level with limited international recognition.

## **Management and administration, Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Education (03S, 04S, 05S, 06S, 07S)**

The UoA has a strong multidisciplinary nature that encompasses varied fields under analysis in this assessment. Even so, there are not a lot of publications and research activities related to some of the research fields assessed in this section. An important exception is the field of education, where the UoA is performing an outstanding activity. The information provided also contains multiple agreements of cooperation even that the majority are short-term contracts and stays. The participation in R&D programs funding is good, and it has an increasing tendency, especially in international programs, this fact needs to be rewarded. The papers, conferences and books related to these domains are not at the same level than the publications on law and law enforcement. There are not indexed publications in some of the research fields; this reflects a strong difference and success ratio between fields. There are no international citations by other colleagues in relevant publications. Awards are satisfactory but not of international standing. Participation in international and competitive R&D is poor; there are only two small-scale, national projects. The research and professorship seem to be very encouraged even that they are facing some structural deficiencies and restraints that are not imputable to the UoA or even the University management. The score given to this unit is determined by the weak of international activity and recognition and lack of international dissemination.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The economic and social impact of the UoA is strong but limited to a very narrow scope, public law enforcement institutions, this need to be maintained but it would be optimal to enlarge it to other related domains in public law and security. The documentation shows that the MRU\_VSF has a very decent economic impact with several international consultations and collaborations. The potentiality also in this domain is relevant. Even so, and according to its infrastructure and dominant position in some of the domains under analysis, the different units need to improve to become an international player, leading the international network that are currently creating and placing Principal investigators in international funding calls, such as Horizon 2020, or in the different modalities of ERC. A special mention needs to be introduced for the field of public security, where the research quality and activities could be graded with a better figure. It is necessary to distinguish between the different UoA addressed in this report. In the case of the unit of law, there is no real impact of the prominent international position and network that the unit has. The expectations are high according to the position that the unit already has achieved. The participation of researchers, representing the UoA, in working groups or commissions set up by state authorities, state and municipal institutions is relevant and therefore the grade needs to consider this element. It is also significant the examples of researchers and faculty representing the UoA in Lithuanian domestic expert groups and high institutions but irrelevant in the international domain. In relation to the unit on Management and administration, Economics, Sociology, Psychology and Education, the international network is not so prominent and the economic results are consequential of this fact. It lacks a major influence in the foreign business sector to obtain a greater social and economic impact. The participation of the researchers in international boards is dissimilar according to the different domains that the UoA encompass but globally is good and appropriate to a recognised institution carrying out academic activities, more concretely in the domestic level.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The educational aspect is a very strong element of the MRU\_VSF when talking about public enforcement officers, the multiple certificates of gratitude that the UoA has been awarded, is an evidence of the good task in this important domain. The MRU\_VSF needs to increase its PhD supervisions, a task that due to its degree of specialization and knowledge does not seem to be very difficult to achieve. The figures show that in research, funding and participation in international networks that the UoA has a very good potential and progressively is increasing its influence in the international arena, where it still need to improve. As a reference of the Lithuanian public enforcement education, longer and more solid agreements with greater European institutions are possible. An issue that might be into consideration is the multiple research domains that the UoA is encompassing. An alternative can be to narrow the efforts in some of the domains of expertise with more potential of success in disseminating the work, publishing in the major international academic outlets and participate in the most relevant international conferences. The current grade can be improved if the UoA becomes an international actor and overcomes the strong national-domestic accent in its research activities and publications. The potential of the UoA shows the possibilities to improve the

ratings, economic and social impact, not only in the Lithuanian Republic but also abroad. In this sense, even that the UoA needs to improve the number of articles in peer review journals, ISI, SCOPUS and international editorial publishers the faculty management seems to be following a strategy that will produce results in the next 5-10 years. The potential of the unit in taking into account the number of academic staff, doctoral students, infrastructures, ageing of the staff and the strategic plan explained by representatives of the Institution is promising and justifies the best possible grade.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

1. Strategic management should be improved in order to provide guidance and support to staff members (professors and researchers) to participate in the calls for obtaining international funding. This strategy needs to be “integral” meaning that it has to encompass all the different stages that researchers go through in the submission of a proposal.
2. The management should include internal members in the groups preparing research proposals for international calls. Support to the proposal should also be provided materially, involving reviewers of the draft and the text under submission.
3. Members of the staff should be encouraged to lead international research networks. The UoA has already demonstrated the participation in a consolidated international network, now it needs to place staff members to positions of leading editorial works of books and publications in the relevant international outlets.
4. Faculty members should be encouraged to lead collaborative projects as Principal Investigators and not simply participate in projects as partners.
5. In order to improve publication quality in general, and internationalization the UoA, a more focused publication strategy is needed; targeting Scopus and WoS indexed journals.
6. The strategy of reward economically or exempting teaching obligations of the researcher can be a way to stimulate this high quality research.
7. Publishing in English is a must; it will expand the efficiency of the dissemination of the work and therefore, the potential citations of colleagues around the world. A support system including native speaker language editing service would help this process.
8. In order to become visible for broader researchers community, PhD students should also be encouraged to publish in English. Joint PhD program and co-supervisions with international partners would be beneficial for young researcher.

## Faculty of Public Governance, Mykolas Romeris University

UoA abbreviation	MRU_VVF
Name of the UoA	Faculty of Public Governance
Name of institution	Mykolas Romeris University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	0,87
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	37,12

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Political sciences (02S)	2	-	8,66
Management and administration (03S)	3	0,87	28,46

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	2
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Political sciences (02S)

In the field of Political Sciences there are 12 teaching staff with 8.7 Full Time Equivalent. The research output is published mainly in in-house journals, either directly at Mykolas Romeris University or Central and Eastern Europe region. The publication strategy reflects a purposeful distribution of publication outlets: 6 in Lithuania, 8 in Central Europe and 6 in Western European journals. Such a publication strategy restricts both the international visibility of research output, and the participation in most recent debates in the field of Political Science that are published in relevant international journals. The exception are monographs (1 by Routledge) and three chapters in national edited volumes. However, the publication process of a monograph differs from the double-blind compulsory practice in best journals, yielding a different level of rigor, aimed at an audience more involved in education rather than research activities. Co-authorship is limited to in-house colleagues or domestic ones, with no visible links to international scholars. As compared with the numerical potential, the actual output, especially in international outlets, is very low and offers ample room for increase. Constraints identified with reference to using the staff's potential involve the focus on domestic publications, the focus on short term evaluation, and the substantial teaching load. The evaluation rules applied to individuals are conducted twice a year, generating an orientation at rapid publication processes and outlets. This publication strategy may establish strong links with practitioners or the domestic audience, but is also detrimental to the international visibility, quality and reputation of the Unit of Assessment. 17 conference presentations are reported, and indeed most of them has been delivered by a single scholar. The international association in link with this Unit of Assessment is limited in membership, and while important for their own topical focus it offers limited exposition to international feedback. As a result the recognition of staff is limited to national awards. Competitive grants attraction is limited, and the success rate has fallen to zero lately. In the reporting period no dissertations have been finalized, and no dissertations are under way either. Therefore this Unit of Assessment is assessed as satisfactory at national level but does not encourage, enforce or yield international recognition.

## Management and administration (03S)

In the field of Management and Administration there are 4 researchers and 31 teaching staff with a Full Time Equivalent of 29.3. The research output is mostly not published in top JCR journals (Clarivate Analytics). However, in the last years some publications indexed in Scopus have appeared, mostly from the fourth quartile, but also from the first quartile. Therefore, the research output displays a mix of domestic and international audience targeting, even if the topical scope of journals is very diverse, ranging from technology, through land degradation to education. Some international co-authors are visible in the best publications listed in the report, which indicates that a networking process at international level has started and offers promising avenues for further increasing the international recognition of research output. Conference attendance shows an international orientation. Additionally, a trend of quality increase of conferences attended is noticeable, as national conferences are sided by regional events in Central and Eastern Europe, and some major international annual congresses are also targeted. Listed academic rewards are not truly academic, that is awarded by peers, but reflects a recognition by important stakeholders from outside the academic community. Hence, the national institutional recognition reflects the current profile of this Unit of Assessment, which is oriented at a national and institutional audience, rather than an international and academic community. Consistently with this profile, the number of dissertations is quite considerable, with a diverse topical range, and tops 25 defended theses over the reporting period. Some dissertations have been published in English which adds to international exposure of this Unit of Assessment. Successful participation in competitive international projects is rather limited, both in numbers and in attracted funds value, the majority of projects (13 out of 20 reported) are nationally funded. This Unit of Assessment has opted for an international orientation, but needs to sustain and further develop its current engagement in consortia, conferences, co-authorships and grants. The overall assessment recognizes the national social, institutional and economic relevance of research, with limited international recognition.

## The economic and social impact of R&D activities

The Unit of Assessment executes an appropriate amount of commissioned research/consultancy, mainly at the national scale and oriented towards public and regulatory bodies, with a clearly visible lack of business and Non-Governmental Organization linkages. Reported business contracts are actually focusing on health care management and public governance, as expected by the contractors that are government bodies and regulators. The impacts of the various projects are, however, not very systematically described, and in rather general terms. The Unit of Assessment staff participate in several commissions at national, regional and municipal level, including a prestigious counselling to the Prime Minister of Lithuania. This reflects a clear strategy of being a national leader in the field of public governance with strong involvement in current activities, and policy development. This strategy is not in line with the evaluation criteria, as several actors such as businesses, or the wider society are missing, and the R&D involvement is limited. As compared to the connectedness to national actors, this Unit of Assessment staff is loosely connected to international bodies, with one exceptional grant with the Moldovian government body. However, academic associations, business chambers and European bodies are clearly underrepresented, with the exception of the European Observatory for Sports. Although the involvement with business and decision-makers could be improved, the panel has evaluated the scientific and expert activities as recognized by the institutional environment. The outreach is carried out through academic events – including one regularly organized annual event – and non-academic events aimed at the larger public. Participation in editorial boards is limited to in-house journals, with no editorial experience reported in the highest ranking international outlets. Additionally, membership in relevant international associations is reported. The popularization activities include conferences, mainly academic. Overall the scientific research and expert activities carried out by this Unit of Assessment are important for society, it is a recognized institution carrying out academic activities.

## Development potential of UoA

The SWOT analysis provides a clearly overstated view, overly optimistic of the current potential. While numerically the potential of this Unit of Assessment is substantial, and offers avenues for the development of several specialized labs, the quantity of output does not match actual potential. The assessment of current performance does not substantiate this Unit of Assessment to be excellent in contract based relations, or leading in public governance research. Similarly, the weaknesses list does not address the publishing performance which is currently consistently avoiding top tier journals. However, there is ample

room for development, both in terms of numerical evidence of research output, and in terms of its quality. The Unit of Assessment premises, infrastructure and database access is very good. Staff is large, and leaves room for productivity increases if the rewarding policy is improved. The current strategic plan addresses a long period, finishing in 2020. This constraints the efficacy of efforts, given that long term objectives are not clear, and the subsequent resource allocation has not been deployed. The representation of younger scholars and doctoral students in the staff structure is limited, so the structure seems rather top-heavy. This may restrict the development potential in the future and orient research activities away of activities such as international mobility, junior scholars training, extensive data collection, intense networking and innovative focus. However, the doctoral training process opens to international exposure both in terms of attendance to highly reputed doctoral consortia (EGOS) and in terms of creating a supportive environment to international students. Overall, given the numerical potential of staff, its age distribution, available infrastructure and planned directions of development this Unit of Assessment has the potential to maintain its current ratings.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

The current level of activities of this Unit of Assessment is below the actual potential due to a few strategic choices made, and subsequently implemented. While important for social partnering and domestic policy, those choices limit in the same time the quality and the quantity of output delivered, and thus reveal detrimental to its evaluation. Therefore, we recommend several alterations of current strategies:

1. Expand the focus on academic audiences, away from the purely educational or student-related one. This objective helps link to latest development in academic literature. The focus on international audience could be translated into targeting most prestigious international conferences, fostering membership of staff members in international academic associations, and targeting top quartile JCR outlets.
2. Current linkage to businesses is limited. It is recommended to increase direct links to businesses both through teaching/training programmes, and through research projects. This has the merit of embedding current and future needs of the domestic economic players into teaching and research, which in turn may generate higher potential for funds attraction and a higher capability in playing a significant role in fostering economic development of Lithuania.
3. The current individual researcher evaluation exercise is too frequent, which induces staff members to look for fast publication tracks and disregard highly ranked, but slow turnover cycle journals. It is recommended to alter the individual performance evaluation to a multiple year exercise with interim evaluations serving mentoring purposes.
4. Currently doctoral dissertations are delivered as published monographs in Lithuanian, which limits the outreach of these publications, impeded research labor market entry for doctoral students, and restricts the publication output of the Unit of Assessment. A shift to paper based dissertations is recommended as they have the triple merit of: providing the PhDs with a solid curriculum for the research job market; increasing the quality of output through international refereed journal feedback; increasing the visibility of the UoA through co-authorship. Also, it is recommended to develop the proportion of theses defended in English.
5. The current HR policy results in a focus on local academics, mostly locally trained. Hiring international scholars has the merit of increasing both the output of the Unit of Assessment, and fostering knowledge sharing within the Unit of Assessment, increase the chances of attracting funds and develop co-authorship networks.
6. The current strategy is limited in time horizon to the very next years. It is recommended to update this document in order to set new directions and take the Unit of Assessment to the next level in terms of international publications, impact on business and society, and exploiting the current potential, with coherent targets and remuneration systems and resource allocation to each strategic priority.

## Economics and Management, Siauliai University

UoA abbreviation	ŠU_EkV
Name of the UoA	Economics and Management
Name of institution	Siauliai University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	4,5
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	25

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Management and Administration	2	1,8	11,9
Economics	2	2,7	13,1

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities

The UoA has two research fields: Management and Administration (03S), and Economics (04S). These two research fields have approximately the same size in terms of human resources and the results of their research activity are of the same level.

#### Management and Administration (03S)

In the area of Management and Administration there are 10 researchers and 15 teaching staff (a total of 13.7 full time equivalent). In the last five years, the UoA has its work published in books, proceedings, and in journals not listed in the Web of Science, with very few exceptions: e.g. in the Rumanian journal Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences (Q4) and Lex Localis (Q3). Considering the size of the group, there are almost no relevant international contributions in this respect. Thus, although the UoA's research activity may be assessed satisfactorily at the national level, it has no international recognition. The level of the international conferences attended has not promoted international visibility. There is no presentation at the main conferences either in the general area of Management, Administration, or their specialization fields. In particular, there are no contributions to congresses associated to the top journals in Management, Administration, or Business. The UoA researchers and management have recently become aware of the importance of internationalization, but their efforts have not yet produced a significant success in the period of evaluation, although they report some improvement for 2018. The level of previous research by the members of the unit has also implied that they are not able to secure external funds (no information on external funding is provided). However, the UoA has available all the necessary infrastructure and resources necessary for their research, so that this does not seem to be a limiting factor. The number of PhD theses defended in the last five years is very low. Only one doctoral thesis defended in 2016 is reported. PhD students write their theses in Lithuanian, in the form of monographies and their research reproduces the patterns of the researchers in the UoA.

Overall, the level of research carried out is satisfactory at the national level.

## Economics (04S)

In the area of Economics, there are 2 researchers and 19 teaching staff (a total of 15.8 full time equivalent). In the evaluation period, the UoA has published their research results for this field in books, proceedings, and in journals not listed in the Web of Science, although there are some exceptions: e.g. in the Lithuanian journal Engineering Economics, and one paper in Energy (Q1). Considering the size of the group, this output is not significant. The publication strategy has focused on quantity rather than quality and as a result the group has very little impact outside the region. Thus, even though the UoA's research activity may be assessed satisfactorily at the national level, it has very limited international recognition. This lack of international visibility is also reflected by the level of the conferences attended; there is no presentation at the main conferences, either in the general area of Economics or in specialization fields. In particular, there are no contributions to congresses associated to the top journals in Economics. The UoA researchers and management have recently become aware of the importance of internationalization, but their efforts have not yet produced a significant success in the period of evaluation, although they report some improvement for 2018. The level of previous research by the members of the unit has also implied that they are not able to secure external funds (no information on external funding is provided). However, the UoA has available all the necessary infrastructure and resources necessary for their research, so that this does not seem to be a limiting factor. The number of PhD theses defended in the last five years is very low. Only three PhD dissertations defended in 2017 are reported. PhD students write their theses in Lithuanian, in the form of monographies and their research reproduces the patterns of the researchers in the UoA.

Overall, the level of research carried out is satisfactory at the national level.

## The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Outside the academic community, the UoA is an important partner carrying out applied research and consultations for several institutions. The unit cooperates with several business and public companies. In this respect, the economic and social impact of the R&D activities of the UoA is relevant at the regional level, in particular, some projects financed by the National Agency for School Evaluation, the Siauliai municipality administration, the Radviliškis District Municipality Administration, the Lithuanian Museum Association, National Education Exchanges Support Foundation, among others. Some members of the UoA collaborate with the Ministry of Finance, the Siauliai city municipality, the EU Gender Equality Expert Team, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Lithuanian Marketing Association, the Siauliai Regional Development Council, the Siauliai Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Crafts (SCCIC), etc. Thus, the UoA performs applied research that is relevant for society. The UoA has also carried out some interesting initiatives of dissemination and popularization of scientific knowledge, giving public conferences and writing press articles. Some of the initiatives of the unit have a high social interest, e.g. the promotion and strengthening of financial, economic and entrepreneurship literacy among pupils of secondary schools. The unit has organized several scientific events and conferences.

However, even though the unit has an impact at the regional level, the contributions of the UoA cannot be considered of exceptional importance in terms of their economic and social impact. The overall conclusion is that the scientific research of this unit is important for society. The relationship with business, decision-makers and the society is appropriate to a recognised institution carrying out academic activities.

## Development potential of UoA

Concerning the prospects for the future, the deep reform of Lithuanian higher education is viewed by the management and the researchers of the UoA as an opportunity for improvement. The mergers of public universities will provide contact and scientific interaction with other UoAs, which is considered valuable.

Both the management and the researchers in the UoA are aware of the need to improve scientific results and seem to have clear objectives concerning the future. They report an improvement in 2018 in their Q1-Q2 publications as result of the effort carried out in the last few years. They have also implemented an incentive system to promote research at an international level.

Although it was not fully stated in the self-assessment report, during the visit the strategy of the UoA became clear. The UoA will implement a set of measures to foster the scientific activities at an international level. These proposed measures, many already in place, are considered appropriate.

The main constraint to reach that objective is the lack of experience in performing high level research and the difficulty to attract to the UoA senior researchers that could provide the necessary expertise and generate spill over effects among the current researchers. Another constraint, although probably of second order, is the high teaching load of the university faculty. The UoA has very little external financing and although the UoA considers funding sufficient, for some activities it can be a constraint for development.

Despite these difficulties, the UoA has the potential to improve its ratings. Given the willingness to succeed and their strong motivation to become researchers at an international level, the UoA is considered capable of improving the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments noticeably within the next 5-10 years.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

The UoA has already recognised the need to improve the academic impact of their work and initiated a process of internationalization. To reach that objective, The Panel recommends taking additional measures in that direction:

1. The Panel's first recommendation would be to implement a weekly program of seminars given by foreign researchers, experts in topics of interest for members of the UoA. This seminar series could be useful to keep in touch with the more recent developments in the field and to identify relevant questions of analysis. The seminar series could be announced in the webpage.
2. Similarly, and together with the previous recommendation, a program of longer research stays by foreign researchers (for a semester or a year) in the UoA could also help international networking. The call for applications for visiting professorships could be announced on the webpage.
3. As a complement to the previous two recommendations, the UoA should further promote mobility of the researchers in the UoA, with visits to universities and institutions overseas to carry out collaborative research with leaders in frontier research in the relevant fields.
4. The Panel strongly recommends trying to recruit international researchers, or Lithuanian researchers with a PhD from international prestigious universities, as permanent staff for the UoA, so as to foster knowledge exchange and enable cross-fertilization.
5. Since present regulation in Lithuania allows the PhD dissertations to be in English and in the format of scientific papers, the Panel strongly recommends that students be not only allowed but also encouraged to write their theses in English and in the form of articles that could later be sent for publication in journals. This measure will lead the young researchers' efforts to the most fruitful direction for their future academic career.
6. To reinforce the effect of the previous recommendation, the UoA should consider the possibility of establishing as an internal requirement that at least one paper of the PhD dissertation be published in the Web of Science before the defence can take place. This measure would signal the young researchers the direction and the requirements for their future academic development in an international context.
7. The UoA should implement an incentive scheme to further stimulate publications in higher-ranked international outlets.

## Education and Special Pedagogy, Šiauliai University

UoA abbreviation	ŠU_USP
Name of the UoA	Education and Special Pedagogy
Name of institution	Šiauliai University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	3,08
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	50,76

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Education (07S)	3	3,08	50,76

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Education (07S)

Education is a large field (FTE 53.82) in this unit of assessment, and this is the only one within it. The possibilities offered by these human resources are not always reflected in the quality of publications. Although many publications appeared abroad, papers published in top journals of the field are not represented among them. The publishing practice is focusing on book chapters, a few are of international publishers, yet, majority is of local importance only. Conference attendance does not include the major meetings of educational sciences, yet, some of the conferences are important international conferences at the European and global level (e.g. International Conference on People with Special Needs). Participation in international and competitive R&D is very good. Projects are with international (two of them) or regional partners, in fields of very good social and economic impact. Two of the projects have attracted large EU funded budgets, whilst others have been funded by SU\_USP. Scholars have received satisfactory international and national recognition for their contribution to research in the form of letters of achievement. Regarding the number of doctoral students -- there is a decreasing trend of number of students enrolled in the program across recent years. Taken together, those arguments makes it possible to conclude that research carried out at this unit of assessment is of high-level and recognized at national level.

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

The unit of assessment has had R&D contracts with the municipality of and the Ministry of Education and Science under 'private sector entities'. The projects are mainly very good with high impact on changing school practices and improving services for children. Research-business cooperation agreements indicate that the unit of assessment can be regarded as a very important partner in R&D on a number of exciting, socially responsible projects (alternative transport, scooters etc). The usual way of facing needs of society of the unit is by participating as individual experts in various decision boards and commissions. Scholars make significant contributions to state working commissions in a broad area of expertise, including curriculum development, lifelong learning, higher education, quality assessment, and psychological support. Similarly, they have provided high-level consultative advice to the municipality and to the state. The unit of assessment has organized some important regional and one international conference. Scholars sit as members of editorial boards on of international journals; they represent the unit of assessment at high

level international networks, committees and associations. There are also cases of good science popularisation activities; a wide spectrum of stakeholders were recipients of the activities with very good social impact. All in all, scientific research done at the unit of assessment is important for society. The relationship with business, decision-makers and the society is at an appropriate level to a recognised institution carrying out academic activities.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The unit of assessment has recently increased the number of researchers. There is a good distribution of scientific degrees amongst the staff; however, a very high number do not have a scientific degree. There have also been many employment terminations of those with scientific degrees. The UoA has an extensive infrastructure of highly specialised centres and research laboratories, which are well-equipped, well networked at local, regional and even international levels. The unit of assessment wisely plans to merge a number of these into one Multifunctional Centre for Child Cognition and Therapies. The unit of assessment has put a number of very good incentives in place to address shortfalls of R & D. Childcare facilities are provided. Principles of HR management are basically sound, but too long for a person to get an indefinite contract. The hours of pedagogical and contact work with students are too high to support research work. The unit of assessment has nine research themes with each having many sub-themes, yet, there is a poor sense of cohesion. Themes are more a list of individuals' research interests. There are four strategic goals defined, however, these have could be more elaborated upon. Despite the critical remarks enlisted below the unit of assessment has the potential to improve its ratings. There were some human resources problems, e.g., the age distribution was problematic (22 persons are above 55), especially if the large proportion of the part-time workers is also taken into account. The unit of assessment is capable of improving the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments by 2 points within the next 5-10 years.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

1. To promote collaboration of researchers outside, both in terms of cross-disciplinarily and cross-institutionally. This will change the culture of UoA by fertilizing it both by experience coming from other research departments facing similar scientific challenges and skills of researchers from different research fields. This will also be in accord of the global tendency to focus more on problems to be solved and not so much on historically developed definition of a field.
2. To facilitate the use of laboratory equipment. The equipment could be used for both fundamental and applied studies, by this the UoA could become more flexible in terms of serving needs of society.
3. To facilitate publications in international journals with a higher citation rate (in comparison to current outlets of scientific articles). By this the UoA will obtain both better bibliometric score and will change the writing culture within the UoA. First of all it will make the researchers more visible in a broader researchers' community. As a secondary gain there will be opportunities of participating in international research teams.
4. To consider the possibility of lowering pedagogical workload of researchers by proving opportunities to work on research projects. This would change the culture the UoA in several ways – the researchers will improve the necessary skills of designing research projects, the skills of project writing, the studies will be of a better quality, the papers will be published in outlets of a higher impact.

## Vytautas Magnus University, VMU Economics and Management (VMU FEM)

UoA abbreviation	VDU_EV
Name of the UoA	Vytautas Magnus University
Name of institution	VMU Economics and Management (VMU FEM)
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	0,3
itNo. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	28,9

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Economics	3	-	13,0
Management and administration	3	0,3	15,9

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities:

The strategic objective of the Faculty of Economics and Management is to be a business school producing high quality and relevant research, with a strong focus on interdisciplinarity. This objective is fully embraced by the research unit at all levels, which produces a strong shared ambition and focus moving forward. The unit is well connected to the community of international business schools and other relevant networks. It produces research in the fields of economics and management & administration, which are roughly of the same size in terms of fte.

#### Economics

The research in this field is strong, well recognized at the national level with limited international recognition. Most publications are in English and one of the best journal articles in the evaluation period is in the first quartile of the Clarivate journals. The number of publications in Scopus and Clarivate journals displays a clear upward trend over the evaluation period. Best conference presentations evolve from a strictly regional interest towards involvement in relevant international associations. This evolution is marked by presentations at the European Academy of Management (EURAM) meeting in Valencia (2014) and the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management in California, USA (2016). Best received national and international awards include regional or national recognition with awards or scholarships, one individual's EMBA conference contribution recognition, a national ministry delivered medal, a world energy council award for outstanding achievements delivered in Lithuania, and university level recognition awards. PhD studies at this Unit are organised well, with an adequate course programme provided in a network of partner universities. In addition to the core areas, there is a tendency to focus dissertations on interdisciplinary topics, for example, experimental economics. Students are increasingly encouraged to write in English. As in many places, PhD students that are able to focus full-time on their thesis are rare (if only due to financial constraints).

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit in this field as high-level and recognized at national level, with limited international recognition.

## Management and administration

The research of this unit in this field is strong, well recognized at the national level with limited international recognition. In the field of management and administration, the unit has a reasonable number of English publications in reputable peer-reviewed journals. The number of publications in Scopus and Clarivate journals displays a clear upward trend over the evaluation period. Best conference presentations include most relevant annual events both in Europe and in the US, including conferences of the European Academy of Management (EURAM) and the Academy of Management. Best received national and international awards include national scholarships, but also best paper awards at international conferences. Participation in competitive projects is good. The establishment of a centre of excellence for culture and creative innovations, funded by EU H2020, is an impressive achievement. PhD studies at this Unit are organised well, with an adequate course programme provided in a network of partner universities. It attracts some international students. In addition to the core areas, there is a tendency to focus dissertations on interdisciplinary topics, for example, neuromarketing. Students are increasingly encouraged to write in English.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit in this field as good with limited (but increasing) international recognition. Research carried out is of high-level and recognized at national level.

## The economic and social impact of R&D activities

The unit carries out important research and is an important partner in R&D outside academia. The strong focus on interdisciplinary and societally relevant work is an important asset of this UoA. The unit has close connections to business practice and plays an active role in applied and policy-oriented research projects. It is involved in several projects with high practical relevance and impact, either for the European Commission or the Lithuanian government. The unit has organised some interesting conferences and workshops, both traditional and ad hoc, including the 13<sup>th</sup> International Conference “Management Horizons in a Changing Economic Environment”. The latest Horizon 2020 project concerns the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Cultural and Creative Industries, and integrates scholars in business and management with researchers from arts, culture, ICT and education science. This is a high-potential project. Participation of employees in commissions include national scientific award commission membership, expert evaluation for the RCL, expert membership of accounting standards ministry committee, municipality expert group, and the national confederation of industrialists. Consultations provided to public and private entities involve academic bodies, an accounting association, a business, and the general audience. Membership of researchers in editorial boards include several national outreach journals, and one impact factored journal. Membership of researchers in expert bodies include vice-presidency of an expert panel evaluating projects for the EC, executive committee membership with the EMA, and membership in European and national bodies. Popularisation activities include TEDx talks, presentations, radio interviews and newspaper interviews. Research-business agreements include contracts with banking industry, hotelier associations, energy sector companies, and several other firms.

## Development potential of UoA

The unit has the potential to improve its rating within the next 5–10 years. The strategic focus of the Faculty of Economics and Management on internationality, interdisciplinarity and impact (the three I’s) is excellent and supported by the current needs of society and science. It also connects well to its objective to be a key provider of liberal arts-based business education, for both national and international target audiences. Its focus on highly-rated, impactful and innovative interdisciplinary research is embraced by researchers at all levels, and this produces a strong drive forward with clear and broadly supported international ambitions. The unit has an expanding network of partnerships with European business schools, which will further enhance the internationalization of its research too. The unit is well equipped with good infrastructure and facilities. It has well-qualified staff. The age distribution of staff members is healthy with many relatively young scholars. The economic and cultural revival of Kaunas city creates opportunities for further cooperation with business and public stakeholders, to further improve both regional and (inter)national relevance. The management team of the unit is doing a wonderful job in setting out the strategic goals of the unit, and – even more importantly – implementing a path towards its realization that is supported by its researchers. This creates fruitful ground for further growth and improvement in quality, impact, and relevance. Given the interdisciplinary focus of the unit, the panel sees good potential for the unit to become more successful in participating in competitive EU projects and to

further improve on societal impact overall. Overall, the panel expects that this unit will be able to improve its quality of research and economic and social impact in the next 5-10 years.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

For the coming years, this unit has laid out a clear strategy based on three key directions: interdisciplinarity, internationalisation and impact. The panel applauds these strategic directions, as they combine the current strengths of the unit with relevant opportunities within and outside Lithuania. The leadership team of this unit has created a healthy culture of interdisciplinarity, cooperation and shared ambitions across broad groups of scholars. The panel advises this unit to continue this strategy and to further exploit the synergies between these different aspects. Most importantly, further internationalisation is a key element to increase visibility, reputation and the societal and academic impact of its research. This requires publishing more in (better) international journals, more (international) research visits, seminars and conferences, improving international networks and accreditations, and fostering a healthy culture of diversity, cross-fertilisation and knowledge exchange across scholars with different (academic) backgrounds. More specifically, the panel has the following recommendations:

1. Improving international visibility and recognition is crucial. The policy to put a stronger focus on international English publications (in the better Clarivate/Scopus journals) is applauded; more co-authorships with foreign scholars are recommended.
2. It would be desirable to attract more (young) scholars with a PhD degree from another institution, so as to improve diversity and internationalisation of the unit's research staff.
3. Encourage writing of PhD theses in English; encourage the use of article-based dissertations rather than monographs (where possible).
4. The focus on interdisciplinary work should not take away the focus on producing impactful disciplinary publications.
5. Improve the international exposure of young scholars by further stimulating international research visits, exchanges, and conference participation.
6. Expand international institutional partnerships with other universities and business schools, also in the area of research.
7. Start a more ambitious research seminar series with international speakers, potentially in cooperation with other institutes in Kaunas or Lithuania.
8. Invest in support for competitive grant and project applications and (once successful) project administration and management.

## VMU Communication Research, Vytautas Magnus University

<b>UoA abbreviation</b>	VDU_KOM_T
<b>Name of the UoA</b>	VMU Communication Research
<b>Name of institution</b>	Vytautas Magnus University
<b>Type of institution</b>	University
<b>No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017</b>	2,38
<b>No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017</b>	8,79

### The quality of R&D activities:

<b>Research field:</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017</b>	<b>No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017</b>
Communication and information (08S)	3	2,38	8,79

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

<b>Score</b>	4
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### Development potential of UoA

<b>Score</b>	2
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### The quality of R&D activities

Research carried out at the Department of Public Communications at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Diplomacy at Vytautas Magnus University is of high-level and has national and (limited) international recognition. The research capacity of the unit with about 2.4 FTE research staff with PhD and 8.8 FTE teaching staff with PhD is rather small. Because the research interests of the group cover a broad spectrum, including journalism, media studies, political communication, strategic communication, risk communication and creative industries, the research is somewhat fragmented and lack critical mass. The publication record of the group is satisfactory in terms of numbers with approximately 15-20 publications per year. Research findings are published in Lithuanian journals, international journals, and as (chapters in) monographs. The research strategy of the Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy aims at increasing the number of high quality international publications with some success: for the Faculty as a whole, the number of publication in Clarivate/Scopus- outlets and in monographs published by international publishing houses, has significantly increased. The best research outputs listed by the Department of Communication include studies that describe and analyse national media and communication developments, but also (comparative) studies aimed at generating theoretical insight relevant for the broader international scientific community. Publications have national significance. International high quality publications in the better Clarivate/Scopus journals are limited. Research findings are presented at international conferences, but participation in the conferences organised by leading associations in the field such as the International Communication Association (the world largest social science oriented communication organisation) and ECREA (the important European organisation in the field) is limited. Research staff received a number of national awards, for instance from the national and local governments, the Parliament and the Radio and Television commission, however almost none from their academic peers for scientific work. There is no doctoral program although some dissertations in political science touch 'communication related' topics. The unit is quite successful in attracting external funding for competitive national R&D projects. The unit also participates in a H2020 project that aims to create a centre of excellence of creative and cultural innovation in Lithuania. Members also partner in other internationally funding schemes, such as COST, Nordic Council Ministers, and HERA.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit as strong with limited international recognition. Research carried out is of high-level and recognized at national level.

## The economic and social impact of R&D activities

The Department of Public Communications carries out important scientific research and actively contributes to research projects and policy design in the area of communication and media. Collaborations with institutions and the media sector at the national and regional level are intensive and diverse, and cover a wide range of government agencies, media regulatory agencies, and public organisations. Researchers are represented as experts in a wide variety of national organisations, such as the Research Council of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Council for Culture, the Media Council, Lithuanian Journalists Union, and the Press, Radio and TV Support Fund. Researchers also serve as consultants at the national and regional level, for the Government, the Parliament, the Kaunas Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Craft, Kaunas - European Capital of Culture 2022, and Vilnius Policy Analysis Institute. The unit actively engages in science popularisation activities on the role of media in society and contributes to media and communication organisations in Lithuania. The unit lists an impressive list of research outputs and R&D contracts with private sector entities, but it seems that these activities did not generate additional income for the unit as the sum of the funds allocated to the unit based on R&D contracts with business and state institutions is reported to be 0. The unit receives basic funding for R&D, small amounts from national and international funding programmes for R&D, and also the university provides research grants and positions.

The unit also (co-)organized conferences on topics of national and international relevance. Researchers are active as editors and editorial board members, mainly of internal journals. Representation in international journals is limited to one researcher who is an editorial board member of two high-quality communication journals. Also other data show (limited) engagement of the group in international organisations. They mainly connect to the international communication community by their membership of ECREA, their participation in COST, the European Research Council, the European Science Foundation, and the Baltic Association for Media Research. International research mobility in terms of longer incoming and outgoing international visits is limited. The foundation of the UNESCO Chair on MIL for Inclusive Societies is an important achievement that provided opportunities to extend relations with the international (and national) community.

Overall, the scientific research is important for society. The unit is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers, and the society.

## Development potential of UoA

The UoA has the potential to maintain its ratings within the next 5-10 years. On the positive side: the management wants to reduce research fragmentation and integrate existing research groups into cohesive research teams. They also want to increase collaborations with the industry and increase the number of projects conducted for the industry. Furthermore, in 2018 scholars of the unit were granted the title of the UNESCO Chair on Media Literacy for inclusive Knowledge societies, which may boost media literacy research and valorisation, and active engagement with national and international organisations. And finally, the intended development and implementation of a doctoral program in Media and Communications will strengthen the research capacity of junior faculty. Finally, the unit has an adequate R&D infrastructure and an appropriate human resource management system to support these intentions.

On the other hand, detailed, realistic and solid plans of action of how to realize these opportunities are not provided. It is not clear to what extent the policy to reduce research fragmentation and to integrate existing research groups into cohesive research teams is embraced by the researchers, who say that they highly value (academic) freedom at this university. It is also not clear how the unit will be able to acquire R&D contracts (none in the last five years) with economic entities. A plan to develop and implement a doctoral program in Media and Communications has been on the table for more than ten years, and has not been realised up until now. Researchers are sceptical about the financial support for their research and the possibilities for fundamental research, due to a high teaching load and part-time appointments.

Overall the panel expects that this unit has the potential to maintain its ratings within the next 5-10 years.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

Overall, the panel evaluates the research at the Department of Public Communications as strong. Research carried out is of high-level and recognized at national level; international recognition is limited. The scientific research is important for society as the unit is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers, and the society. The unit has the potential to maintain its ratings within the next 5-10 years.

The panel advises the unit to develop -in consultation with the research staff- detailed, realistic and solid plans of action, including a time schedule, that aim at realizing the strategic plans of the management as laid down in the assessment documents. Important is a reduction of the fragmentation of the research and development of a focused research profile, and the integration and consolidation of existing research groups into cohesive and multidisciplinary research teams as this helps to create a critical mass for the research topics which contributes to scientific and societal impact at the national and international level. It is recommended to further detail and consolidate the research agenda in line with the European research agenda and international developments as this enhances international collaboration, successful European grant applications, and in general “visibility” in the field. As R&D contracts with economic entities are almost insignificant, the unit is also advised to develop plans to increase this source of funding, which will contribute to the financial potential of the Department.

The unit is also advised to develop other initiatives that improves international visibility and recognition, such a stronger focus on international English publications (in the better Clarivate/Scopus journals).

It is also advised to realise the long existing plans for a doctoral program. The doctoral program, including a broad research training program, could possibly be developed in collaboration with other departments in the Faculty, or with other universities in Lithuania or abroad. The creation of a strong group of well-trained young scholars is vital for the research quality of the unit and other units in the field. It is advised to encourage writing of PhD theses in English and to encourage the use of article-based dissertations rather than monographs (where possible), as this helps the connection of young researchers and their research findings with the international community.

## VMU Political Science, Vytautas Magnus University

UoA abbreviation	VDU_POL_M
Name of the UoA	VMU Political Science
Name of institution	Vytautas Magnus University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	3,16
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	18,64

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Political sciences (02S)	3	3,16	18,64

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	2
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### The quality of R&D activities

#### Political sciences (02S)

The unit has over the last 4–5 years consolidated its research output. The research output is a mix of articles in in-house journals (at VMU or regional), book chapters (with some of them in edited books published by renowned publishers such as Palgrave and Routledge), and articles in high quality international journals with significant impact factors (such as Electoral Studies, Journal of Comparative Politics, Journal of International Political Theory, and Global Affairs). The share of international publications in the overall output is stable, but has not significantly increased compared to the previous research assessment. Moreover, the research is still mainly applied, based on existing theoretical frameworks, with a focus on the Lithuanian/Baltic case, or concerns literature reviews. Comparative research and/or theory development is lacking. Conference participation is significant (but not extensive) and shows a genuine international orientation. Participation in larger mainstream political science conferences (ECPR, APSA, IPSA, CEPASA) is however limited and less than would be expected. Most academic awards are national and/or by stakeholders in relevant policy fields, or concern scholarships, and are not provided by (international) academic peers.

The unit has established a consortium in political science PhD studies, together with KTU, KU and LKA. The number of defended dissertations and of on-going PhD projects is acceptable, but rather volatile. Dissertations are unfortunately published in Lithuanian, which does not allow for international recognition of the underlying research, and they are hardly followed-up by international publications.

The unit has strong and extensive international cooperation links, and makes good use of various mobility schemes (Fulbright, Erasmus+). Staff members have visited internationally renowned institutions in Europe, the US and Canada, and the unit is able to attract faculty from such institutions for research visits and guest lectures at VMU.

The unit is involved in some competitive R&D projects (also internationally, such as COST), but the involvement is limited, also in financial terms. The largest project mentioned (GeSt) is not a genuine research project but a capacity building project focusing on modernisation of MA programmes. There seems to be a large gap between the international profile of, and practices at the unit and its actual involvement in international research cooperation.

Overall, the research has a strong research performance. Its R&D activities are carried out at high-level, recognized at the national level, but with limited international recognition.

## The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Commissioned research and consultancy work are of substantial magnitude, and these activities have significant impacts on the national level. There is also huge involvement in working groups and committees. The unit's faculty have very good links to several non-academic civil society organizations and the unit has extensive networks with key government agencies. Faculty is involved in an impressive amount and variety of scientific advisory boards of governmental bodies (Higher Education Council, Research Council, Collegium of Minorities, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Tax Inspectorate Board, et cetera). The unit provides a large amount of consultancy work, which shows the relevance of its work to the Lithuanian society. Relationships with the business sector are however very limited. Advisory and committee work at the international governance level is not very well-developed.

Membership of editorial boards is also appropriate to a unit like this (and of this size), but does not involve international journals with a high reputation; membership is mainly local, national and regional. Membership of international academic networks and expert groups is relatively well developed, and signals international recognition.

Academic events are organized on a regular basis. They do often concern policy-oriented events; genuine research seminars and/or conferences are lacking. The unit also organizes (many) outreach and popularization activities. Many members of the unit have a significant media profile; they are often invited to provide expertise or give lectures in different institutions or media.

Overall, the unit carries out very important R&D activities. It is closely related not only to the academic community, but it is a very important partner to other stakeholders as well, especially to policy makers and civil society actors at the national level.

## Development potential of UoA

The staff composition of the unit is balanced in terms of age, but less so in terms of ranks, with relatively few juniors and a lot of chief/senior researchers and full/associate professors. Research infrastructure and facilities are good; the unit is located in a very modern building. In the documents the HR principles and measures are outlined for the VMU as a whole. The site visit showed that within this VMU framework the unit uses a mix of recruitment requirements, bonuses for performance, competitive internal funding for conference participation, and support for proposal writing and applications, in order to enhance personal competences and performance. These measures seem to be adequate. Bottlenecks mentioned by researchers during the site visit mainly concerned external rules and procedures, and general low funding of social science research in Lithuania. PhD students (most of them graduates from VMU) generally seem to be content with the facilities, the supervision, and organization of their studies.

Regarding its current strategy, the unit has provided information in which much attention is paid to funding problems and inequities, bottlenecks created by legislation, and so on. This approach also dominates the SWOT analysis. It would have been better to focus on issues within the unit's own span-of-control, and to assess the unit's performance in a more self-critical way. One of the current weaknesses is that the research profile of the unit is not clear. According to the documents there are four main research themes or clusters, but their content is minimally explained and justified. Actual research is quite diverse: welfare policies, citizen-centred public services, local politics, journalism, Islam, child protection, identity politics, memory politics, energy security et cetera. Clarification on the unit's research profile could not be provided during the site visit. The approach seems to one of inclusion, i.e. accommodating a large amount of specialisations (political philosophy, religion studies), leading to a proliferated research profile. The unit has a large amount of international contacts, but these contacts also seem to be rather personal and ad-hoc, and not embedded into a larger strategy.

Overall, it can be expected that the unit keeps its current scores in the next period. Improvement of the scores (especially of the quality of research output, in terms of more high quality international publications, and participation in international research projects) requires a clear research strategy and profile, which does not seem to be present today.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

The unit is a strong player which carries out high-level R&D activities. These activities are very important for Lithuanian society, but have limited international academic recognition. The many international contacts the unit has (with individual colleagues abroad and in academic networks) give plenty of

opportunities for improvement of the international profile and output of the unit, provided the unit has a clear research strategy and profile. The panel makes the following recommendations:

1. Reconsider the current research profile and prioritize. Make sure that there is a clear focus on 2-3 topics (rather than broad inclusive clusters) and create sufficient mass around these topics in terms of research capacity.
2. Strategically plan the implementation of measures to capitalize on existing international contacts, in order to enhance international research cooperation, and to increase the share of publications in high-impact international journals.
3. In order to increase international academic visibility, participation in larger mainstream political science conferences and academic networks (ECPR, APSA, IPSA, CEPSA) should be enhanced.
4. Make better use of PhD research, especially for the enhancement of the international profile. Dissertations should be published (more often) in English and/or should be followed up by international publications, in high impact journals. Selection of PhD candidates should focus more on inflow from outside the own institution, including PhD students from abroad. Collaboration with foreign universities in the area of PhD studies should be enhanced.
5. While it is important to continue the current policy-oriented events which target practitioners and policy-makers, it is also important to organize more genuine academic (i.e. research) events, aiming at (national and international) academic peers, in order to strengthen the academic profile of the unit.

## VMU Psychology and Education, Vytautas Magnus University

UoA abbreviation	VDU_PSI_EDU
Name of the UoA	VMU Psychology and Education
Name of institution	Vytautas Magnus University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	4,61
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	28,45

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Psychology (06S)	3	1,86	14,49
Education (07S)	3	2,75	13,96

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Psychology (06S)

Researchers in the field of psychology have been dealing with a broad range of themes, concentrating on organizational psychology, as well as on studies of driving behaviour. Some quality papers and chapters (in English) have been published in edited books by known publishers, as well as in international journals. The top journals of the field are not represented among their best publications. Researchers have participated in five large-scale national projects; however, the possibilities offered by these resources are not yet reflected in the quality of publications. Regarding the R&D Themes, the Psychology field is very strong in volume, scope and potential. Participation in competitive R&D projects, though local and mainly small to medium scale, is good both scientifically and in terms of impact value. Outputs of competitive projects include articles, international conferences and training for practitioners. The UoA has presented papers in international conferences run by large scientific associations. It is good to see that a number of national and international awards have gone to early career researchers; two others have gone to the same scholar. The number of PhD students is quite small; however, it is stable. Part of the PhD students' work is published in good scientific outlets. During the evaluation period there has been no foreign student enrolled in the PhD study programme. To conclude - research carried out is of a high-level and recognized at a national level.

#### Education (07S)

The proportion of FTE and head count (35:16.7) indicates that a large number of part-time workers are employed at this field which endangers research productivity. The 5 best publications, which are all in English, are in foreign outlets such as chapters in well regarded collections and publishing houses, as well as journal articles in very good journals (i.e. European Journal of Social Work). However, the majority are not reporting results of original empirical studies. Scholars have presented interesting papers in international conferences in the sub-fields of study, but are not presenting in top conferences of large international scientific associations. They have achieved a very good range of international awards of prestige; this is a highly esteemed group of scholars. The participation in international and in competitive R&D, with four major large-scale and a minor research project is very good. Projects have garnered large sums of funds, but the exceptional resources are not reflected in scientific publications yet. There are also

projects with business partners. The Education themes are uneven, missing several fields of educational sciences. Some, like the continued research in adult learning, address research gaps. The validation of non-formal or informal learning which contributes to EU level standard setting is well articulated. Original research based on experiments or large-scale data-collection is not representation in the portfolio of the researchers of this field. The number of PhD students is quite stable. There is also one foreign student involved in the PhD program. In sum, the Education field in this UoA is strong nationally with limited international recognition.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The economic and social impact of VDU\_PSI\_EDU is very good. There are applied projects directly addressing the societal needs dealing with important social and economic issues. This is a good example of how an academic institution can cooperate with society. The list of research outputs and contracts is impressive. There are value-added commissions from the business sector, for a variety of services which have generated considerable income for the UoA. R&D orders include an extremely high quality project, funded by the ESF. Researchers have been appointed to a number of working groups and committees in very important fields. Researchers are members of prestigious international expert groups such as of the UN Human Rights Treaty body. Scholars have participated as national consultants in a range of socially important areas, such as for improving access for disabled students and on identifying the psychosocial risks of prison employees. Scientific conferences and events organised by EDU\_PSI\_EDU range from the organisation of a conference of a major international scientific association to symposia and summer schools for staff and students. Scholars are editors or co-editors of international and national journals. The UoA has invested in a range of good, but rather traditional, popularisation activities targeting diverse beneficiaries.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The current research traditions of the institution have become stronger during last years and have the potential to increase till excellent. Staff in Psychology and Education is very well-qualified. The R&D infrastructure of the university is very good. Human Resource Management principles include a number of financial incentives which are available for a range of research and teaching activities, including opportunities for staff CPD in foreign language competence. There are arrangements to reduce the teaching load and increase research (from 50% to 75% of the load) on an individual basis, in connection with annual evaluation. Early career researchers are encouraged to participate in special research funds. There is strong encouragement for research at the university level, through the use of large networks. Research is organized around departments, clusters and hubs (lifelong learning and psychosocial functioning of the individual). Within the broad themes, there is the freedom of topic choice which both researchers and doctoral students greatly value. Resource constraints are a general (national) issue which is not university related; the UoA has found creative ways to counter these constraints, such as the interdisciplinary research clusters. Preparing proposals is facilitated by University level supports. Furthermore, there is an intention in the Psychology field to conduct interdisciplinary research, together with natural sciences. Researchers are motivated by having five year evaluation exercises which gives them time to prepare articles for international journals publishing in English. Researchers report that the university has been deeply supportive of collaboration with international scholars. Doctoral students report very good possibilities to go to conferences funded by the university or the RCL. Many are employed as junior researchers; scholarships are available for those who are outstanding. Opportunities to co-author papers with supervisors are in place. Doctoral students benefit from additional courses in Sweden (Umea) and Estonia (Tallinn), as well as from forms of distance learning. Scientific consultants from the international field are utilized. They report healthy supervisory relationships. These conditions indicate that the UoA may improve its research quality and social impact in the near future.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

1. VDU\_PSI\_EDU psychology has been working on some very important fields of well-being and emigrants, motivational interviewing, traffic offenders' profiling and social competence of primary school pupils. These are all very good, though local, R & D projects. This expertise is easily translatable to other contexts; the research could interest international researchers in these fields.

Given this experience, VDU\_PSI\_EDU should seek international collaborators and project funding (especially EU) in these and cognate, fields.

2. Psychology researchers report using the University's 'cluster' research funds for research more than for conference participation. However, a judicious review of conference attendance should reveal whether it is worth shifting some more funds to this in order to better network with potential international R & D collaborators.
3. Researchers report that they respond to calls for interdisciplinary work and more creativity by publishing with historians, amongst others, but then the publication is not counted as a social science. The UoA should revise this method of categorizing outputs so as to not punish this interdisciplinary work for crossing disciplinary boundaries.
4. The Social Work entity, should, with Social Work departments elsewhere in Lithuania, push for a State recognised doctoral programme.
5. Researchers report a bias against research coming from the ex-Soviet bloc. They are utilising networks based on contacts made during international conferences to overcome this perceived hurdle. Targeting members of international journals' editorial boards to have as external examiners, or guests at conferences organized by UoA could reverse this 'bias' trend.
6. There is a well-justified emphasis on having a cultural impact through the use of the national language which needs, however, to be matched by continuing investment in increasing the capacity of researchers and doctoral students to speak and write in English.

## VMU Sociology, Vytautas Magnus University

UoA abbreviation	VDU_SOC
Name of the UoA	VMU Sociology
Name of institution	Vytautas Magnus University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	6,78
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	9,23

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Sociology (05S)	4	6,78	9,23

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Sociology (05S)

The sociology field is very strong academically. Its strength is a multidisciplinary orientation that reaches from sociology to evolutionary science, religious studies to epidemiology. Both the university and the UoA have direct and clear incentives to publish. The university offers an annual bonus and uses a coefficient to the 5-year contract to adjust wages based on the productivity. The members of the group have published in major international journals such as Evolutionary psychology, History of the family, PlosOne or Men and Masculinities. Several scientific presentations were delivered at high-profile international conferences. The number and range of international projects, Fulbright, COST, H2020, ESF, ERC, ERA are also very good. At the same time, the unit is rarely a leading partner on the international level and has not been competing for the high-level programs such as ERC grants. The lack of confidence and time is the main hindrance that prevents the staff to compete for the leadership and the ERC projects. Moreover, there is relatively little direct support for those who would decide to go for such a competition. The unit conducts doctoral training in Sociology and it is also noteworthy that the PhD training is very open and it attracts students that received their master degree elsewhere. In total, nine PhD students defended their dissertations since 2013. The students appreciate the liberal and free atmosphere and non-hierarchical structure of the unit. The methodology support and training are at a high level. However, there are no funds to cover direct research costs. Even though national funding (RCL) for research abroad is available, there is no support for research in Lithuania (e.g., travel money for the fieldwork in Lithuania). These facts altogether indicate that the field is strong at international level.

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

The UoA is carrying out socially and economically important research. Most of the research projects focus on actively discussed policy areas that are directly connected with actual social-developmental problems of the country and have a significant regional impact (e.g., homelessness, energy security, health, social exclusion, youth policy, aging, and many other topics). The faculty is well connected to mainstream international networks and boards (Anthropological Journal of European Cultures, NORMA, Implicit Religion, European Science Foundation, International Society for the Study of New Religions, Science Europe). The UoA's faculty is well networked at the national level as well. Among the cooperating partners, there are several non-academic organizations. For example, the researchers from the VDU are involved in the work of bodies established the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Higher Education Council, or Lithuanian

Academy of Sciences. Faculty members are active in a diverse range of working groups and commissions locally working with courts, and in government policy making (for example in the aging strategy), and internationally (i.e., OECS). The unit is also actively involved in popularization activities (TV appearances, public lectures). At the same time, the direct cooperation with the business sector is relatively low. However, the unit of assessment (VDU\_SOC) has already signed several research-business cooperation agreements that provide internship opportunities for the VDU students. The collaboration with the private sector is also directly encouraged by and incentivized by the University. Overall, the scientific research of the UoA is important for society. The relationship with business, decision-makers and the society is on the appropriate level for a recognized institution carrying out academic activities.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The age structure of the research and teaching staff is well-balanced. The UoA has a good virtual and physical infrastructure and a progressive remuneration policy that incentives academic production (even though the overall wage level is still low due to the lack of resources on the national level). The unit is successful in attracting financial support from international funding programs, which compensates some of the decline in the funding on the national level. However, the UoA has still suffered from the overall decline in financial support by nearly 20 percent in the last five years. Due to the financial restrictions, some academic staff supplements their wages by research projects; others have to accept part-time employment elsewhere. A possible – unused – opportunity lies in the effort to increase the collaboration with the commercial sector. Despite the instability of financial support, the research staff is well-motivated and interested in searching for new academic opportunities, new sources of financial support and international collaborations. To fulfill this potential, a more direct support for grant applications would be needed. Also, the fragmentation of the research themes might constitute a possible hindrance to the future development. Overall, considering the composition of faculty and staff, the R&D infrastructure, the planned directions for development as well as global trends in its area of science, the UoA is capable of improving its standing by two points in the next 5-10 years. In sum, the panel sees the good developmental potential of this UoA, therefore the overall score the panel gave is 5.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

- The UoA is actively involved in several international research activities but it has potential for even more international cooperation and improvement of visibility. The researchers of the UoA should aim at taking leading roles in collaborative projects. To overcome the limitations, it would be helpful to develop – potentially in cooperation with other research institutions – project writing mentoring program for aiming at international grants, including ERC.
- The management and the leading scholars in the UoA should discuss also other ways to help the applicants (e.g. by providing direct administrative support, inviting experienced ERC holders).
- The PhD students should be encouraged and incentivized to write their dissertations in English. Such strategy would help to publish the results of their doctoral research in English, preferable in prestigious international outlets.
- Instead of the traditional monograph-type theses, theses based on multiple-study should be encouraged, based on already published papers (or manuscripts prepared for submission for publishing).
- A course in academic writing might be a good means to support PhD students but also researchers on the post-doctoral level to increase international visibility and to publish more in international journals and other outlets.
- Internationalisation of the PhD training, inviting international professors for shorter or longer visits and attracting international students may also contribute to further increase the quality of research and the number of high-level publications.
- It is laudable that PhD students are encouraged to gain international experience. However, the UoA should also consider ways to help students with empirical research and fieldwork in Lithuania. This help might take many forms, for example it can be in the form of the direct financial support or in the form of administrative support for the application for external research funds.

## Social Sciences, Vilnius Gediminas technical university

UoA abbreviation	VG TU_S
Name of the UoA	Social Sciences
Name of institution	Vilnius Gediminas technical university
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	1,45
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	74,97

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Communication and information (08S)	3		12,06
Economics (04S)	3	0,75	24,77
Management and administration (03S)	3	0,7	38,14

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Communication and information (08S)

In the field of Communication and Information science there are 25 teaching staff with 12.1 Full Time Equivalent. The research output listed in the reporting period has mostly been published outside the Journal of Citation Report (Clarivate Analytics) journals with two exceptions of a Civil and Mechanical Engineering journal and a Philosophy-Sociology profiled journal. The publishing strategy does not seem to aim at international JCR outlets focused on communication and information technologies. Yet, publications in English are clearly preferred, which suggests a transition period from a domestically oriented publication strategy to a fully fetched international outlet targeting. The wide variety of journals that host publications in this field reflect the multidisciplinary focus of research. While clearly successful in R&D terms, multidisciplinary research may reveal detrimental in academic publishing given a clear focus on single-discipline in academia. The participation of researchers to international conferences includes reputed and highly visible events. This substantiates a sustained effort carried out by this Unit of Assessment researchers, recognized by international colleagues, given that typically the acceptance policy of reputed international congresses involves peer-review of submissions and a strict rejection rate policy. Regarding the participation in competitive projects, this Unit of Assessment list one large grant aimed at developing the Creativity and Innovation Centre and several other small grants. Defended dissertations are not listed in the report. One reason for such a low performance may refer to the particular structure adopted by the VG TU as a whole, which aims at linking social science directly to natural and technical science faculties and projects. However, there is a number of international publication outlets which may host this Unit of Assessment research and are currently left unattended. Overall, the academic performance evaluation in the field of Communication and information is strong with limited international recognition, while strongly recognized at national level.

#### Economics (04S)

In the field of Economics the human potential includes 40 teaching staff, 1 full time researcher, and totals 25.5 Full Time Equivalent. In numerical terms the output is not very large, however this is compensated by an increasing quality of publications. The publications include Journal Citation Reports listed outlets,

with recent increase in quality. As compared to potential, the research output is limited in quantity and leaves ample room for improvement, including a fostering of co-authored work. Additionally, publishing in outlets with truly international editorial boards would foster the visibility of research output, yet have not been successfully targeted in the reporting period. The participation in international conferences is sufficient, even if there is room for improving the international exposure of each scholar. Similarly to publication output, the participation to international conferences is limited in numbers. This constrains direct access of researchers to peers' feedback during conferences, as well as limits prospection of academic networks. Competitive research projects include a reputed range of Horizon 2020, 7th Framework Programme and a Tempus project from EU financing, as well as two small projects financed nationally. The international recognition of this Unit of Assessment is limited to a Ukrainian medal awarded to one scholar, and a honorary doctorate to one scholar. International conference of journal best paper awards, or academic association awards have not been reported. Doctoral training activity is systematic, well-structured and highly productive with 23 defended doctoral theses. Overall, the assessment of this Unit of Assessment in the field of Economics is strong, with limited international recognition.

### **Management and administration (03S)**

In the field of Management and Administration there are 2 full time researchers, 53 teaching staff, which translates into 38.8 Full Time Equivalent. Despite this very high numerical potential, the publication list reported in the best outlets include only a few publications, several of which domestic. Over the reporting period higher quality journals have hosted the publications of this Unit of Assessment, and importantly those were co-authored with international scholars. This suggests the implementation of a policy aimed at improving international visibility, and nesting research in a network of international academics. While the quality of publications is increasingly high, there is still room for ample increase in number of papers published. Conference attendance is sufficient, and includes the highly reputed and selective GIKA and IBAI. However recognized top events such as European Academy of Management, European Group for Organization Science, Academy of Management, or British Academy of Management are missing. Also, the number of scholars who have participated in international conferences as compared to the Full Time Equivalent in this Unit of Assessment is limited. At the same time, researchers do not report significant constraint in terms of financing mobility, which suggests that a stronger focus on conference related networking and related visibility might be more incentivized. The international recognition of researchers is limited to a few awards for articles. The doctoral training programme is systematic, well-structured and highly productive with 17 defended theses. The participation in competitive projects is focused in the reporting period on the INTERREG, Baltic Sea cooperation programme, and two other small projects. Nationally funded projects have not been listed. Overall the evaluation of this Unit of Assessment is strong, with limited international recognition.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The economic and social impact of this Unit of Assessment is significant. Particularly the development and operation of the Creativity Lab increases the impact well beyond the average level displayed by Unit of Assessment in this evaluation exercise. The impact translates into direct action with individuals, and direct action with regulatory bodies in Lithuania. The participation of staff to commissions is limited to national bodies, and to a limited number of scholars as compared to the numerical potential of this Unit of Assessment. Important events organized are aimed at a national audience, with a predominantly domestic composition of scientific committees. The exception goes to one event organized in Firenze, however this Unit of Assessment is not listed as organizer on the event's website. Some staff members are active in editorial boards of international outlets, even if these are not international journals with an impact factor. Popularization activities include a wide range of events and communication channels aimed at the national audience. One important facility includes co-working spaces and start-up hosting space, which might contribute both to a stronger impact and to a higher visibility of this Unit of Assessment's activities. Several agreements with businesses have been reported, however the focus is quite broad and detailed, focused actions are still to come. Major research outputs include collaboration links with Lebanon and Syria, a study of Lithuanian economy long-term competitiveness, transport policies alignment in the Baltic area, Marie-Curie scheme, clusters policy development, a Cost action scheme and some other projects. While reported activities are mainly aimed at institutional decision-makers, they involve evidence based policy shaping. Overall, the Unit of Assessment carries out very important scientific research and reveals to be an important partner for R&D outside the academic community. The policy of coupling social sciences research with technical advancement translates into a focus on implementation of ideas and technologies

instead of focusing on innovations. This recognizes both the role of technology and the role of implementation, as complementary activities.

## **Development potential of UoA**

The development potential of this Unit of Assessment can be estimated as very high for several reasons. Firstly, the numerical human potential with PhD in Full Time Equivalent terms tops 75. As compared to the current situation, there is ample room for mobilizing personnel into projects, conferences and publications. Secondly, the facilities at hand have been recently developed, are state-of-the-art and include both specialized labs, easy access to library resources and significant amount of co-working space. Relevant R&D infrastructure is available on site, and a link to start-up activities on campus is fostered by additional infrastructure. Thirdly, the motivation system fosters medium-term engagement, with yearly evaluations but bi-annual decisions on workload and salary. The flexible remuneration system includes a variable part that may account for a significant part of the total salary. Additionally, the doctoral training programme is highly structured, internationally oriented, and includes workshops or other skills development events. Strategies for developing research and promoting personal careers are well articulated, and remain stable over time which clearly fosters their implementation and a productivity-oriented organizational culture. The doctoral training programme implemented is very well structured and fosters productivity at international level, while remaining with very close links to actual business or institutional use. Structural arrangements implemented by the authorities in terms of team composition, team flexibility, cross-functional and cross-disciplinary composition greatly serves interdisciplinary and complex project implementation. As a result the general outlook for future development is very positive. The overall assessment is that this Unit of Assessment has great potential to achieve or maintain very good or excellent rating in the coming 5 to 10 years.

## **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

This Unit of Assessment has reached a significant potential, recently developed in terms of facilities, funding, human resource development and procedures. It is reasonable to expect a significant increase in terms of output and impact given the potential gathered. However, some further developments may help achieving higher marks:

1. Current publication output leaves JCR journals out of scope. It is highly recommended to shift publication policy towards JCR outlets in order to gain a high-quality feedback and reach out to an international audience. Outlets published internationally and focused topically on each of the represented fields of research should be identified, and clearly targeted. Perhaps lists such as the Association of Business Schools (ABS) or Financial Time 50 list may be an inspiration for developing a focused policy.
2. Current participation to international prestigious congresses is limited in number of this Unit of Assessment employees. An increase of international collaboration in terms of conference presentations numbers, and paper development in co-authorship is recommended. It opens ways for bilateral and networked collaboration opportunities, embeds scholars in academic networks and fosters dissemination of research outputs.
3. Given the financial constraints at the Unit of Assessment it is recommended to focus on nationally financed projects in order to prepare solid grounds for internationally financed projects participation and develop a high financing potential at the UoA level. This sequence allows for increased networking, data collection publication effort financing. Given that national funding is very competitive, an effort in developing capabilities of attracting national funds may reveal very useful in engaging with international projects.
4. Currently doctoral dissertations are delivered as published monographs, which limits the outreach of these publications, impedes research labour market entry for doctoral students, and restricts the publication output of the Unit of Assessment. A shift to paper based dissertations is recommended as they have the triple merit of: providing the PhDs with a solid curriculum for the research job market; increasing the quality of output through international refereed journal feedback; increasing the visibility of the UoA through co-authorship.
5. Current incentives for publishing top 1.000 euro or so per prestigious publication, which is not very competitive as compared to international standards, and to salaries in Lithuania. Therefore, highest ranked publications are not a priority for researchers. A significant increase the bonus per highly

ranked publication either in monetary terms, or in hours equivalent is recommended to prioritize top-tier publications.

6. Current linkage to businesses is limited. It is recommended to increase direct links to businesses both through teaching/training programmes, and through research projects. This has the merit of embedding current and future needs of the domestic economic players into teaching and research, which in turn may generate higher potential for funds attraction and a higher capability in playing a significant role in fostering economic development of Lithuania.
7. The current HR policy results in a focus on local academics, mostly locally trained. While Marie-Curie scheme and Cost actions contribute to develop research and networking skills, this process needs to be internationalized and accelerated. Hiring international scholars has the merit of increasing both the output of the Unit of Assessment, and fostering knowledge sharing within the Unit of Assessment.
8. The currently implemented interdisciplinary group structure, oriented at projects involves a significant time allocation to meetings. Employees report this as important, but regret that time allocated to these activities is not accounted for in internal evaluations. This may discourage from involving in preliminary meetings and hamper project preparation efforts.
9. Current access to databases may restrict research activities. While the Unit of Assessment is typically responsive to requests of purchasing a specific database, this effort of identifying relevant databases might be more systematic. It is recommended to further develop a system for identifying relevant databases.
10. The current recruiting system for doctoral program focuses on in-house candidates. While highly successful this also limits talents attraction and may generate a cultural lock-in effect. It is recommended to develop a system for recruiting doctoral students from other universities or countries in order to avoid a culture replication effect.

## VMU Law, Vytautas Magnus University

UoA abbreviation	VDU_TEIS
Name of the UoA	VMU Law
Name of institution	Vytautas Magnus University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	1,6
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	12,9

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Law (01S)	3	1,6	12,9

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Law (01S)

The Law Faculty of VMU continues to be a dynamic and internationally oriented institution, with considerable international recognition, but in this regard, there is still room for improvement. The staff of that Faculty is relatively small and young. In spite of that they had managed to achieve meaningful research results. It is worthwhile to mention that it is publishing the only legal journal in the country indexed in SCOPUS (Baltic Journal of Law and Politics). The Unit has published numerous scholarly publications in English. In particular one should note “Introduction to Lithuanian Law and The Law of the Baltic States” – the first English language description of legal system of the country and the region. The staff of the UoA has developed significant expertise in several important fields, such as legal ethics, education law, criminal law, white-collar crime, financial and insolvency law, energy law, labour law, legal philosophy, and alternative dispute resolution. There are numerous peer-reviewed international publications (Springer, Elsevier, Computer Law and Security Review, International Journal of Law, Language and Discourse) – although not in the top journals or publishing houses. In spite of the fact the UoA has managed to attract number of foreign scholars, its researcher’s presence at top tier international conferences, workshops in leading universities or research institutions or in exchange programs outside the region is actually low. The Unit has two major research projects with a very important budget that might open the possibilities of improvement of the UoA in multiple fields. In conclusion, it should be stressed that research carried out is of high-level and recognized at national level, however, has not yet reached satisfactory international recognition.

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

The UoA continues to have prominent presence in national institutions (courts, government, political and professional bodies including the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court, the Seimas, the Central Electoral Commission, the prosecutor’s office, the Commerce or the private detectives’ organization) and arguably plays a significant role both in the legislation process and in implementation of law in Lithuania. Its activities are reasonably accessible for the broader public. The UoA’s leading scholars are present in international legal academic networks and experts’ bodies (such as Kluwer and European Company Law boards, UN working groups, ECLAN, ELA, SECOLA and H2020 and Erasmus projects), but this presence could and should be improved – similarly to the UoA’s own journal. Given their qualifications, which

would make them eligible for these positions, the international impact and visibility of the researcher's the UoA's in expert groups, committees and editorial boards of top-tier journals, however still needs improvement. Also, the scope of doctoral training is so far rather limited, needs to be expanded. The domestic economic and social impact of the VDU\_TEIS is very prolific and relevant but in comparative terms (with other Lithuanian institutions) needs to point the most important institutions of the Republic of Lithuania. The participation in LOGIN conference seems to be an important active in order to upgrade the score of the UoA in terms of popularisation activities, but the rest of results are modest. In this sense, more dissemination is needed. The list of research-business cooperation agreements is basically monopolized by law firms. Due to the potential of the VDU\_TEIS is seems short and need to be broaden by aiming cooperation with public institutions besides that the cooperation agreement signed with the Office of the Prosecutor General five years ago. In conclusion, scientific research carried out in VMU Law Faculty is important for society. The UoA is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers, and the society. In sum, the UoA carries out important academic research and is an important partner in R&D outside the academic community to business, decision-makers, and the society.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The Unit - composed of relatively young researches - has a potential to become one of the leading law faculties in the country. Despite of the certain focuses of expertise, it is noticeable that the interdisciplinary approach is very much encouraged, especially in project activities, journals published and joint publications. It is also important to recognize that the University and the State provides the Unit with a good infrastructure and sufficient financing for conducting research. The UoA has the potential to further improve its ratings: it is capable to improve the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments within the next couple of years. The UoA's strategic development plan is original and impressive; it continues to be a dynamic and creative academic institution. The physical and technological infrastructure of the UoA is adequate and sufficient, career development and human resource management is progressive. However, it seems necessary to increase funding for academic mobility for research and conference travel for researchers. While already number of valuable foreign researches is noticeable facilitating visits from top-tier researchers should be encouraged. The two financial projects that will or have already started this year must boost all the activities and fields of the VDU\_TEIS because of the transcendence and amount of both projects. The amounts are considerable and open significantly the potentialities of the UoA. At the same time that kind of projects are going to test the research and organisational capabilities of the VDU\_TEIS and provide evidence if the UoA is prepared to improve and achieve an outstanding level not only in the domestically but also internationally.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

The Law Faculty of VMU is a dynamic, well organised and managed academic unit. It is open for international cooperation and managed to attract number of international scholars. However, so far scholars of the Faculty have not been able to be involved in top ranking international research projects. Participation in such projects increases international reputation of the Faculty and constitutes platform of exchange of academic staff. Through such projects scholars are able to be updated with new trends in legal sciences. The best way to be part of those projects is membership in different international academic networks and organisations. Also participation in international conferences and presentation of research results at those conferences seems to be absolute necessity, in particular for young scholars and PhD students, in order to be able to confront they research with international audience. Participation and presentation of papers at such conferences requires as a rule financial contribution. Therefore, securing funding for academic mobility is a precondition for more active international involvement. Number of PhD students, bearing in mind academic potential of the UoA, is too small. More numerous PhD seminar offers wider scope of research and builds potential for further development. Bearing in mid the above the following recommendations are presented:

1. The Faculty will need to increase memberships in international academic networks and organizations.
2. Increase funding for academic mobility for research and conference travel for researches including doctoral students.
3. More active search for international funding in particular EU sources for research projects is needed
4. The number of doctoral students needs to be increased.

## Law, Vilnius University

UoA abbreviation	VU_01S
Name of the UoA	Law
Name of institution	Vilnius University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	1,18
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	52,16

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Law (01S)	3	1,18	52,16

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	5
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	2
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Law (01S)

Based on the institution's annual R&D performance assessment for each of the last five years, in particular: data on research work and on participation in international R&D projects; the list of the best research outputs and best presentations delivered at conferences abroad best research outputs; participation in competitive R&D projects; the most important national and international awards; as well as the number of defended dissertation and the number of doctoral students from abroad, the Unit of Assessment is evaluated as good and strong with limited international recognition, and the research carried out is of high-level and recognized at national level. The Law Faculty of the Vilnius University undoubtedly enjoys the strongest academic position at the national level due to high level of awareness, its popularity and long tradition. It is a prominent national authority in the field of law. Members of the faculty are continuously advising and assessing the most important public institutions of the Republic of Lithuania. It has a highly qualified faculty and prestige among the legal profession. The UoA also has a good network of international collaborators including outstanding institutions. However, academic outputs do not reflect this adequately. Although its international presence had increased significantly since the last assessment, the major weakness is still the lack of publications in relevant international peer review journals or international book publishers. Among the list of research outputs from 2013 to 2018, there are no Scopus "A" journal, ISI or other similar internationally relevant database publications (although the Bruylant-book is noted. Mostly book chapters and self-edited books are presented as best publications of the faculty. The lack of visible participation of the staff members in prominent international conferences is another a weakness. The overall level of internationalization is rather modest, just as the number of interdisciplinary project initiatives. The UoA's leading scholars are present in international legal academic networks and experts' bodies (such as the boards of the New Journal of European Criminal Law, the Queen Mary Journal of International Law and networks and organizations like FRESCO, AEAJ, IPPF, PCA, EUCLAN, ELI), but this presence could and should be improved – similarly to the UoA's own journal. The UoA has a very impressive record of PhD theses but neither is based on internationally published work.

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Based on the assessment of the last five years' R&D performance in the light of: business and public sector (Lithuanian and foreign) R&D orders; the assessment of the social and economic impact of research outputs and R&D contracts with private sector entities; the participation of researchers in national and

international working groups, associations and expert groups; consultations provided to the public or economic entities; attendance at domestic and international academic conferences and events; organizing academic conferences and events; membership in editorial boards of academic journals; and science popularization activities, it has been established that the UoA carries out scientific research of exceptional importance and is an extremely important partner in R&D outside the academic community and it has a positive influence on the development of society and is a highly valued partner in R&D development issues, not only within the academic community, but also beyond its borders. Employees of the institution are regarded as experts in the public and private sectors. The economic and social overall impact of the faculty of law of the University of Vilnius is, in sum, outstanding in the national level. The UoA continues to have prominent presence in national institutions (courts, political, professional and academic bodies such as the prosecutor's office, ministries, the Supreme and the Constitutional Court, the Bar, the notaries' chamber, the Copyright Commission, the Committee for Tax Disputes, the judicial mediation committee, the UPR-committee) and arguably plays an important role in the writing and implementation of law in Lithuania. Its activities are reasonably accessible for the broader public. Projects like the Leaders' Academy, the ERA, the Best thesis award, the SMD, the open seminars the Spring of law science project are particularly valued.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The assessment, based on: reviewing the composition of faculty and staff; the R&D infrastructure, the planned directions for development, indicated participation in national and international R&D infrastructures; the principles of human resource management; the strategic plan of the UoA, as well as global trends in its area of science, found the UoA's development potential satisfactory in the sense that it has the potential to maintain satisfactory or better ratings and is capable to maintain a sum of at least 4 points in its R&D performance, economic and social impact assessments within the next 5-10 years. The reason for the relatively low score for developmental potential has two reasons. The first is that the UoA already achieved high scores in research and social impact (hence a very high degree of improvement is not conceivable). The second reason is as follows: although international research and publication achievements and international presence have improved since the last assessment, the expert committee was under the impression that the uncontested prestige and status of the UoA does not induce or incentivize plans, visions or strategies for further development. It appears that management and researchers do not feel pressured to further increase research and impact outputs. Despite the fact that due to its very traditions and position among the academic and legal community, the UoA possesses all necessary conditions to significantly improve its ratings, in particular to better develop international contacts, enhance interdisciplinary research projects, attract more international scholars to pay visits and conduct joint research projects. Given that the physical and technological infrastructure of the UoA is adequate and sufficient (although the maintenance of the library poses challenges), career development and human resource management seems progressive, the UoA's potential for further development has not been assessed as solid, but it is foreseeable that it will remain on the same (good) level, and a recognized institution in the international market.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

1. The weaknesses that the UoA has can be redressed with a strategy that promotes more internationalisation of the faculty, participation in the most notable legal conference outlets and to consolidate, broaden and strengthen the international network of the faculty.
2. For this, transparent guidelines for mobility (conference and research travel) grants should be established.
3. Also faculty and graduate students are encouraged to join major international research societies and attend congresses regularly.
4. A center for international academic writing (including language editing) is advised to be established.
5. It is recommended to reconsider the direct financial incentives for publications. The current incentive structure does not adequately reflect the quality of the publication. A rational actor might rather to focus on the in-house journals (published by the university) rather than on the top international outlets.
6. In order to become visible for a broader research community, PhD students should be encouraged even stronger to publish in English and consider writing the dissertations in English as well.
7. It is also recommended to introduce a fully transparent and potent financial incentivizing scheme of bonuses for high-quality, peer reviewed international journal publication.

8. Also the UoA is encouraged to design and implement a sabbatical-scheme to allow (and incentivize) faculty to take paid research leaves.

Also, the assessment committee is on the opinion that much of earlier assessments findings (MOSTA 2015) are still relevant whereas “The Vilnius University Faculty of Law is the biggest law faculty in the country. It plays a crucial role in the development of the national legal system in general and legal sciences in particular. It is well equipped in terms of human resources and physical infrastructure. At the same time its international standing as far as research output is concerned is not adequate to its potential. It is recommendable that its research strategy should put far more emphasis on joining international research projects and publishing in international peer review journals. The Faculty should create a better environment for teamwork. Multidisciplinary and innovative research projects should be given priority. The overall dismissive attitude to assessments ... needs to be tackled. The complacency of the Unit, largely resulting from its undeniable role as the most prestigious UG law department in Lithuania, is a waste of the clear talent and potential of the Units researchers.”

## Political Sciences, Vilnius University

UoA abbreviation	VU_02Spm
Name of the UoA	Political Sciences
Name of institution	Vilnius University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	5,36
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	18,77

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Political sciences (02S)	4	5,36	18,77

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	2
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Political sciences (02S)

The research output of this UoA is of high quality, with a large share of publications in internationally renowned journals in the field of European studies and public administration (with varying but overall decent impact factors), as well as chapter contributions to edited volumes published by high quality publishing houses. The research themes range from more general theoretical issues regarding European integration to concrete issues such as the migration crisis. They include different fields, such as security policies and fiscal policies. In addition comparative analyses of the Baltic States and case studies on Lithuania are provided. Taken together, this portfolio of themes shows that the unit is well-connected to the current international academic debate and to the research themes that matter internationally.

Conference participation also shows a genuine international orientation, with good links to the major academic associations in the field (for example ECPR, EUSA, APSA, and ISA). International academic recognition is further shown by relevant awards (e.g. NISPAcee).

The number of finalized dissertations is acceptable, with sufficient potential follow-up by ongoing PhD projects. The number of defended dissertations does however fluctuate considerably over the years, and the intake of new PhD students is limited (three annually). Dissertations are mainly published in Lithuanian, which does not allow for international recognition of the underlying research.

There is somewhat limited involvement in nationally and internationally funded research projects, although the financial resources involved are relatively large and make up a fair share of the unit's revenues. The quality of these projects is high; they include prestigious H2020 projects as well as competitive research projects funded nationally. Generally, the unit is very well connected to mainstream academic international networks in the field. It has close ties with many prestigious institutions and researchers in Europe and overseas, and research mobility is well developed.

Overall, in terms of research performance, the research carried out is of high level. The unit is strong at international level, with significant international recognition.

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Most of the research projects focus on relevant policy issues in Lithuania, and they have significant impact. Participation in working groups and committees is well developed, and concerns a wide range of policy fields. The unit has very good links to the Lithuanian central government administration, especially

regarding EU affairs. Among the unit's cooperation partners, there are several non-academic civil society organizations. Involvement with the business sector is limited, as is participation in working groups and committees at the international governance level.

A fair amount of consultations and training seminars has been provided. The unit also organizes academic events on a regular basis, and has been host to the 20th CEPSA annual conference, as well as to a conference within the framework of H2020 project EU-STRAT. Many events are organized in cooperation with partners abroad, which adds to their international impact. The unit also hosts The Baltic Journal of Political Science, a peer-reviewed English language journal, which regionally is a major outlet in the field, and is of interest to both academics and policy-makers.

Research staff serve on a number of editorial boards, although this is largely limited to national and regional journals. The unit is very well connected to international expert groups, networks and think-tanks (COST actions, COCOPS, ECFR). It is also very active in many popularization and outreach activities. Such activities are frequent and diverse in nature, giving the unit a high visibility in the national (mass) media. Some of the research and outreach activities specifically target school pupils, which creates important social impacts.

The unit thus carries out very important scientific research, with significant impact beyond the academic community. Although the unit's relationship with the business society is limited, it is a very important player in the Lithuanian policy-making community, with close links to decision-makers and society.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The staff composition is balanced in terms of age, with a good share of early and mid-career researchers/teachers, but less well balanced in terms of ranks, with relatively many chief and senior researchers, and full and associate professors. HR principles and measures are up-to-standards and center on individual career development. To that end HR principles are implemented in a very flexible way; basically every individual staff member has a different set of tasks (teaching, project involvement) and remuneration, geared to the situation at hand. This is perceived as fair and transparent by both management and staff. The research facilities are sufficient and up-to-standards, but within the limitations of a not-so-modern building.

The 2015 Strategic Plan of the Institute is a good mix of targets, activities and performance indicators. The recent large improvement in international research output has been brought about by a balanced mix of measures, which will have an impact in coming years as well: clear communication of the mission regarding internationalization, training activities, also for PhD students, enhancement of methodological skills, personal coaching/development, and financial incentives (i.e. funds for travel, translation, and bonuses for publication).

The unit has a group of enthusiast researchers that focus on opportunities rather than constraints. PhD students seem to be very well motivated. International cooperation is very well developed and involves some renowned academics in the field.

The unit is well led by management and has a good understanding of where it stands. The SWOT analysis demonstrates that it knows its strengths and weaknesses, especially by mentioning a lack of comparative research and a lack of original and sufficiently fundamental research. The unit has recently (September 2018) been reformed into five thematic research groups. The reform has been well-discussed internally, and seems to have brought additional élan to the Institute. It also gives more structure (regular meetings) to exchange best practices and to enhance internal peer review.

The panel expects that the unit will at least sustain its high scores in the next years. Moving to higher scores may be difficult in light of external constraints in funding, and (especially for research output quality) would imply a strong specialization on a niche topic.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

The unit carries out research at high level, is strong at international level, with significant international recognition. It carries out very important scientific research, with significant impact especially on the Lithuanian policy-making community. The unit clearly has the potential to maintain these positions. Its strengths are its clear internationalization mission, the adequate implementation of measures to deliver on that mission and the support for these measures by staff members, its close links to Lithuanian policy institutions and networks, and its well-developed international academic network. Weaknesses concern limited relations with the business sector, limited involvement in international policy and governance networks, and its PhD programme (with relatively low intake, and narrow international impacts).

The panel makes the following recommendations:

1. In order to safeguard the current support among staff for the unit's internationalization mission and measures, built on and continue with the open, transparent and inclusive way in which the unit's strategic decisions and operational affairs are currently dealt with.
2. Regarding the recent restructuring into five research themes, it is important to safeguard that each theme has a sufficient critical mass of research capacity, and to avoid proliferation of topics and research capacity. It is advised to critically review the restructuring in 2-3 years, and –if needed– decide on further prioritization of research themes.
3. To enhance research capacity, more PhD students could be admitted into the unit's PhD programme, also from abroad.
4. In order to improve the international impact of PhD research done at the unit, good use can be made of the extensive international contacts the unit has (for example for PhD co-supervision). To increase international visibility, it is advised to let PhD students publish their thesis more often in English and/or to ensure follow-up of their thesis by means of publications in high impact international journals.
5. In order to enhance the group of external stakeholders beyond the current set of public and civil society actors, it is advised to explicitly assess in which areas closer cooperation with the business sector is possible.
6. In order to increase involvement in international (and especially EU) policy networks, assess whether it is possible for staff members to get more involved in EU working and expert groups. This not only enhances the impact of the unit's R&D activities to practitioners beyond the national level, but such contacts are also highly beneficial for future research project cooperation.

## Communication and Information, Vilnius University

UoA abbreviation	VU_08S
Name of the UoA	Communication and Information
Name of institution	Vilnius University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	4,12
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	41,34

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Communication and information (08S)	3	4,12	41,34

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	3
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities

The Faculty of Communication of Vilnius University is an important national player with the potential of strengthening its national position as well as by developing a more prominent international profile.

Although the Faculty is the largest Communication and Information Studies unit in Lithuania, the research capacity of the unit is with about 4 FTE research staff with PhD and 41 FTE teaching staff with PhD, still limited. Because the research interests of the group cover a broad spectrum, including books, libraries, museums, journalism, TV, radio, digital reading and PR, the research is somewhat fragmented and lack critical mass. The publication record of the group is satisfactory in terms of numbers with approximately 80 publications per year. Publication outlets include journals, book chapters and monographs. Although the publications have national significance, international high quality publications, such as in Clarivate/Scopus journals are limited. Where most listed papers contain interesting studies (on Lithuanian and Baltic issues), they are mainly aimed at describing and analysing developments rather than testing or developing theories. Some studies are conducted with international colleagues. Research findings are presented at international conferences, including important conferences in Europe and North America, but the conferences organised by leading associations in the field such as the International Communication Association (the world largest social science oriented communication organisation) are missing, and participation in the important European conferences organised by ECREA is limited. Research staff members received a number of awards, for instance from the Lithuanian government, the Lithuanian Parliament and the Lithuanian Union of Journalists, however not from their academic peers for scientific work. The number of doctoral students (22) is satisfactory, although declining, as are the number of doctoral dissertations. In 2017 only two new doctoral students entered the program and two dissertations were produced. Dissertations are published as monographs and some smaller studies of a student's doctoral work are published separately, both types of publications mostly written in Lithuanian. Doctoral students are extremely satisfied with the financial support they receive, their supervisors and the courses they can take (for free). However, course work is largely individual; a systematic, mandatory broad research training program is lacking. The unit is quite successful in attracting external funding for competitive R&D projects in the public sector.

Overall, the panel evaluates the research of this unit as strong with limited international recognition. Research carried out is of high-level and recognized at national level.

## The economic and social impact of R&D activities

The Faculty of Communication carries out important scientific research and is an important R&D partner for projects outside the academic community at the national level.

Its researchers contribute and make an impact on topics such as Lithuanian libraries, museums, journalism, radio and TV, higher education policies, and electronic scientific data resources. The unit actively communicates the findings of their studies with society by organising scientific events. Academic staff fulfil a number of memberships in committees and advisory boards of government and organisations. Researchers serve as advisors for the Parliament, the Council of Lithuanian National Radio and Television, and the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. The unit is also consulted by national public institutions, such as museums and the Ministry of Education and Science. The group is active in popularization of academic insights as advisors to TV, radio and film organisations. The Faculty of Communication also organises conferences, in Lithuania, mainly on topics of national or regional interests. R&D contracts with economic entities are almost insignificant. Significant collaborations with stakeholders are lacking. This lack of external funding is considered a serious issue, also by the management. Researchers are active as members of editorial boards, although they are not represented in the international top journals in the field. Faculty members are active in European organizations and projects, such as ECREA, COST, East Center and EuroPub, but important European grants are missing. The group participates -to a limited extent- in international R&D projects mostly by adding a regional perspective to the studies. International colleagues visit the unit, mainly for collecting Lithuanian sources. Researchers participate in international conferences, but international research mobility in terms of longer incoming and outgoing international visits is limited. Recently a doctoral student was awarded a Fulbright scholarship.

Overall the panel is of the opinion that the UoA carries out important scientific research and is an important partner in R&D outside the academic community. The relationship with national business, decision-makers and society is appropriate to a recognised institution carrying out academic activities.

## Development potential of UoA

The UoA has the potential to improve its ratings. It is believed that the Faculty is capable of improving the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments within the next 5-10 years. Importantly, the new management has developed a serious plan for a structural reorganization of the unit. The aim of plan is to increase the research quality of the Faculty and to prepare the unit for a stronger role in Europe. The plan is developed in consultation with the research staff and provides for generating a pool of research groups with perspectives, endorsement of the most promising research achievements, and research integration. The new topics include a focus on digitalisation and connect well to the European research agenda. The unit also acquired new R&D infrastructure, including eye-tracking equipment, 3D scanner, and Micro-Spectrophotometer. These technologies are important for the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the research. It will help the development of theoretically relevant research at the international level and publications in top journals in communication and information sciences. It also facilitates the further development of a social sciences perspective in the Faculty that has a strong tradition in humanities.

The unit also has a plan for the internationalization of VUFC research periodicals. First successes are the acceptance of Book Science and Information Sciences to Scopus.

The new policy is supported by HRM measures that include a new motivation system, a workload management system, and a research quality evaluation system. The SWOT analysis mentions as weaknesses the small size of the research staff and the aging of older staff. The number of the redundant researchers is significantly high and in any case higher than the newly recruited staff. During the site visit the staff that met with the assessment committee expressed a positive attitude towards the reorganisation. The academic staff and the PhD students appear strongly motivated and engaged to produce research outputs addressing international outlets and to make impact on society.

Overall, the panel expects that this unit will be able to improve its quality of research and economic and social impact in the next 5-10 years.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

Overall the Faculty of Communication of Vilnius University is an important national player with the potential of strengthening its national position as well as by developing a more prominent international profile. The unit carries out important scientific research and is an important R&D partner for projects

outside the academic community at the national level. The UoA has the potential to improve the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments within the next 5–10 years. The management seems to have a clear strategic understanding of the directions that need to be undertaken to improve the scientific quality, the national impact, and the internationalisation of the Faculty of Communication and Information.

Successful implementation of the new strategic plan and the reorganisation is of utmost importance and will require continued attention of the management and the research staff. Effort should be made to improve alignment of the professional ambitions of the researchers in the unit with the ambitions of the management.

Furthermore, the panel fully supports the aim to create more focus and less fragmentation in the research as this helps to create a critical mass for the research topics which contributes to scientific and societal impact at the national and international level. It is recommended to further detail and consolidate the research agenda in line with the European research agenda and international developments as this enhances international collaboration, successful European grant applications, and in general “visibility” in the field.

As R&D contracts with economic entities are almost insignificant, the unit is also advised to develop plans to increase this source of funding, which will contribute to the financial potential of the Faculty.

The unit is also advised to develop other initiatives that improves international visibility and recognition, such a stronger focus on international English publications (in the better Clarivate/Scopus journals).

It is recommended to develop a solid, structured doctoral training program as the creation of a strong group of well-trained young scholars is vital for the research quality of the unit and other units in the field.

It is advised to encourage writing of PhD theses in English and to encourage the use of article-based dissertations rather than monographs (where possible), as this helps the connection of young researchers and their research findings with the international community.

## Educology, Sociology, Psychology, Vilnius University

UoA abbreviation	VU_ESP
Name of the UoA	Educology, Sociology, Psychology
Name of institution	Vilnius University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	7,73
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	69,02

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Sociology (05S)	3	2,04	25,66
Psychology (06S)	3	5,47	34,47
Education (07S)	2	0,22	8,89

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	3
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Sociology (05S)

The following list of arguments is based on based on the information provided by the UoA, the information gathered during the visit and other official sources. All the publications presented for evaluation are written in English but most of them appear in international research outlets with a relatively low relevance of scientific impact. However, some articles appear in quite good journals (like, Population Ageing, Post-Soviet Affairs etc). The Unit has been very successful in national competitive funding but international funding is less successful. The Unit has started participating in two international consortiums (European value study and SHARE). Researchers of the Unit have also started to participate in the European Social Policy Network (ESPN), and COST activities. The full potential of participation in these international comparative surveys and networking projects has not been realized yet because the only publications are book chapters and a working paper, as well as papers submitted for publication. Some prestigious awards have been awarded to both senior and early career scholars. The number of PhD students is stable. Most defended PhD theses were written in Lithuanian. Efficiency of international cooperation is currently relatively low, measured by the number of articles with co-authors from abroad, the published papers are mainly book chapters. Taking those arguments together it is concluded that the Unit is an important national player with some international connections, namely, the UoA is strong with limited international recognition.

#### Psychology (06S)

The following list of arguments is based on based on the information provided by the UoA, the information gathered during the visit and other official sources. The researchers of Psychology Unit focus on several important psychological topics: suicidal behavior, psychological reactions to stressors, human cognitive processes and cognitive abilities etc. Papers submitted for evaluation are written in English. The research outputs listed demonstrate the range of expertise in the field and the relatively high quality of publications, most of them appeared in international journals (with varied but often decent impact factors, e.g.: Nordic journal of psychiatry: IF=0.788; Infant Behavior and Development, IF=0.833; Frontiers in

Psychology: IF=1.00; Journal Comprehensive Psychiatry: IF=1.125; European psychiatry: IF=1.195; International Journal of Behavioral Development: IF=1.248; Journal of Vocational Behavior: IF=1.79, those IIs are weighted measures taking into account the prestige of journals). The funding from national funds is very good. International funding is practically missing. Yet, researchers participate in COST actions, which might lead to international funding in future. There is much innovation with new models, diagnostic tools, methodologies etc. being developed. The laboratory is relatively well equipped. There is much innovation with new models, diagnostic tools, methodologies etc. being developed. The majority of PhD theses are completed in Lithuanian, which limits dissemination of results internationally. The work and studies of PhD students seems not to have a fixed schedule for the studies, it is relatively flexible. A number of quality awards have been made. They have been awarded to different scholars working in different sub-fields of psychology; they are for both scientific and applied research. Taking those arguments together it is concluded that the UoA is strong with limited international recognition.

### **Education (07S)**

The following list of arguments is based on based on the information provided by the UoA, the information gathered during the visit and other official sources. The number of researchers in field of educational sciences is quite small (18 FTE researchers). The researchers focus on philosophy of education, education policy and curriculum development, history of education, on culture and education. Only a small proportion of articles appeared in international journals of a high impact. The Unit Assessment Report indicates that researchers concentrate besides other topic on secondary analysis of international student achievement studies (PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS and others). But this analysis have not yet resulted in comparative articles in international journals. There is less emphasis on applied educational studies, which gives the impression that VU\_ESP Education is less interested in teacher training and in social economic impacts than in scientific impacts, though awards for youth schools implies some engagement with the applied field. Awards are satisfactory but not of international standing. Participation in international and competitive R& D is poor; there are only two small scale, national projects. The number of PHD students is small as well as defended PhD theses. Yet, there are international students in the PhD program. Taking those arguments together it is concluded that the UoA is assessed satisfactorily at national level.

### **The economic and social impact of R&D activities**

The following list of arguments is based on based on the information provided by the UoA, the information gathered during the visit and other official sources. The Unit has a good level of presence in national institutions (the Lithuanian Education Council, Lithuanian Social Work Council etc) as well as in several working groups. Research outputs are therefore relevant for Lithuanian society. The equipment of the laboratory is used for socially important studies. VU\_ESP has been engaged in a number of very high-end contracts with the private sector, and the number of R&D contracts with economic entities have grown in recent years. Many are for developing tools for cross-country comparability. They contribute to unique Lithuanian data sets which can be compared to European and global data sets and involve designing new diagnostic tools. The research has very strong social and economic impact- targeting vulnerable groups, improving the inclusion of marginalized populations, training of a large number of professionals in the specific fields. Experts from VU\_ESP have also provided important consultancy to Lithuanian ministries and other state organizations in a variety of key social fields. VU\_ESP has organized a number of high-end international conferences and seminars in various fields of study. Scholars are guest editors or editors of many international journals. They are also members of leading international associations and networks. All in all, the UoA carries out very important scientific research and is a very important partner in R&D outside the academic community.

### **Development potential of UoA**

The Unit has a potential to become an international player especially using the competencies of its multidisciplinary staff. The research profile of some researchers is very good. Yet, there are only limited cases of cross-institutional as well as international collaborations. The competitive R&D funding from Research Council of Lithuania is very good, while the international funding linked to international competitive R&D programs is almost insignificant. There is particular need to increase international funding significantly. The promising actions in this respect have been initiated in terms of involvement HORIZON 2020 project, about which information was provided during the visit on site, reports on which does not appear in the evaluation documentation. The weakness is the fragmentation of research within

unit, the actual priority of teaching. The publication on PhD theses in English should be strongly encouraged. The distribution of academic staff in the three fields shows that VU\_ESP is preparing for replacement as professors and chief/senior researchers move on. There is a rather high number of teaching personnel and researchers without a (doctoral) degree, partly this reflects the fact that many people are employed for rather short term (half a year or a year) as consultants or psychotherapists. Recruitment is on a competitive basis is to be expected in the Unit. The strategic plan of the UoA plays to its strengths in each of the three fields of assessment. In the education field more applied research is envisaged which should lead to better social and economic impact. The Psychology Institute has an excellent multi-pronged strategic plan, which consolidates previous research on suicide and psychotraumatology. Similarly, the sociological trends are in exciting fields, many which give important international visibility and contributions and the new work on migration and family life. The strategic plans are ambitious, but justifiably so, given the present track record of VU\_ESP. Taken those arguments together, it is concluded that the UoA is capable of improving the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments by 2 points within the next 5-10 years.

### **Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement**

1. Provide training for writing scientific papers in English, encourage PhD students to publish internationally, as well as to write their thesis in English.
2. Develop project writing skills for aiming at international grants.
3. Participate in existing, as well as develop new international research networks.
4. Guidelines for mobility (conference and research travel) grants, particularly for PhD students, should be established.

## Economics and Business management, Vilnius University

UoA abbreviation	VU_Sekv
Name of the UoA	Economics and Business management
Name of institution	Vilnius University
Type of institution	University
No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	5,08
No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	92,88

### The quality of R&D activities:

Research field:	Score	No. of research staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017	No. of teaching staff (with PhD) FTE in 2017
Management and administration (03S)	4	1,17	31,35
Economics (04S)	4	3,91	61,53

### The economic and social impact of R&D activities

Score	4
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### Development potential of UoA

Score	5
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### The quality of R&D activities:

#### Management and administration (03S)

Results of both formal and expert evaluations performed by RCL (amount of points) are substantially above the average in most years between 2013–2017 for the whole UoA. Some results declared among the best research outputs consist of the articles in the top-class journals like Sustainability or the Journal of Business Ethics. There is a publication forthcoming in the Journal of Finance. The UoA pressures not only to publish in outlets included in the Clarivate Analysis of the Web of Science but also the Academic Journal Guide which is highly appreciated by the assessment team.

Delivered presentations at conferences abroad contain papers at prestigious conferences. The UoA was investigating 1 INTERREG project and some national projects. Scientists from the UoA have been awarded by several national and international institutions. According to the above-mentioned points, the research carried out by the UoA is of high-level, recognized internationally.

#### Economics (04S)

Results of both formal and expert evaluations performed by RCL (amount of points) are substantially above the average in most years between 2013–2017 for the whole UoA. The list of the best research output is excellent, including a publication in a top-five journal in Economics. There is also a publication forthcoming in the Journal of Finance. The UoA pressures not only to publish in outlets included in the Clarivate Analysis of the Web of Science but also the Academic Journal Guide which is highly appreciated by the assessment team. The number of publications listed in the AJG has strongly increased from 2 in 2015 to 9 in 2018 (almost all are co-authored by researchers from abroad).

The contributions to international conferences are excellent and correspond to the best conferences in the areas of research. A very good number of PhD theses have been defended in the last five years (10, 4, 4, 8, 2). The group has local funding and one European project (2011–2015); no current international funding is reported. One PhD student has been awarded by a national prize. According to the above-mentioned points, the research carried out by the UoA is of high-level, recognized at the international level.

## The economic and social impact of R&D activities

According to the evaluations performed by RCL, the UoA has substantial and regular funding from business institutions for research and development contracts. The UoA also had several projects from Lithuanian ministries in different research fields and participates in the EUROMOD project, funded by the European Commission. Many projects have practical relevance as well as academic impact through publications or conference presentations. The main important projects which significantly contribute to the economic policy in Lithuania are the Pension Reform, the Tax Reform and the Social Economic Policy. Through some projects, the UoA is also a leader in spreading the spirit of the Entrepreneurship. Researchers of the unit strongly contribute to the Lithuanian Science Policy as representatives in the Research Council of Lithuania. The unit hosts some well-respected conferences such as the Baltic Economic Conference. UoA's researchers strongly contribute to the Lithuanian economic policy changes (e.g. pension reform, tax reform, social economic policy). Researchers of UoA participate in the editorial board of some foreign (not top-class) journals. The UoA has agreed on co-operation with some business and public companies. The unit very closely co-operates with the Bank of Lithuania (the Lithuanian central bank). This institutional co-operation brings to the unit new research ideas but also additional money for co-funding salaries of selected researchers and for conference attendance. Overall, the UoA carries out very important scientific research and is a very important partner in R&D outside the academic community. Its scientific research is important for the society. The UoA is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers, and the society.

## Development potential of UoA

The unit correctly identifies its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. From this analysis, it appears that the development potential of the unit is large, particularly because it seems to be possible to attract professionals with a very good training and there is funding available to attract foreign researchers (H2020 and projects funded by the Research Council of Lithuania). The unit participates in the international job market by advertising the job vacancies in the listings of the American Economic Association (AEA) and by the interviews at the AEA meetings (Barcelona, Philadelphia). Participation in the international job market may be crucial to achieving the objectives of the unit. The new incentives set up in 2017 for publications in AJG (“cash-for-publication”) may also stimulate quality. The management of the institution endeavours to integrate the PhD studies in Economics & Management into one joint doctoral school (at the national level) which has a strong potential for achieving synergy and improving the quality of PhD studies at the unit. The unit has a young, but well-experienced management which creates an excellent research environment. Researchers have sufficient opportunities for doing interdisciplinary research. The UoA is able to attract PhD candidates from abroad. Almost all PhD students write their PhD theses in English. Some researchers, co-funded by the Bank of Lithuania, are allocated for 80% of their time to the unit for research. On the other hand, some researchers do their research in their leisure time as their workload for teaching and organizing activities is too high. Overall, The UoA has a great potential to achieve very good and excellent ratings in the next 5-10 years.

## Recommendations on the activities of UoA continuity and (or) improvement

This unit is on an ambitious track and makes all the right steps going forward, especially incentives for researchers („cash-for-publications“), funding (additional sources from the Bank of Lithuania), international hiring of the staff, focus on quality (pressure on AJG publications), organizing of seminars for researchers and PhD students. The unit supports training of its staff (e. g. opportunities of summer school attendance, 4-day intensive courses). All these steps made by the young, but experienced management confirm the current high quality of the unit’s research and its future potential as well.

As the grant acquisition is a very competitive area (success rate is relatively low in general), some training focused on this area should be developed. Although there are some reductions in teaching workloads for researchers who investigate the research projects, some of them mention that their research is carried out in their leisure time, and the unit is advised to further explore options to reduce teaching workloads.

The requirement to publish two papers before a PhD dissertation can be defended provides incentives to go for low-quality fast outlets rather than to invest more to realize a publication in one of the very top journals (which typically takes several years for reviews and revisions). It would be good if this requirement could be relaxed.

The international exchange opportunities for PhD students should be extended, some PhD students do not participate in any mobility scheme.

## PANEL REPORT SUMMARY

## Brief background

Social sciences have been playing a more and more important role in modern societies. On the one hand, understanding the most crucial problems these societies face mostly require the type of knowledge social sciences produce. Social sciences play a critical role in knowledge creation and knowledge management, in supporting innovation, in technology transfer, and in economic and social development and well-being. On the other hand, the structure of jobs has been significantly changing and several sectors of the economy need more well trained economists, sociologists, political and communication experts. Furthermore, as a highly performing education system is the engine of development, for preparing the young generations for an unknown future, schools need well trained teachers. Without high-quality research, these trainings cannot be successful.

There are a number of factors that make the development of social sciences different from that of natural sciences, especially in Central and Eastern European countries. On the one hand, social sciences are more strongly embedded in the local and regional culture and they are more closely related to the main language(s) of the researchers. The commitment of maintaining the culture and cultivating local language(s) requires additional resources in terms of human resources, time and financial support and the activities necessary to obtain and utilize these resources challenge the type of research that directly aim at international competitiveness. This is quite a general phenomenon and researches of smaller countries wrestle with these difficulties all over the world. The special difficulty the post-socialist countries face is that before the early 1990s, social science research in these countries was very weak in most disciplines. Due to ideological restrictions several social phenomena were not allowed to be studied, possibilities to attend conferences and cooperate with Western colleagues were limited. Due to all these circumstances, there are few masters in the generation of senior researchers who really could be a role model and could nurture young talents. In order of catching up at these fields, a very conscious and well focused capacity building is needed.

As for language, two specific problems were identified that hinders more influential international publication activities. On the one hand, for a long historic period, Russian was the mandatory first foreign language, and in the past quarter of century, shifting to English has not received enough attention and support. On the other hand, this constraint is enhanced by the fact that language is an especially sensitive issue in the case of social sciences, as in social science publications there are more lengthy essay-like components that require using proper terminology and sophisticated linguistic quality. In sum, internationalization of social sciences requires the recognition of the special role of language, especially English as the main communication tool of research.

There are some common, general problems that hinder the efficiency of social science research. These constraints are well-known and often mentioned in the self-assessment reports of the institutions. Just mentioning a few: the relevance of social sciences is not recognized by decision makers, these disciplines don't enjoy the necessary prestige, they are underfinanced, the number of researchers is too small, there are too many part-time employees in the institutions, in many units there is not a critical mass of researchers engaged in major research projects, due to low salaries it is difficult to recruit young researchers etc. External experts can confirm these observations but remark at the same time that without significant improvement of the financial conditions, major progress will hardly be achievable. The panel of experts sees the dilemma: it is hard to spend more on underachieving fields, but, because of the relevance in the development of society and economy, it's a common interest to enhance the capacity of certain domains of research. This summary offers some hints of where the extra investment could best serve the common good.

## Quality of Research in the Social Sciences

The panel's assessment of the quality of the research fields is shown in Table 1. The table shows that none of the research fields were evaluated as an international leader and that only a few research fields were evaluated as strong internationally (10 out of 75). Most fields were evaluated as performing satisfactorily at the national level (62), some of these with limited international recognition (35). Three programmes were evaluated as poor. The overall picture is that the majority of the social sciences programmes in Lithuania perform satisfactory at the national level, with a few peaks in the research landscape consisting of programmes that are strong at the international level and that some programmes are rather weak.

**Table 1 Distribution of Quality of Research Scores**

Score	Meaning	Frequency	%
1	The field is assessed poorly at national level.	3	4
2	The field is assessed satisfactorily at national level.	27	36.0
3	The field is strong with limited international recognition.	35	46.7
4	The field is strong at international level.	10	13.3
5	The field is the leader at international level.	0	0
Total		75	100

In our summary below, we will focus on the large majority of the research programmes (more than 82% of all programmes) that have a score of 2 or 3 for research quality. The observations of the panel with respect to the peaks in the social sciences landscapes and the underperforming units are discussed in the relevant individual units assessment.

The research of the programmes that perform satisfactory at the national level is mainly focused on Lithuanian and Baltic cases. Much of the research is applied, descriptive, essayistic and often limited to analyses of social developments. Empirical studies aimed at developing or testing theories – dominant in the international social sciences’ literature – are scarce. Topics that are highly relevant in the international literature and on the EU research agenda are underrepresented. Overall, much of the social sciences research in Lithuania is overly oriented to national issues aimed at a national audience, which limits its potential to arouse the interest of the international community. With a few exceptions, the panel misses research that is at the cutting edge or frontiers of scientific inquiry and that is well-connected to the international literature.

The publications published by the units in the social sciences in the past five years mirror the above. Some researchers publish internationally, although very few in high-impact (Clarivate/Scopus) outlets. Many publications have only national significance, are written in Lithuanian and published nationally or in proceedings of conferences with scarce influence in the discipline. The panel understands that units also have to study Lithuanian issues and that for these studies publications in international journals is problematic. However, the panel is of the opinion that a too strong focus on these issues may come at the expense of publications that add significantly to the dissemination of academic knowledge, academic debate, the development of the disciplines, and the connection of Lithuanian scholars to the international scholarly community. If the social sciences in Lithuania really want to make an impact internationally, become a relevant member of international networks, competing for EU funding, it is advised to pursue publishing in higher impact (Clarivate/Scopus) journals and publications of international publishing houses. As these outlets have rigorous review processes by peers, this also contributes to a higher quality of the publications. In the same vein, although some Lithuanian social sciences’ researchers present their findings at international conferences, presentations at high-quality, mainstream conferences – for instance those organised by the leading associations in the field – are scarce.

The panel also observed that the research in the majority of the units is fragmented and lack critical mass, as the interests of most of the research groups cover a broad spectrum while the research capacity is rather small. Coherent and focussed research programmes that guide the research of the individual staff members are largely missing. The panel has the impression that each researcher picks their own topic and there are little indications that the selection of topics is guided by a systematic, cumulative research agenda. The positive side of this is the academic freedom that it brings which is highly valued in academia and by the research staff. The downside is that it impedes the quality of research and the scientific and societal impact at the national and international level.

The institutes have overall good connections to other Baltic States, and other institutions in Eastern and Central Europe, but not always with top institutions abroad. The panel also observed units’ engagement with international mobility, although international hires and longer research visits (incoming and outgoing) are insignificant.

The documents show that the units are underachieving in obtaining R&D grants from international programmes. The size of international funding is for most units insignificant. This is a lost opportunity for the funding of social sciences research in Lithuania, and also illustrates the limited international performance of most units.

## Doctoral Training

Doctoral training is one of the oldest, the most traditional and best established segments of university training, maybe it is enough to mention that Aristotle himself has introduced and elaborated the concept 'Thesis' that today is still the main and most visible product of the PhD studies. On the other hand, due to the globalization, digital and communication revolution and the European developments (e.g. European Higher Education Area, Bologna process), PhD training has been going through a number of changes and universities and other training institutions need to adapt to them. Recognizing the fact that PhD students are in their most productive years as researchers, made them esteemed fellows; the student-supervisor relationship is transformed into a junior-senior researcher relationship where PhD students are more-and-more considered equal-right collaborative partners aiming at producing co-authored publications. Such a transition started earlier in natural sciences and now has been gradually transforming the training at several social science fields as well.

There is a visible rapid development in PhD training in Lithuania, however the quality of training is still diverse, and the pace of development differs from institution to institution, from field to field. The common values of international scientific communities are mostly known and recognized, ambitious aims are set at many training units, but in general there are no firm feasible plans to reach them.

The number of PhD students in the domain of social sciences is low and in many field it is decreasing. The reasons are known and mentioned in several self-assessments (academic salaries, prestige), and the institutions have limited means to change the situation. The decline is so worrying in some institutions that it endangers the stability of human resources and narrows the possibilities of recruiting young scholars. Attracting more international projects and involving PhD students may be helpful in this area as well. Offering the students more part time studies at leading research universities and inviting international professors in a permanent position (as is already an existing practice at one university) or for short-term visits definitely would improve the quality of training.

Language skills still seem a major problem in many PhD training institutions. The visiting committees met PhD students in several universities where some students were able to communicate with them only by the help of interpreters. Conversations during visits confirmed what could already be concluded from the documents, that in several cases supervisors themselves do not meet the international criteria, they do not have the type and quality of publications that would be expected from the PhD candidates.

In empirical social sciences where typical studies are based on data-collection (e.g. research on psychology, sociology, management and administration, communication, education) PhD students should receive more training in research methods, especially in quantitative methods and statistical data analysis. Meeting with the students during the visits of the experts revealed that a lot of students deal with small-scale qualitative studies, results of which are hardly publishable in prestigious journals. More significant empirical studies require more resources what should be planned in the budget of the institutions.

In some institutions, at some domains with fewer researchers the insufficient knowledge and competences of supervisors may constraints the quality of doctoral training. Systematic preparation of supervisors, supporting their study visits to institution with established graduate studies may help a lot. Better recognition of successful supervision activities could also help increase outcome of training. Establishing a quality management system, setting criteria of becoming supervisor (e.g., international experience, certain level of Hirsh index in Scopus or WoS, etc.) would be useful.

At some fields (also mostly in the empirical fields) there is an international tendency in changing the structure of theses: instead of the traditional monograph-like theses, candidates produce multiple-study theses based on already published (or publishable) papers. This kind of transition should be encouraged as the published papers already went through the quality control of the reviewers, thus a certain level of quality would be insured.

## Economic and Social Impact, Contribution to Lithuanian Society

Social science research is embedded in national and regional society and culture; researchers of these fields, intellectuals, have been influencing the life in many different ways, although their impact is not always immediately observable and sometimes hard to measure. Throughout the entire assessment exercise, panel members had the impression that Lithuanian social science researchers consider this societal impact as a high priority, and several of their activities in this dimension is well documented.

Overall the panel appreciates the impact activities of the units reported in the self-assessment documents and demonstrated during the visits. Table 2 summarizes the scores and it shows that most units maintain good relationships with decision makers and business sector representatives. Their research and developmental activities are appreciated beyond the academic communities as well.

Only two units scored at level two (the interaction with business, decision-makers, and society is weak), 16 were at level three (the relationship with business, decision-makers and the society is appropriate to a recognized institution carrying out academic activities) and 16 were at level four. The mean score of the units is 3.46 what on a five-point-scale indicates a slight incline towards the higher end.

Most units presented extensive list of projects that have had, directly or indirectly, policy implications, important for the future development of Lithuania. The type of the activities that are reported by the assessed institutions for documenting their economic and social impact is very diverse, ranging from cultural to industrial relationships, from small businesses to large international companies, and from local, municipal authorities to Lithuanian ministries and European agencies. However, less collaborations are reported that can be placed closer to the higher ends of the abovementioned ranges.

**Table 2 Distribution of the economic and social impact of R&D activities scores**

Score	Meaning	number	%
1	Scientific research is not important to the public. The UoA does not interact with business, decision-makers, and the society.	0	0
2	Scientific research is important for society. However, the interaction of the UoA with business, decision-makers, and society is weak.	2	5.7
3	Scientific research is important for society. The relationship with business, decision-makers and the society is appropriate to a recognized institution carrying out academic activities.	16	45.7
4	Scientific research is important for society. The UoA is closely related not only to the academic community, but also to business, decision-makers, and the society.	16	45.7
5	The UoA has a positive influence on the development of society and is a highly valued partner in R&D development issues, not only within the academic community, but also beyond its borders. Employees of the institution are regarded as experts in the public and private sectors.	1	2.9
Total		35	100

The majority of the units have been providing services for state institutions (most Lithuanian ministries are mentioned in the documents) and municipalities. Researchers in the units appear to have been frequently consulted related to a number of topics ranging from educational to agricultural issues. The documented relationships with the business sector are not as frequent; there are much fewer contracts with private sector entities, some with Lithuanian firms but very few with foreign ones. In most cases the amounts of funding involved in these activities seem to be rather small, and fluctuate considerably over the years.

Representation in editorial boards of scientific journals is not frequent; in most cases it means a national or regional role, membership in editorial boards of prestigious journal is very rare. Participation in editorial boards is limited to in-house journals in most cases. Most units are active in organizing conferences and other scientific meetings, however few attracts large numbers of international participants. Membership of international academic networks, associations and expert groups is sufficient but could be enhanced, also in a geographical sense.

One of the most extensive activities with broader social impact the units have reported is science popularization, publishing for the audience beyond the academic community and the organisation of conferences and other events aimed at the public at large.

The units of assessment usually scored higher on their economic and social impact then on the quality of research, indicating that research and social activities are not balanced well-enough. There are complex relationships between the qualities of research activities and the activities beyond the academic communities, as both require resources and there is always a need for choosing between these two types of commitments. There are a few opportunities for a cross-fertilizing effect, e.g., the already successful networking activities and participation in multinational projects could be utilized for increasing the numbers of co-authored publications with partners from esteemed international research institutions.

## Development potential

Overall the panel is rather positive about the development potential of the units. Table 3 shows the scores. Thirteen units are expected to achieve or maintain very good or excellent ratings for research quality and impact. Thirteen units are expected to (significantly) improve their ratings and eight units are believed to maintain or better their satisfactory ratings. Please note that the scale is not linear in the sense that higher scores imply a greater potential as the scores also depend on the current scores for research quality and impact (see the labels of the scores). The evaluation of the development potential of the units is based on the strategic plans of the units, the composition of the academic staff, HRM-policy, and the infrastructure.

**Table 3 Distribution of the Development Potential Scores**

Score	Meaning	number	%
1	<b>The UoA has no potential for maintaining its ratings.</b> In the next 5-10 years, the quality, economic and social impact assessments of the R&D activities of the UoA will decrease or remain below 4 points.	0	0
2	<b>The UoA has the potential to maintain satisfactory or better ratings.</b> The UoA is capable to maintain a sum of at least 4 points in its R&D performance, economic and social impact assessments within the next 5-10 years.	8	22.9
3	<b>The UoA has the potential to improve its ratings.</b> The UoA is capable of improving the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments by 2 points within the next 5-10 years.	13	37.1
4	<b>The UoA has the potential to significantly improve its ratings.</b> The UoA is capable to improve the quality of its R&D activities and its economic and social impact assessments by 4 points within the next 5-10 years.	1	2.9
5	<b>The UoA has a great potential to achieve or maintain very good and excellent ratings.</b> The UoA is capable to achieve in the next 5 to 10 years that its R&D activity's quality, economic and social impact assessments' sum would be not less than 9 points, or to maintain such an estimate	13	37.1
Total		35	100

Almost all units mention in their strategic plans the need for change in the direction of less fragmentation, consolidation of the research programme, internationalisation, publishing in higher impact (Clarivate/Scopus) outlets, and increased funding from EU grants and (commercial) projects carried out for national stakeholders (business and state). It must be concluded that the awareness of these issues and the need for change is high.

Some units have already taken concrete steps to implement their strategic plan. For example, these units have introduced an incentive system (monetary rewards, extra research time) for high-profile scientific results and publications. Also, administrative support is provided that aids grant acquisition at the international level, and funding is offered for international conference participation.

On the other hand, in a substantial number of cases, the extent to which the research staff embraced the management plans was not clear to the panel. In several site visit meetings the research staff did not seem even aware of the strategic plans of the management. Furthermore, the panel observed that many plans were rather vague and stated in superficial terms. Operational elaborations of the plans, including a time schedule, were scarce.

With respect to the composition of the research teams, the panel observed that a substantial number of teams in the 75 research fields are really small. Furthermore, although teachers are assumed to spend 30% of their time on research, this is in practice often not possible to achieve. Many teachers have difficulties with the balance between teaching load and research focus. What further limits the research potential of a research field is that many research staff members work part-time, as becomes clear from an inspection of the proportions between head count and FTE of the units. This endangers the research productivity of a research field even more.

The overall conclusion of the panel is that the average research capacity of the research fields is small and that some fields at some universities are most probably too small for a meaningful research programme.

The panel assesses the age distribution of staff members of the units as healthy. On average, the groups below and above 45 years old are balanced. A minus is that the group under 35 years is somewhat small which might endanger research innovation and the viability of the research group in the long run. Individual units may deviate somewhat from the general age composition picture, but the panel has not seen really problematic cases in this respect.

A final remark about the composition of the research staff is the observation that most researchers seem to work individually and not in research teams. Part-time appointments, lack of a strong coherent research program, and academic freedom, all contribute to this situation, but successful research programmes all over the world are more and more team-based, which enhance research quality, impact and successful grant acquisition. Team-based research might also open the way to put together a research team with different specialisations, not only in terms of topics, but also in terms of research qualities.

The assessment shows that the infrastructure of most units is satisfactory. Universities and research institutes have invested in buildings, workspaces, IT-infrastructure, libraries, statistical packages, software for specialised fields, access to databases with statistical information, data archives with social science survey data, eye-trackers, EEG-, EMG-, and reaction time equipment, VR-technologies, baby labs, work simulators, play research laboratory, a “snoezelen” room, and interactive educational games. The universities often give “open access” to these facilities to other researchers. On the other hand, some researchers complain about the lack of office space, and a need for investments in new infrastructure, such as for big (behavioural) data, robots, chatbots, augmented and virtual reality will present itself soon.

Other facilities include project offices that aid the researchers in the application and post-award stages of competitive grants and projects. Also, some units installed knowledge and technology transfer offices that provide important support on the dissemination of research results.

The overall conclusion of the panel is that the research infrastructure of the social sciences in Lithuania is adequate, but the need for new investments is coming up which raises the issue of how to fund these.

The HRM policy of most units includes clear procedures and norms for recruitment, adaptation of new employees, learning and development, performance appraisal and remuneration policies. The panel, however, wonders if these somewhat bureaucratic rules are sufficient for the current situation. The abovementioned issues with respect to the research teams (small teams, part-time appointments, the challenging balance between teaching and research, and the lack of specialisms in the research teams, insufficient mobility, and the lack of sabbaticals) require a stronger support by HRM policies. The panel also believes that current incentives for publishing are not very competitive as compared to international standards, and to salaries in Lithuania. Therefore, highest ranked publications that can take a number of years, partly because of the long-lasting peer review system, are not a priority for researchers.

## Recommendations

Almost all units are aware of the need to bring more focus in their research programmes and the need to consolidate their research agenda, as shown in their strategic plans. The panel fully supports these plans as these helps to create a critical mass for the studies which contributes to the quality of the research, and the scientific and societal impact at the national and international level. Because these plans are currently rather superficial and not very elaborated, the panel advises the units to develop –in consultation with the research staff– detailed, realistic and solid plans of action, including a timetable. Also, several strategic plans are almost expired and need to be updated. An option is that the units develop 5-years research programmes that guide the –fundamental and applied– research of the research staff. These research programmes should have a clear focus in line with the expertise in the unit and the profile that the unit wants to pursue: more fundamental or more applied, more nationally or internationally oriented, more or less aimed at the commercial market, the state, or science foundations. Developing a research agenda in line with the European research agenda and international developments is attractive as this enhances international collaboration, successful European grant applications, and in general “visibility” in the field.

Given the fragmented research and the lack of critical mass in the majority of the research fields, there is not only a high need for consolidation of the research agenda, but also for a policy to create more collaboration between the researchers and to invest in the development of research teams with different specialists in terms of research qualities. The panel is convinced that the research of a unit will profit from working in larger teams. For this reason, the panel also advises the smaller units and research fields to develop a network of colleagues to work with, internally with other fields of the university, or externally at the national and/or the international level. Collaborating on research projects and co-authoring papers

increase the financial basis of the research, the quantity and quality of the production, the impact of the research and chances of (inter) national research funding.

A related measure that will contribute to research focus is to concentrate research time in a smaller number of individuals and to create teams in which some academics are more focused on research and others more on teaching or administration.

As current linkages to businesses are limited for some units, it is recommended to increase direct links to businesses both through teaching/training programmes, and through research projects. This has the merit of embedding current and future needs of the domestic economic players into teaching and research, which in turn may generate higher potential for attracting funds and a higher capability in playing a significant role in fostering economic development of Lithuania.

As internationalisation is high on the agenda of the units, further plans to promote internationalisation should be considered: for instance, international recruitment, an international exchange programme for researchers and doctoral students (incoming and outgoing), joint projects with leading universities abroad, joint publications, and joint grant applications.

The panel also supports the plans of the units to develop other initiatives that improve international visibility and recognition, such a stronger focus on international English publications (in the better Clarivate/Scopus journals). In this respect the panel also recommends a critical evaluation of the pros and cons of In-House journals and to examine if they do really contribute to the research field and the prestige of the university and against what cost.

The units are also advised to develop a strong HRM policy that support the recommendations above and that includes measures that facilitate the creation of larger teams, more differentiation between teaching and research appointments, less part-time appointments, more balance between teaching and research obligations, and more support for high-impact publications, international mobility and sabbaticals.

## Assessment of Individual Disciplines

In this section we discuss some observations with respect to the individual disciplines. Table 4 shows how the social science fields perform in this research assessment. The table includes the number of units that operate in the discipline in question and the distribution of the “quality of research scores” given by the panel.

**Table 4 Distribution of Quality of Research Scores by research field (in %)**

Discipline	Number of units that have a research programme in the discipline	Quality of Research Score					
		1	2	3	4	5	mean
Communication and Information	6	16.7	33.3	50.0	0	0	2.3
Economics	13	7.7	23.1	46.2	23.1	0	2.8
Education	8	0	37.5	62.5	0	0	2.6
Law	7	0	14.3	85.7			2.9
Management and Administration	14	0	50.0	28.6	21.4	0	2.7
Political Sciences	6	0	50.0	33.3	16.7	0	2.7
Psychology	5	0	0	60	40	0	3.4
Sociology	9	0	44.4	44.4	11.1	0	2.7
Missing	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overall	75	5.3	36.0	45.3	13.3	0	2.7

Legend: 7 fields are missing because they represented a combination of several disciplines (e.g., political sciences and economy).

## Communication and Information

The evaluations of the research in this field (previously located in the domain of Humanities, currently in the Social Sciences domain), are in line with the overall evaluation of the Social Sciences research as discussed in the Summary above. The main findings with respect to internationalisation, quality of

publications, and the economic and social impact, as well as the recommendations provided therefore also apply to this discipline, although the overall quality of this research field is a little lower than average. Six units in Lithuania conduct research in Communication and Information field. One unit is assessed poorly at the national level, two are “satisfactory” and three are considered strong with (limited) international recognition. The Communication and information unit that performs poorly is a real small field (3 teaching staff, a total of 2.4 FTE) with an underdeveloped research programme and output. The three strong research programmes in Communication and Information are part of units that also score high on “impact”: they carry out very important scientific research and are a very important partner in R&D outside the academic community. Overall, the panel assesses the prospects of the Communication and Information discipline as good, as it is expected that four out of the six units that have a communication programmes will be able to (significantly) improve the quality of their research and/or impact.

### **Economics**

The panel evaluated not less than 13 units that carry out a research programme in Economics. The evaluations of the research in the field of Economics are in line with the overall evaluation of the Social Sciences research in Lithuania as discussed in the Summary above, although with a slightly more pronounced difference between lower and higher performing units. The main findings with respect to internationalisation, quality of publications, and the economic and social impact, as well as the recommendations provided therefore also apply to this discipline. One programme is assessed as performing poorly, and four as only “satisfactory”. Six units are considered strong with (limited) international recognition, and three programmes are considered strong at the international level. These later units publish in international, high-impact journals, present their work at high-quality conferences, and have a very good PhD programme, for instance. All units that offer a research programme in Economics score high on “impact”: they carry out (very) important scientific research and are a (very) important partner in R&D outside the academic community. Overall, the panel assesses the prospects of the Economics discipline as good, as it is expected that all but one unit that have an Economics programme will be able to (significantly) improve the quality of their research and/or impact.

### **Education**

Educational science is one of the most rapidly developing fields of social sciences, due to the fact that the quality of education determines the possibilities of economic and social progress. Education research is expected to scientifically establish the development of schooling, modernizing curricula and teaching materials and support evidence-based education policy. The panel evaluated eight units that have a research programme in Education. The number of units seems sufficient for Lithuania, but the numbers of researchers in each unit are too small to be able to meet the multiple expectations. Education research should cover a number of different themes and the mission to support educational practice requires experts at each area of development, but several timely topics are missing from the research portfolios of the evaluated units. Empirical studies and quantitative methods are even more strongly underrepresented in Lithuanian educational research than in other social sciences compared to the international tendencies. There are no large differences between the assessed units as three units were found being at “satisfactory at national level” and five units “strong with limited international recognition”. However, it may be a warning signal that this discipline scored below the average, being the second weakest field, and there was no unit at the internationally strong or leading levels. Overall, the panel assesses the perspectives of the Education sciences field as good and sees the potential for further improvement both in the quality of research and in their socioeconomic impact.

### **Law**

The panel evaluated seven units where research on law is conducted. Out of the seven, one was evaluated as “satisfactory at national level” and six units as “strong with limited international recognition”. Although the scores given to the fields/research groups do not always express it, there are differences between the units on several dimensions. There are units where teaching enjoys a much higher priority than research while there is a research institute among the assessed units where research is the main activity (Law Institute of Lithuania). There are differences in the sizes of the units as well; furthermore some units are homogeneous groups of researchers of Law, while others are composed of researchers representing different disciplines. Law has an exceptional status among the social sciences as legal systems have national and international aspects as well. Therefore, internationalization has different demands and possibilities depending on the theme of the research. Legal science in Lithuania can become a leading centre for

regional research within the Baltic Sea basin. Such efforts are already being undertaken by some units. Taking up innovative research topics can also be noticed, such as business and human rights and cybersecurity. Overall, the panel assesses the Law field as good with significant social impact. Developmental potential is differing from unit to unit.

### **Management and Administration**

The panel evaluated 14 units where there is research on the field of Management and Administration. This is the largest number for a field, exactly the double of the number of the Law units for instance, and this comparison prompts the question if there really is a need for research at so many places. The sizes of the units are smaller, and the quality of research in the units varies across a broad spectrum. Seven units are “satisfactory at national level”, four units are “strong with limited international recognition”, and in three units this field is “strong at international level”. Most units of Management and Administration are characterised with the same problems that is observable in other disciplines as well, but here is more typical that research is applied, focusing mainly on simple Lithuanian or Baltic cases; comparative research and theory development is lacking. There are some strong research groups at this field as well, they publish excellent articles in top-level journals and presentations are delivered abroad at prestigious conferences. Overall, the panel assesses the research field Management and Administration as good and if the good practices of the strongest unit will be transferred to other units, the current level may be maintained or even be developed further.

### **Psychology**

Psychology is the strongest field among the assessed social science disciplines in Lithuania. It is internationally also a well-established domain with strong research associations, well defined methodological and publication norms. Lithuanian psychologists were able to catch up and integrate into the international scientific communities relatively well. Five units in Lithuania have a research programme in Psychology, which is the smallest number for the social science disciplines assessed. Out of the five, three units are at the “strong with limited international recognition” level, and two units are “strong at international level”. The mean of the scores is 3.4, far above the other disciplines. These qualifications are results of the relatively strong international orientation, successful publication strategy submitting manuscripts to high-quality journals and attending relevant conferences. It seems that researchers at the field of psychology are the best able to distinguish authentic original research aiming at original results from other activities useful for practice. Overall, the panel assesses Psychology field as very good and sees the potential for maintaining its current level or even developing further.

### **Political Sciences**

The evaluations of the research in the field of Political Sciences are in line with the overall evaluation of the Social Sciences research in Lithuania as discussed in the Summary above, although with somewhat more difference between lower and higher performing units. The main findings with respect to internationalisation, quality of publications, and the economic and social impact, as well as the recommendations provided therefore also apply to this discipline. Six units in Lithuania have a research programme in Political Sciences. Three units are assessed “satisfactory” at the national level, two are considered strong with (limited) international recognition, and Political Sciences at one unit is considered strong at the international level. The units that offer a research programme in Political Sciences score high on “impact”: the panel is of the opinion that they carry out (very) important scientific research and are a (very) important partner in R&D outside the academic community. The panel expected that only two out of the six units that have a Political Sciences programme will be able to (significantly) improve the quality of their research and/ or their impact.

### **Sociology**

The evaluations of the research in the field of Sociology show the same patterns (with respect to the mean score and the distribution of the quality of research scores) as the overall evaluation of the research as discussed in the Summary above. The main findings with respect to internationalisation, quality of publications, and the economic and social impact, as well as the recommendations provided therefore also apply to this discipline. Nine units in Lithuania have a research programme in Sociology. Four units are assessed “satisfactory” at the national level, four are considered strong with (limited) international recognition, and sociology at one unit is considered strong at the international level. This latter programme has very good PhD studies and is well-connected internationally, although rarely a leading

partner on the international level and the field has not been competing for high-level programs such as ERC grants. Almost all research programmes in Sociology are part of units that score high on “impact”: they carry out (very) important scientific research and are a (very) important partner in R&D outside the academic community. Overall, the panel assesses the prospects of the Sociology discipline as good, as it is expected that six out of the nine units that have a sociology programme will be able to (significantly) improve the quality of their research and/ or their impact.

## **Some Final Overall Observations**

### **General Conclusions**

The panel appreciates the efforts of the Lithuanian research community into the improvement of the quality of its research and strengthening of its social and economic impact. Panel members who participated in previous assessments see the improvement of the conditions, as well as the development of both motivation and value system that is behind the search for excellence. Nevertheless, some areas are still stagnating, and without focussed efforts they will probably not improve. The panel agrees with the declared aims of the development of the research system, and underlines the importance of social science research in building a knowledge-based society, supporting the transfer to digital economy and ecosystems, and enhancing innovation. To reach these goals, further investments in some strategic areas are necessary. To reach these goals the further development of research strategies and target investments in the strategic areas as discussed in this Summary are highly recommended.

### **Remarks on the Assessment System**

The panel appreciates the systematic and consequently implemented research assessment system of Lithuania that has been consolidated over the last decade. The MOSTA documents that the experts received in advance were well edited and sufficiently informative, the instructions for performing the assessments were clear. The sophisticated logistics and the organization of the institutional visits were all highly professional, as well as the administrative support and communication before, during and after the stay in Lithuania.

An aspect where the panel sees potential for improvements is the scoring system. The definitions of the three indices (the quality of R&D, economic and social impact and the developmental potential) include a number of different, basically separable dimensions, and this complexity is often hard to map into a single scale, especially if the data and facts of the particular dimensions point into different directions.

Another issue is the resolution of the scale. Because of the practical realities, scores 1 and 5 are rarely used in the assessment of social science domains, and the three middle values (2, 3, and 4) cannot differentiate the units of assessments well enough. For example, at many domains 3 was the most frequent value, but there are still large differences between the units of assessment receiving 3 scores. In some cases, the panel has been struggling a lot with the quantitative scoring, as the current system did not offer the option of a more differentiating assessment. A solution would be to increase the number of scale points, e.g., using a ten-point-scale. Another and even simpler solution would be if the system would not require whole numbers, but allowed decimal scores instead. In this way, the verbal description of the values (e.g., defining what score 3 means) may be left unchanged, and a score of for instance 3.5 could be used to indicate that the unit is in the middle between level 3 and four.

An especially problematic scale is the one used for assessing developmental potential. The complexity of its applicability is an issue here as well, as, for example, age distribution and research infrastructure are two distinct variables. Furthermore, if we consider developmental potential a continuous variable, and assume that there is not an absolute, fixed end-state in the development, there may be a chance for improvement from any actual level. However, it became clear to the panel, that assigning scores on the development scale is restricted by the scores a unit have for research quality and impact, which implies that the scale is not linear in the sense that higher scores mean a higher development potential. The panel experienced that this scale made the scoring of the units on this criterion extremely and unnecessary complicated, and so will be the further use of the scale scores. Members of the social sciences panel are experienced in scaling and assessing complex issues in several domains (e.g. quantitative research in economy, sociology, psychology and education use scales routinely) and would be happy to contribute to the improvement of the scoring system.

### **Documents provided by the UoA and site visits**

The panel was pleased by the information provided by the units and the efforts the units put in the site visits. However, the panel also believes that there is room for improvements. A suggestion of the panel is to include more quantitative information in the Self-Assessments, Annual Data Reports and Strategic Plan documents, for instance information on the number of publications (in different types of outlets), funding data, participation in editorial boards and (inter)national committees, etc.

The panel also noted that there is not a 1-1 relationship between the documents and the assessment (sub) criteria: the information that was needed for the assessment of a unit on a particular criterion was sometimes included in different documents. A suggestion of the panel is to provide the information in a format and sequence that fits with the (sub) criteria that the panel has to use.

The panel also appreciates the time and hospitality that the units put in the site visits. In general the site visits provided the panel with very useful information. The panel, however, would like to suggest to restrict the number of participants in the different sessions of the site visit to a maximum of 5 or 10 people as that will contribute to an efficient use of the very limited time (that the panel understands) during the visits.