



**LIETUVOS MUZIKOS IR TEATRO AKADEMIJOS  
VEIKLOS VERTINIMO IŠVADOS**

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**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW REPORT OF  
LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND THEATRE**

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I hereby certify that this is the final text of the institutional review report of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre.



*Professor Mark Hunt*

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of the external review is to determine the quality of the performance of a higher education institution based on the findings of the external review, to create prerequisites for improvement of the performance of a higher education institution, to promote a culture of quality, and to inform founders, academic community and the society about the quality of higher education institutions.
2. This review report is based on the evidence given in the self-evaluation report, additional evidence requested by the panel, information provided by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereinafter: SKVC) and a site visit, where meetings with a wide range of audiences were held.
3. The panel was composed of the reviewers, following the Experts Selection Procedure approved by the Director of SKVC on 31 December 2019 [Order No. V-149](#) and included the following members:

Prof. Mark Hunt (panel chair)  
Ms. Christina Rozsnyai (panel secretary)  
Dr. Daniela Jobertova (academic)  
Prof. Margus Partlas (academic)  
Dr. Nomeda Šatkauskienė (social partner)  
Ms. Miranda Harmer (student)

4. As a result of external review the **Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre** is given a **positive evaluation**.
5. Judgment by the area:

Area	Assessment with points*
MANAGEMENT	4
QUALITY ASSURANCE	4
STUDIES AND RESEARCH (ART)	4
IMPACT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	3

\*5 points - **excellent** – the area is rated exceptionally well in the national context and internationally;

4 points – **very good** – the area is rated very well in the national context and internationally, without any drawbacks;

3 points – **good** – the area is being developed systematically, without any major drawbacks;

2 points – **satisfactory** – the area meets the minimum requirements, and there are drawbacks that must be addressed;

1 point - **unsatisfactory** – the area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are fundamental drawbacks.

6. **Seven** examples of good practices were found; **eight** recommendations are made.

## II. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1. Background of the review process

7. The external review of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (hereafter: LMTA or Academy) was organised by SKVC and carried out in December 2021 by an expert panel of international experts (the panel). It was conducted in accordance with the Procedure for the External Evaluation and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Branches of Foreign Higher Education Institutions, Evaluation Areas and Indicators approved by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Procedure’) on 19 of December 2019 [Order No. V-1529](#) and the Methodology for Conducting an Institutional Review of a Higher Education Institution approved by the Director of SKVC on 9 of March 2020 [Order No V-32](#) (the Methodology).
8. According to the Procedure the external review consists of the following stages: submission of a self-evaluation report prepared by a higher education institution to SKVC; formation of an expert panel and analysis of the self-evaluation report; expert panel visit to the a higher education institution; preparation of the external review report; decision-making on the external review as well as accreditation and publication thereof; follow-up activities aimed at improving the performance of the higher education institution, taking into account the external review report.
9. At the preparatory stage of the external review, the panel received a number of background documents and supporting material for the procedure from SKVC. It subsequently was provided the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of LMTA on 20 October 2021, including 33 annexes. Following its internal meeting on 19 November, the panel requested additional information, such as information on the role and composition of Study Programme Committees; information about study programme internal reviews; additional information on the preparation of the LMTA Strategy 2030; as well as analytical documents, such as on risk management. Specific requests regarding LMTA procedures included data on competitions for academic positions and job descriptions as well as internal surveys. LMTA met the request with 16 documents in Lithuanian, reviewed by the Lithuanian panel member, and an extensive summary with excerpts of the documents in English. SKVC provided to the Panel additional information about the Academy, as set in the Methodology (Chapter 26), including statistical data on students and staff; financial data; findings from the ex-ante and ex-post programme reviews, institutional review and evaluations of research and development activities; State-budget allocations for research activities; information on potential violations of academic ethics from the Office of the Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures of the Republic of Lithuania.
10. The site visit to LMTA took place between 7-9 December 2021, after two training sessions organized by SKVC staff and preparatory panel meetings. In line with the internationally common procedure, the panel had meetings with internal and external stakeholders of LMTA, including the recently incoming as well as the previous rector and the current vice-rectors; academic and non-academic staff; students; and social partners. **Due to the worldwide pandemic situation, the review visit was organised online using video-conferencing tool Zoom** hosted by SKVC. Subsequently, the panel met virtually to review and agree conclusions and recommendations. The review report was finalised by correspondence and submitted to SKVC.

11. In line with the Methodology, the external review focused on four areas covered by the evaluation indicators and related criteria: **management, quality assurance, studies and research (art)** and **impact on regional and national development**. In analysing the evidence collected, the panel also gave due consideration to the recommendations of the previous review from 2013, noting that LMTA has carefully considered and acted on them. This is reflected in the SER and was supported in the site visit interviews.
12. Regarding the self-evaluation process, it is commonly considered a cornerstone of an external review procedure in that it serves as an instrument of self-reflection on an institution's achievements, strengths and weaknesses. The SER of LMTA shows that the Academy has meticulously examined not only the panel recommendations of the 2013 review but has established an extensive internal quality assurance system that encompasses all actors of the Academy. Moreover, it has involved internal and external stakeholders in its procedures; has analyzed its goals and activities in preparation for its Strategy 2020 and Strategy 2030; and has conducted surveys and SWOT analyses. The panel noted, however, that the SER could have been more condensed and some repetitions edited out. More importantly, it felt that LMTA has missed an opportunity by taking advantage of the essence of the self-evaluation process in that it has produced a very descriptive SER, with little self-reflection and analysis. This is most striking with the SWOT analyses at the end of each of the four main chapters on the areas evaluated, where many of the weaknesses listed were not discussed in the text of the report. Nevertheless, the panel was able to ascertain during the interviews in the site visit, that intricate self-reflection had indeed taken place on many levels of the institution. This, the panel wishes to commend.
13. The review of a higher education institution assesses each of the evaluation areas with one of five ratings: **excellent** – 5 points – the area is rated exceptionally well in the national context and internationally; **very good** – 4 points – the area is rated very well in the national context and internationally, without any drawbacks; **good** – 3 points – the area is being developed systematically, without any major drawbacks; **satisfactory** – 2 points – the area meets the minimum requirements, and there are drawbacks that must be addressed; **unsatisfactory** – 1 point – the area does not meet the minimum requirements, there are fundamental drawbacks.
14. The decision on **positive** evaluation is made when none of the evaluation areas is evaluated as unsatisfactorily (1 point). The decision on **negative** evaluation is made when at least one of the evaluation areas is evaluated as unsatisfactory (1 point).
15. In line with the Methodology, the review report, prepared by the panel is being reviewed by SKVC and sent to the higher education institution to comment on factual errors and the evaluations based thereon. The panel revises the report in response to the comments from the higher education institution (if applicable) and submits it to SKVC.
16. The panel received LMTA comments on factual errors. As a result minor proofreading changes were made to the report.
17. After the panel considers comments from the higher education institution (if applicable) and finalizes it, the report is being considered by the external Commission of the Higher Education Institutions' Review (the Commission), set up by SKVC. On the basis of the proposal, made by the Commission, provisioned in the Commission's regulations, approved by the order of the Director of SKVC on 8 of January, 2020 order [No. V-5](#), SKVC takes one of the decisions:
  - to evaluate the performance of the higher education institution positively;

- to evaluate the performance of the higher education institution negatively.

The decisions of SKVC may be appealed to the Commission for Appeals, formed by SKVC. Subsequently, the decisions of SKVC and the Commission for Appeals may be appealed against in accordance with the procedure established by the *Law on Administrative Proceedings* of the Republic of Lithuania.

18. On the basis of the external review decision SKVC takes one of the following decisions on the **accreditation** of the higher education institution:

- to **accredit for a period of seven years** if performance of the higher education institution is evaluated positively;
- to **accredit for a period of three years** if performance of the higher education institution is evaluated negatively;
- to **deny accreditation** if the repeated external review results of the higher education institution are negative.

19. SKVC announces the decision on the external review together with the conclusions of the external review and the decision on the accreditation of the higher education institution on its website. The higher education institution respectively announces the decision on the evaluation of the higher education institution together with the external review report on its website and maintains it until the next external review.

## **2.2. Background information about the institution**

20. The original predecessor of LMTA was a music school in the city of Kaunas, founded in 1919. After a merger with a conservatoire in Vilnius and several reorganizations it became the Lithuanian Academy of Music in 1992, with the theatre branch added in 2004. The last reorganization took place in 2018, when the Music Academy of Klaipėda University merged into LMTA to become its third faculty.

21. LMTA is thus a public higher education institution with three faculties, two in Vilnius and one in Klaipėda: the Faculty of Music with 19 departments, the Faculty of Theatre and Film with five, and the Klaipėda Faculty with three departments. Other units include art, film and dance studios, performance and rehearsal facilities, and research and publication centres.

22. The range of studies covers several musical and theatre areas, but also dance and film as well as theoretical directions encompassing the history and theory of art. Education is offered on the bachelor-, master- and PhD-levels. In film, dance and theatre, LMTA is the only university-level institution in the country, and the only one offering PhD studies in music, theatre and film.

23. A major development in the life of LMTA is the construction of a new campus, whose first stage should be completed in 2023. As noted in the SER: “For the first time in more than 85 years, following the implementation of the Campus project, the state will create specialised infrastructure for art studies and research in the areas of music, theatre, dance and film adapted to professional art studies of the 21st century.”

24. As of 1 October 2020, LMTA had 1048 students, with 719 in bachelor, 290 in master, and 39 enrolled in PhD programmes. The numbers include 32 foreign students, 16, 14 and 2 on the

respective levels, accounting for 3.2 % of the student population. The staff encompasses 759 persons in total, or 456.6 full-time equivalent positions, of whom 225 (49%) are teachers and 110 (13%) are auxiliary teaching and research staff. These include prominent artists and performers. Administrative staff comprises 65.25 FTE positions (14%).

25. LMTA has stated that it wants to advance its life-long learning activities. It currently organizes professional development courses for its staff and for teachers from other institutions, including teachers of children with special needs. Moreover, it offers opportunities for the external community, from children to adults of all ages, to participate in non-formal training and enrichment events.
26. LMTA is a leading cultural institution in Lithuania. Artistic events are presented and performed not just in Vilnius and Klaipėda but throughout the country, the majority of them free of charge. While in the pandemic year 2020, LMTA organized 266 cultural events, the number topped 600 events in each of four preceding years listed in the SER.
27. The current rector of LMTA has been in the position since 1 October 2021, having served as Vice-Rector for Science for ten years prior.

### III. ANALYSIS BY EVALUATION AREAS

#### 3.1. Management

*Management* area is being analysed in accordance to the following indicators and criteria, set up in the Methodology.

*1.1. Compliance of the higher education institution's strategic action plan with the mission, assurance of its implementation:*

*1.1.1. The strategic action plan is consistent with the mission of the higher education institution, legal acts regulating research and study activities and it takes into account the provisions of the national research and study policy, the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area;*

*1.1.2. The parts of the strategic action plan (analysis of the current situation, priorities and aims, objectives of the activities, implementation means, resources, planned performance indicators) are appropriate and justified;*

*1.1.3. Regular monitoring of the implementation of the strategic action plan is carried out and the results are used to improve performance management.*

28. Strategy 2020-2030, approved by the LMTA senate in 2019 and building on the previous strategy issued in 2013, identifies three strategic priorities: sustainable activity, International School and transferable culture. These are derived from LMTA's mission, which is to

“Ensure sustainable development of art and art research, participate in the shaping of the national artistic education and cultural policy, foster spiritual harmony in the society and national identity, educate the most artistically gifted young people into creative, proactive, entrepreneurial members of the society who are open to Lithuania and the world.”

29. The Statute of LMTA, approved by Parliament in 2012 and provided to the SER (as an annex), makes reference to the legal framework under which the Academy operates, specifically the *Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania* of 2009. The Strategy

was developed, moreover, taking into consideration “the objectives expressed in the State Progress Strategy Lithuania 2030”.

30. The SER also references the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area in the appropriate sections, and the standards of the European quality evaluation agency for musical studies MusiQuE. The internal quality evaluation standards of LMTA are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). Indeed, the panel was able to ascertain LMTA’s consideration of the international framework in a range of documents.
31. The SER describes two short-term strategic action plans linked to the use of state funds as well as assigned to funding long-term strategic goals. The Strategy 2030 mentions 15 research projects funded from various state and European sources. A breakdown of funding is described in a separate chapter in the Strategy 2030.
32. LMTA reports that it conducted a SWOT analysis prior to producing Strategy 2030. There is reference in the SER that the Strategy 2020 was monitored regularly, and public debates and a consulting company were involved in producing the 2030 document.
33. One of the strategic priorities set by LMTA is its expansion of internationalization, with the goal to have an operating International School by 2030. Key performance indicators have been set, ranging from the increase of foreign students and academic staff to raising the foreign language capacity of administrative staff.
34. The panel was able to ascertain from the documents received as well as in several interviews during the site visit that LMTA has a strategy carefully developed by involving a broad range of internal and external stakeholders and that it is, indeed, a guiding document internalized by the LMTA community.
35. From the descriptions in the SER and other documents, the panel considers that basic funding for implementing the strategic plan is adequate. LMTA itself notes the Strategy 2030, however, that “Funding of the Academy’s activities is heavily dependent on the state funds,” and in a SOWT in the SER that additional funding is needed to fulfil the Academy’s aims.
36. It was not clear to the panel, however, how LMTA actually monitors its achievements, how it arrived at the results of the SWOTs presented in the SER, especially since the SWOT states that “It is necessary to ensure the monitoring of the implementation of the strategy LMTA ‘2030 and use the results of monitoring for the improvement of activity management”.
37. In the site visit interview, the panel explored how the Academy analysed the achievements of its previous Strategy 2020 and came to the conclusion that although it is not elaborated in the SER, the internal discussion fora and working groups explored the results achieved and to be developed further and these were built into the new strategic plan. The new strategy provides an in-depth analysis of the current state of affairs at LMTA; provides a benchmarking study of art institutions in six foreign countries; and provides a SWOT on which it builds its priorities and performance indicators. It is clear from the documents and responses in the site visit interviews that stakeholders are aware of the strategic priorities and management is conducted with these in mind.
38. The panel welcomed the priority of LMTA to raise its international capacity. The fields of performing arts are inherently international, but the Academy is also aware that expanding its



presence beyond its borders even more than it is doing presently is needed in order to also ensure its sustainability, its first strategic priority.

39. The panel felt, however, that LMTA could do more in developing its internationalization. International activities seem to be driven by individual teachers and departments, without university-level coordination. Therefore, the panel recommends that *LMTA should further develop the International School 'implementation plan' within Strategy 2030 to create clearly articulated staging posts and concrete plans. This would benefit from having dedicated personnel in place for its co-ordination. These actions are needed in order to ensure the strategy is fully realised and implemented in a co-ordinated way. The key performance indicators should also encompass steps for the development of international studies, actively advertising LMTA activities abroad and the strengthening of international research projects.*
40. In the strategy and the SER, LMTA identifies the declining demographic trends in the country as being behind the strategic priorities of sustainability, including a reliable income, and internationalization. The panel felt, that LMTA could investigate the reasons for the threat to its declining student numbers in a more deliberate way in order to uncover specific reasons that might lead to fewer or less qualified applicants. The panel suggests undertaking a demographic analysis to understand the reasons for the declining number of potential students in Lithuania and in response develop strategies to ensure the long-term sustainability of home-based students and thus a large part of the income for LMTA.

#### *1.2. Effectiveness of process management of the higher education institution:*

- 1.2.1. A clear structure for governance, decision making and distribution of responsibilities is defined;*
- 1.2.2. Regular process management analysis is performed, preconditions for process improvement and risk management are planned;*
- 1.2.3. Stakeholders are involved in the management process at an adequate level.*

41. LMTA governance is set in its Statutes. It is structured on governing bodies as outlined in the *Law on Higher Education and Research*, as is referenced in the SER. The Council is the top governing body, with nine members, including one student and four external members. The Senate decides on academic issues. It is a large body with no fixed number of members; rather the percentage of representation of teachers, researchers, students and others from the artistic community is set. The panel was told in the interview with Senate representatives that the body currently consists of 25 members.
42. The Rector, appointed by the Council following an open competition, is the institution's CEO and represents it externally. He or she proposes the number and persons of vice-rectors, who are approved by the Council for the time of the Rector's term. Currently there are two vice-rectors, for Studies and for Art and Science. A Rector's Council, consisting of the three deans and heads of other units, serves as an advisory body to the Rector.
43. The three faculties, which encompass departments, centres, studios and other units, are led by deans and are overseen by faculty councils, which each include a student member.
44. The SER notes that risk analyses on management are conducted on a regular basis in the Rectorate and all other management bodies. Some of the risk management processes are described in detail in the following paragraphs.

45. The panel was provided an annex to the SER listing various organizational changes from 2014 on. It shows that the institution's management monitors its activities and implements actions as possible and needed.
46. It was clear to the panel from many parts of the SER and LMTA's operational documents that both internal and external stakeholders are consulted and involved in the relevant management processes. Students are represented in the decision-making bodies in line with the legislative framework.
47. The SER notes that risk management at LMTA is carried out in accordance with the two laws approved by the Minister of Finance, on which its internal control procedure was devised. The panel explored the issue further and asked and received a detailed description about risk management processes.
48. The site visit to LMTA, while conducted virtually, involved informative and open discussions with all interview groups. These have assured the review panel that the Academy operates on a sound footing. The current rector, although in this position for only some months, looks back to a decade of experience at the Academy as its Vice-Rector for Science. The panel felt that she carries on the effective and strong leadership of the outgoing rector and is assisted by an effectual Council, Senate and other committees. Internal as well as external stakeholders take part in a range of decision-making bodies, resulting in robust decision-making and clear lines of responsibility.
49. In almost all interview groups, the involvement of internal and very often also external stakeholders in various working groups and decision-making committees, from programme design to top management bodies, were mentioned. The involvement of external partners was also corroborated in the interview with that group.
50. Based on the documents received, the panel was able to ascertain that LMTA is conscious of risk management and carries out detailed processes regularly.

*1.3. Publicity of information on the performance of the higher education institution and its management effectiveness:*

*1.3.1. Systematic collection and analysis of the performance data, results (including student employment and graduate career monitoring) is in place, data is used for the improvement of performance of the higher education institution;*

*1.3.2. Information on the performance of the higher education institution is clear, accurate and accessible to the academic community and the public, and is provided regularly to the founders and members of the legal entity.*

51. The SER describes data management at LMTA in detail. Specific management units are responsible for submitting information and for data analysis in their particular area. A Study Information and Data Office administer data management and are responsible for various analyses and studies. A Career and Competence Centre provides information to students about career opportunities. This centre is also responsible for tracking student careers and analysing relevant data.
52. The Academy has a website in both Lithuanian and English, with a select range of documents in the latter. These include detailed information on studies at LMTA and a course catalogue. LMTA reaches out to the public also via various electronic channels.

53. The SER notes that a new information system has been installed and was planned for launch in August 2021. In the site visit, the panel heard in an interview that parts of the system were already operational and it is expected to be fully implemented in 2022.
54. The panel was provided with various sets of data, also a number of documents requested as additional material prior to the site visit. It is evident that data collection and retrieval is a functioning process at LMTA.
55. Students corroborated that they have clear access to information about their studies and this was also the case when they were still only exploring the possibility to study at LMTA. The panel met one international student in the interviews who confirmed that the information available had been clear and sufficient.

#### *1.4. Effectiveness of human resource management:*

- 1.4.1. Clear and transparent principles and procedures for the formation, management, evaluation of academic and non-academic staff are established and applied;*
- 1.4.2. The higher education institution has sufficient academic (in-house academic staff) and non-academic staff to meet its operational objectives;*
- 1.4.3. The qualifications of the academic and non-academic staff are appropriate for the purposes of the higher education institution;*
- 1.4.4. Conditions are created for the academic staff to improve the knowledge and skills required for teaching and research activities;*
- 1.4.5. Conditions are created for non-academic staff to develop competencies.*

56. The LMTA website in English lists a number of documents governing human resources: in addition to the Statutes are the Strategy for Student-Centred Learning and Teaching; the Strategy for Scientific Activity; and the Quality Manual and the Policy for Quality Assurance documents. The panel was provided with annexes to the SER with a summary of responsibilities of management and staff; a description of the human resources management strategy; the Code of Ethics; and various quality management documents.
57. The particulars of human resources management are laid out in the text of the SER. It ranges from identifying the need for particular positions to hiring policies and practices to monitoring new teachers and academic staff at regular intervals (e.g. teachers undergo accreditation every five years). Policies and practices for non-academic staff are also described. Various documents governing these are listed. The Description of the Procedure for Improvement of Qualification of LMTA Staff and the Description of the Minimum Qualification Requirements for LMTA Teachers and Research Associates set down the requirement for staff to participate in professional development, including didactic and technical training.
58. Staff numbers shown in the SER indicate that they have remained rather steady in the last three years, with a rise in 2018 due to the incorporation of the Klaipėda Faculty. On the other hand, the number of students has risen somewhat, so that the student-teacher ratio has declined. It is relatively low given the nature of art education, ranging from 4.3 in music and in dance to 7.6 in history and theory of art. LMTA considers the overall decline as being due to an optimisation of study programmes and activities.
59. SER shows the age breakdown of the teaching staff, indicating that academics 65 years and older constitute the largest group. Monitoring of staff composition has resulted in management identifying the need for department heads to focus on increasing the number of teachers under 30

years of age. Subsequently, between 2016 and 2020 their numbers rose from five to 14. Conversely, academic staff over age 65 dropped from 81 in 2019 to 70 in 2020.

60. Given the nature of art studies, the auxiliary teaching staff (defined as concertmasters, illustrators, editors) is relatively high at LMTA, at an average student-staff ratio of 8:1. The ratio of students to administrative staff is 17:1.
61. The SER describes numerous staff-development schemes for both academic and non-academic staff. It lists 112 projects involving LMTA staff and students between 2016 and 2020. These range from workshops and seminars to artistic events. LMTA realizes these through various national and international projects as well as locally through different internal units. External teachers have held courses at the Academy, including several from abroad (a total of 697 is given for 2016-2020). The panel noted from the additional documents list provided that the number of candidates for vacant positions academic positions is very low, between one and two applicants with three in only a few cases, and there are none from foreign countries.
62. The panel commends LMTA for identifying that one aspect of sustainability requires not only the steady recruitment of younger academic staff to replace retiring professors, but also to ensure their confidence in the career path made available for them. The panel heard in an interview that low pension income is one aspect why professors stay in their posts longer and their positions prevent the advancement of younger academics. The panel supports LMTA's efforts to find alternatives for solving this issue.
63. As far as internationalization is concerned, the panel would like to emphasize that human resources in this regard involve not only the foreign-language training of teachers. The panel appreciates the human resources strategy presented in an annex to SER, which aims to formulate the steps required for ensuring high quality staff (hiring, mentoring, development and training, and monitoring with goals for 2020 and 2030). It would like to recommend, however, that *LMTA work out a human resources strategy geared toward the ambitions of Strategy 2030, and in particular the strategic priority to develop the International School. Achieving the key performance indicator target of 20% of teaching staff appointed to have received their education abroad requires indicators that include dedicated hiring practices that advertise positions internationally, training, mobility schemes, international research participation and others.* Moreover, LMTA could utilize its membership with international organisations e.g. AEC, ELIA, NordPlus, etc.
64. The panel commends the excellent support provided by administrative support departments, which enables effective decision making and allows the Academy to follow common and shared strategic goals.

#### *1.5. Efficiency of financial and learning resource management:*

*1.5.1. Financial resources are planned, allocated and used rationally;*

*1.5.2. Various financial resources for the implementation of higher education activities are attracted;*

*1.5.3. Learning resources for provision of studies and research (art) activities are planned and used rationally;*

*1.5.4. Learning resources for conducting studies and research (art) activities are appropriate, sufficient and available.*

65. The SER refers to the *Law on Accounting of the Republic of Lithuania and Public Sector Accounting and Reporting Standards*, but also on its own indicators and strategic plans, for the basis of its financial planning. The management and decision-making lines are described, starting from the annual budget analysis of department heads and deans to the Rector's budget proposal to the approval by the Council. The Finance and Accounting Office, supervised by the Chief Accountant, monitors the budget throughout the year. Internal and external audits are conducted.
66. The vast majority of the LMTA budget, 80.22%, comes from state financing. LMTA's own funds, earned from various services and tuition of e.g. life-long learning courses, make up 8.9%, while most of the rest comes from targeted income from other institutions and from European funds, at slightly over 5% each. Part of increases in the state budget between 2018 and 2020 was earmarked for increasing teachers' and researchers' salaries. Targeted income is for improving infrastructure and research, including the organization of, and participation in, scientific events.
67. A major investment for LMTA is the construction of the new campus, which, as the team heard, has been in the planning for some ten years. The panel received a detailed description of the building project for the new campus in an annex to the SER, but it also heard in multiple interviews about various issues to be resolved once the new complex becomes functional. Financing of the campus comes from EU structural funds and LMTA own investment via the sale of real estate allotted to the Academy by the government.
68. In addition to the SER and additional documents, the interview with the financial administration ensures the panel that the clear annual budget process is effectively planned, allocated and monitored and demonstrates effective leadership.
69. The SER noted, however, that "[t]he appropriations allocated to the Academy are not sufficient to cover all operational costs, therefore, additional sources are being sought to support the maintenance of staff and infrastructure and other financial needs". The urgency to seek additional funding is also noted as a weakness in the SWOT analysis provided in the SER. The SER describes various means of seeking additional funding. The panel appreciates the existing initiatives but it recommends that, in order *to support the financial sustainability of the Academy, LMTA should develop a clear plan or strategy to seek additional external funding to underpin the Academy's strategic ambitions.*
70. LMTA is housed in disparate facilities in the city centre of the capital, in for the most part heritage buildings, which have stood in the way of some needed modernization especially in the study areas that would require up-to-date surroundings and equipment for effectively preparing students for their future work. The panel is assured from several interviews that included the current and former leadership as well as persons responsible for infrastructure that the conditions for completing the construction are in place. The development of the new campus in Vilnius, whose building project includes not only new facilities but also state-of-the-art infrastructure and equipment, will act as a driver for change, growth and future success.
71. The panel explored in several interviews how the Klaipėda Faculty, merged into LMTA three years ago, has affected the institution's management and internal quality assurance, and how this is perceived by staff and student members of that faculty. While the concern raised was the condition of the faculty building, which is in need of renovation, it was also mentioned that distinct parts are being renewed as much as the budget permits. As far as the management and

operative issues are concerned, the panel found that the process of merger and integration of the Klaipėda Faculty into the Academy has been effectively managed. Staff and students have taken on the LMTA identity and participate in its management processes and activities.

72. **In summary**, after the review of SER and its annexes, additional documents requested and supplied as well as the site visit interviews, the review panel has found that all evaluated management areas at LMTA are working smoothly, and the leadership of the Academy fully competent to pursue its mission and strategy. The academic and administrative staff of LMTA, while openly discussing what they perceive as weaknesses, displayed pride in their institution and its operations, and even more importantly, confidence in its success. Areas where there is room for improvement is in human resources, most notably with attention required to be given to a recruitment and career path strategy for younger academic staff; and an implementation plan and human resources plan for internationalization. Exploring ways to secure additional funding should underscore LMTA's sustainability.

73. **Judgment:** the area is rated very well in the national context and internationally, without any drawbacks, and is given 4 points.

74. **Recommendations for the area:**

75. LMTA should further develop the International School 'implementation plan' within Strategy 2030 to create clearly articulated staging posts and concrete plans. This would benefit from having dedicated personnel in place for its co-ordination. These actions are needed in order to ensure the strategy is fully realised and implemented in a co-ordinated way. The key performance indicators should also encompass steps for the development of international studies, actively advertising LMTA activities abroad and the strengthening of international research projects.

76. The Academy should review and revise the human resources strategy to support the ambitions of Strategy 2030, in particular the strategic priority to develop the International School. Achieving the key performance indicator target of 20% of teaching staff appointed to have received their education abroad requires indicators that include dedicated hiring practices that advertise positions internationally, training, mobility schemes, international research participation and others.

77. To support the financial sustainability of the Academy, develop a clear plan or strategy to seek additional external funding to underpin the Academy's strategic ambitions.

78. **Good practice examples:**

79. The effective and strong leadership of the Rector, the former Rector, the Council, the Senate and other committees of the Academy which has embedded externality into its management approach. This has ensured robust decision making and clarity of responsibility.

80. The development of Strategy 2030 (built upon Strategy 2020) has involved a wide range of stakeholders both internal and external to the Academy, and outlines the Academy's broad strategic approach. The new strategy has also been built upon a process of positive cultural change that has been evident in the panel's meetings with staff and students.



## 3.2. Quality assurance

Quality assurance area is being analysed in accordance to the following indicators and criteria, set up in the Methodology.

### 2.1. Implementation and effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system:

2.1.1. *The higher education institution has approved and made publicly available internal quality assurance documents that are consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area;*

2.1.2. *Internal quality assurance measures of planning, implementation and improvement are appropriate, applied periodically and ensure the involvement of the whole institution and stakeholders;*

2.1.3. *Processes for planning, implementation, monitoring, periodic evaluation and development of activities are specified;*

2.1.4. *Students and academic and non-academic staff of the institution receive effective support;*

2.1.5. *Provisions and procedures for academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination, appeal and ethics are specified and applied;*

2.1.6. *The results of the external review are used to improve the performance of the higher education institution.*

81. Following the recommendation of its 2013 review, LMTA has developed a comprehensive internal quality assurance system, financed by a project that was completed in 2014. The panel was provided the Quality Manual, which is also available on the Academy website. The Manual is formulated in a clear structure and language accessible to internal and external stakeholders of LMTA. Additionally, there is a Policy for Quality Assurance, which summarizes the main goals and implementation processes.
82. The Manual covers the range of Part 1 of *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG), addressed to higher education institutions for their internal quality evaluation. The Manual also identifies operational processes and the persons responsible for the evaluation of the particular processes. SER provides a table showing the accordance of LMTA internal evaluation standards with the ESG.
83. The actions set down in the Manual and a review of the Manual itself is foreseen as an annual exercise. On various levels, however, quality evaluation takes place routinely. A Quality Management Office is responsible for managing the regular reviews. Indicators from each stream of evaluations are set and reviewed. Teachers and researchers are evaluated in their units, with goals set for the coming year. Surveys are taken from students, graduates, staff and social partners.
84. There are both national policies and funds to support students with disabilities and LMTA measures. Mentioned in the SER are a mobile stair lift and Braille printer. The SER describes other actions LMTA has taken to support students with special needs.
85. The number of students with disabilities in the first cycle has risen from two in 2015/2016 to seven in 2019/2020. Only one second-cycle student is present in the current year. The drop-out rate is notable, however, with only three graduating from first-cycle studies in 2020 and one from a master's programme.

86. A Code of Academic Ethics describes the measures in place against infringements and there is recourse for students to lodge appeals against assessment results. An Ethics Committee and an Appeals Committee are in place.
87. External quality reviews are set by law. They encompass both study-programme and institutional evaluations conducted by SKVC. LMTA has a formal system for considering the results and recommendations of external reviews and tracking their implementation. E.g. following the 2013 institutional review, the Academy devised a Plan for Improvement, which is available online. Annex to the SER lists the actions taken to the panel recommendations. (Additional quality reviews undertaken at LMTA range from research evaluations for funding purposes to financial audits.)
88. The panel commends LMTA for having developed a complex and functioning internal quality assurance scheme, considering the recommendations from its last external evaluation in 2013. The development of the Policy for Quality Assurance and the Quality Manual have formalised roles and responsibilities and enabled the Academy to plan in a systematic way. This has been underpinned by the effectiveness and professional attitude of the Quality Management Office that has enabled a structured approach to quality management at departmental and faculty levels.
89. The panel explored in the interviews in how far the internal quality culture is “lived” by the internal and external members of the LTMA community. The panel heard from all interview groups that they are participating in regular quality assurance exercises, most notably surveys of various kinds. Students felt that actions are taken on identified weaknesses and that their voices are heard. The responsive approach by faculties and departments to the student representation systems to the closure of the student feedback loop was appreciated by the panel.
90. The panel also heard in the interviews that members of the community appreciate the more formal management of quality assurance processes, as compared to the situation in 2013. Clearly set rules and processes enhance the transparency as a key indicator of the institutional culture.
91. The panel found the involvement and representation of students in all aspects of the deliberative structures of the Academy commendable; it has ensured effective partnership with students on all levels. Thus, a balance is evident between the formal and informal processes to support the embedding of quality assurance processes across the Academy by all staff and students.
92. External partners have also reported awareness of quality surveys. The involvement of external partners in many LMTA committees, from the programme to the management level, ensures that they feed back their observations on quality issues.
93. The panel also explored in an interview in how far students receive information about their studies prior to enrolment and in the course of their learning. As noted, the website in both Lithuanian and English provides access to the course catalogues. Additionally, students are provided with study and assessment regulations as well as information on their rights to recourse.
94. The SER describes that four appeals concerning both students and staff were lodged between 2016 and 2020. These led to three warnings and the expulsion of one student. LMTA followed up on these events but providing additional awareness seminars for teachers and students on academic ethics.



95. In the area of student support, the panel explored specifically the assistance provided to students with disabilities, in line with ESG 1.6, given that the low number and high drop-out rate of disabled students was conspicuous. The panel took note of the Academy's participation in a project by the State Studies Foundation, mentioned in the SER, which is ongoing.
96. The panel did not meet disabled students in any of the interviews. Staff responded to questions from the panel by noting the measures taken to help disabled students, but these were confined to infrastructure aids, such as a lift and Braille keyboard. The panel observed that LMTA seems to have a narrow view on the disabilities the potential student community may be faced with. Given the one-on-one approach in teaching art students, LMTA's filling the needs of individual students as they arise is reasonable. However, there may be many more potential students with disabilities whom LMTA could welcome if it put in place advance measures. The panel, therefore, recommends that the Academy should *review its approach to disability support for both 'seen (for example mobility/stamina or fatigue) and unseen disabilities' (for example, autism, dyslexia, visual, auditory and mental health conditions) and the potential impact the review may have on both study programmes and the facilities the Academy offers*. LMTA should also analyse the reasons for the drop outs among its disabled students.
97. **In summary**, quality assurance measures and structures are firmly in place at LMTA, and quality culture seems to be effective and encompassing its internal and external stakeholders. The one area where the panel found that the Academy could do more is with regard to students with disabilities, which entails LMTA making special efforts to familiarize itself with the range of such problems and to take action toward becoming a more inclusive institution.
98. **Judgment:** the area is rated very well in the national context and internationally, without any drawbacks, and is given 4 points.
99. **Recommendation for the area:**
100. The Academy should review its approach to disability support for both 'seen (for example mobility/stamina or fatigue) and unseen disabilities' (for example, autism, dyslexia, visual, auditory and mental health conditions) and the potential impact the review may have on both study programmes and the facilities the Academy offers.
101. **Good practice examples:**
102. The development of the quality policy and manual which has formalised roles and responsibilities and enabled the Academy to plan in a systematic way. This has been underpinned by the effectiveness of the Quality Management Office that has enabled a structured approach to quality management at departmental and faculty levels.
103. The balance between the formal and informal processes to support the embedding of quality assurance processes across the Academy by all staff.
104. The involvement and representation of students in all aspects of the deliberative structures of the Academy, which has ensured effective partnership working with students.

### **3.3. Studies and research (art)**

*Studies and research (art)* area is being analysed in accordance to the following indicators and criteria, set up in the Methodology.

*3.1. The level of research (art), compatibility of studies and research (art) and its compliance with the strategic aims of activities:*

*3.1.1. The study and research (art) activities carried out and their results are consistent with the mission and strategic aims of the higher education institution;*

*3.1.2. The level of research (art) activities is sufficient for the ongoing studies of the higher education institution;*

*3.1.3. Studies are based on research (art);*

*3.1.4. Consistent recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and informal learning is performed.*

105. It is evident from the evidence gathered in both the LMTA documents and interviews that the community of the Academy pursues its mission to “...educate the most artistically gifted young people into creative, proactive, entrepreneurial members of the society...” with enthusiasm. As the leading higher education institution in music, theatre, dance and film studies in the country, LMTA has a pick of the best applicants to its programmes, and it is deliberately selective in its admission process.
106. The SER mentions repeatedly, and indeed lists in the Annexes to SER, a plethora of artistic and research activities held in recent years. Many of them involve students, which follows from the profile of the Academy with its focus on performing arts. Over a hundred examples of these are provided in the SER, such as Creative workshops for students in acting and theatre directing; a seminar in sound design; development of an interactive music-teaching platform; or an international platform promoting the professional development of young film-makers.
107. LMTA states that the “percentage of top qualified teachers (recognised arts and teachers with a scientific degree) is well above the rate established for universities (> 50 per cent), reaching 69.7 per cent in 2020”. Supporting this, SER documents provide a list of dozens of publications produced by LMTA teachers. The Academy also issues three scientific journals.
108. The SER provides examples about how teaching incorporates the latest results in research and art, stating that the content of programmes is updated in this respect. The review of study programmes in faculty departments every two years extends to this aspect.
109. The Quality Assurance Policy stipulates the consistent recognition of partial and earlier studies, including competences acquired in informal and non-formal training. A Competence Assessment Commission is set up ad hoc upon receipt of an application for recognition, which includes the dean of the relevant faculty, a person from the Study Programmes Office and the teacher of the subject. It should be noted that only one or two candidates have applied annually since 2014, with a peak of four applicants in 2019. Seven of them received recognition while two were rejected, the reasons for which are stated in the SER.
110. Partial studies are more common than long-term mobility, and the mechanisms for the recognition of studies abroad are in place. The faculties are responsible for recognizing partial studies. The SER notes that LMTA has a draft document setting down recognition procedure.
111. From the documents received prior to the site visit, the panel had the impression that LMTA is active in both teaching and research in the fields of music, theatre, dance and film, as well as in art history and art theory. The panel was able to corroborate that the Academy is not only the leading university in Lithuania in these fields but that its activities, as described in several

interviews, are of high quality. Staff research and artistic activities enrich the Academy study programmes and offer opportunities for students to work alongside staff who are experts in their field, both as professionals and active artistic practitioners. The social partners of LMTA also commented on the quality of graduates and their artistic outputs.

112. Nevertheless, the panel believes that the Academy should more actively support, and even initiate, the artistic research of its teachers, as it seems that most artistic research is done mainly by PhD students. It would be to the benefit of LMTA and the panel therefore recommends *reconsidering its research strategy in order to forefront artistic research as a legitimate research activity. The re-articulation of the research strategy should demonstrate the impact of artistic research and demonstrate the value for government and other stakeholders.*
113. As follows from the profile of LMTA, its focus is on the study, creation and public performance of art. In the interview with teaching and research staff, as well as PhD students and graduates, the panel was able to substantiate that LMTA's artistic research activity as a whole is of the quality required for an art university. This activity of LMTA also corresponds to the very nature of artistic research, which still is a relatively young discipline, featuring a range of methodologies, a case-studies approach and pilot projects. In fact, the panel found that the effectiveness of the Academy PhD programmes provide students with a student-centred and bespoke learning environment supported by experienced supervisors.
114. The panel interviewed persons responsible for facilities and equipment and was able to ascertain that the open access and availability to facilities, equipment, and the library has supported effective student learning. This was corroborated by students, who stated that the quality of services was, after initial adjustments, also evident through the COVID period.
115. In the interviews, also specific issues were raised, which, although not strictly in the remit of institutional evaluation, the panel would like to note here. Students and graduates voiced the need for the addition and promotion of the importance of other courses or modules than are currently offered, such as theatre criticism, stage design, entrepreneurship, etc. The possibility for cooperation with the Vilnius Academy of Arts in the field of stage design was also mentioned. The Academy could be the institution that could initiate cooperation in studies with related higher education institutions in Lithuania, which could not only benefit the studies but also contribute to regional and national development.
116. The panel saw that LMTA has a depth of experience in all its study areas and artistic research in all its study fields, supported by corresponding artistic creation, artistic (practice-based) research and scientific research. The documents and especially the interviews made clear, however, that there is much potential for greater collaboration between study programmes and departments. The panel explored this question in interviews and learned that some such cooperative projects do exist. Nevertheless, the panel recommends *supporting greater cooperation and collaboration between faculty staff and students, in order to exploit the rich range of opportunities available. This should be underpinned by concrete steps of action and clearly communicated involvement of the management on all levels.*

### 3.2. Internationality of studies, research (art):

3.2.1. *The higher education institution has a strategy for internationalisation of research (art) and study activities (including indicators of internationalisation), means for its implementation, and measurements of the effectiveness of these activities are performed (not applicable to colleges unless provided for in its strategic documents);*

3.2.2. *The higher education institution integrates aspects of internationalisation into the content of studies and research (art) activities.*

117. As noted earlier, the setting up of an International School is one of three priorities identified in Strategy 2030. It builds on Strategy 2020, which already produced an “Internationalization indicator” that is intended to gauge the level of international activity. These range from the number of international students and student and staff mobility to international projects in which LMTA is involved. The goal of achieving 100% of the target by 2020 was encumbered by the COVID-19 pandemic to reach 83%. The Strategy for Scientific Activity Development of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre sets several goal posts for international research.
118. Regarding student mobility, LMTA has agreements with 179 partner institutions in 38 countries. It aims for a 3:2 ratio between outgoing and incoming students. The SER states that the student mobility rate reached 10% in 2020, which is half the target due to the pandemic. Short-term mobility of up to six months of incoming students rose from 58 in 2016 to 267 in 2019, while short-term outgoing student mobility rose from 130 to 202 in the same period. Long-term, student mobility of one or more semesters in this time period rose from 36 to 50 for outgoing, and 24 to 37 for incoming students. The ratio of permanent foreign teachers stands at 3%, although there are many more (c.a. 150 per year on average) coming to teach classes or courses.
119. There are six study programmes delivered in full in English as well as Lithuanian, four on the bachelor and two on the master level (with one international joint programme in English only). Additionally, a number of electives in English are offered.
120. The panel heard in several interviews that the International School is a strategic priority taken on by internal and external stakeholders of LMTA.
121. It also heard of several current international projects, the joint master programme in Art Therapy taught in English, research, and staff and student mobility activities. The panel commends the Academy mobility programmes, which offer students the ability to share and learn from practice on an international stage. As part of the strategic priority of internationalization, LMTA has begun to implement its targets, which the panel finds realistic for institutions of performing arts. The development was curbed in 2020 only by the pandemic.
122. The team was impressed in several interviews about the excellent functioning of the International Relations Office, providing dedicated personnel to co-ordinate and have critical oversight.
123. The panel discussed in the interviews the need, identified in the SWOT in the SER as an area for improvement, to “[e]xpand the scope of dissemination of information about the studies at LMTA abroad“, which the panel encourages as a means to expand the reach and competitiveness, and thus also sustainability, of LMTA. It would be helpful to arrange extra-curricular international collaborations and artistic research, e.g. hosting online symposiums with practitioners from

outside of Lithuania. This would give students a diverse cultural perspective and new inspirations.

124. **In summary**, the enthusiasm of both the LMTA staff and students for the studies and research they are involved in was palpable to the review panel during its site visit. The documents presented and corroborated during the interviews show that LMTA has put in place the strategic documents and regulations that guide their stakeholders in carrying out their activities. As follows from the nature of an art Academy, formal structures run in parallel to the informal ones, with personal interchanges being part of the studies. Teaching and research go hand in hand and students are part of projects on all levels, including research schemes. Rules are in place for recognition of studies abroad and no concerns were voiced in the interviews. Refocusing the research strategy on the impact of artistic research to demonstrate its value to the government and the public would advance its impact. Similarly, more collaboration bridging LMTA faculties and department would raise the impact of studies and projects.

125. LMTA has identified the need for internalization as a means to increase its competitiveness and sustainability; as a quality benchmark for its study programmes and research; and not least as an instrument for raising the prestige of the institution.

126. **Judgment:** the area is rated very well in the national context and internationally, without any drawbacks, and is given 4 points.

127. **Recommendations:**

128. The Academy should reconsider its research strategy in order to forefront artistic research as a legitimate research activity. The re-articulation of the research strategy should demonstrate the impact of artistic research and demonstrate the value for government and other stakeholders.

129. Support greater cooperation and collaboration between faculty staff and students, in order to exploit the rich range of opportunities available. This should be underpinned by concrete steps of action and clearly communicated involvement of the management on all levels.

130. **Good practice example:**

131. Staff research and artistic activities enrich the Academy study programmes and offer opportunities for students to work alongside staff who are experts in their field, both as professionals and active artistic practitioners.

### **3.4. Impact on regional and national development**

*Impact on regional and national development* area is being analysed in accordance to the following indicators and criteria, set up in the Methodology.

#### *4.1. Effectiveness of the impact on regional and national development:*

*4.1.1. The higher education institution carries out an analysis of national and (or) regional demands, identifies the needs to be met and foresees the potential impact on national and (or) regional development;*

*4.1.2. The monitoring, analysis and evaluation of the effectiveness of the measures on national and (or) regional development are performed.*

132. The third of the strategy priorities for 2030 is “Transferable culture”, which is understood to mean “spread of art values in the general public, active participation in the processes of the art

education and cultural policy”. While the nature of LMTA involves public activity in the form of performances and publicity – and indeed, an annex to the SER provides a map showing the dispersion of artistic performances throughout the country and abroad – the Academy has recognized that this is an area where it can not only improve but establish itself in the country and internationally.

133. LMTA upholds several studios, theatres and concert and dance halls where it offers events that are for the most part free to the public. In conjunction with social partners in art companies and municipalities throughout the country, LMTA caters to requests for art, music and dance performances as well as adult and children’s art activities.
134. The Strategy 2030 names a set of performance indicators for “transferable culture”, including life-long learning schemes. An implementation schedule is part of the strategy and the SER describes monitoring to gauge their achievement, which the panel also heard in the interviews.
135. LMTA has also noted that it carries out stakeholder surveys as part of the quality assurance activity, which helps to identify the needs of the public with regard to what they expect from the Academy.
136. LMTA’s graduate tracking programme, carried out by the Career and Competence Centre, shows that the vast majority of their students find employment on graduation, with about half of them working already during their studies. The results of the annual analyses, fed back to the faculties, provide the Academy with information about the needs of society for their graduates.
137. The profile of LMTA necessarily puts it into contact with a wide audience. The Academy is keen to reach audiences beyond the two campus towns and organizes performances in many parts of the country. It identifies this mission in its strategy and monitors its performance indicators on a regular basis.
138. Nevertheless, the panel agrees with the weakness identified in the SWOT that states, “Ensure continuous monitoring and analysis of implementation of measures impacting national and regional development, as well as evaluation of their effectiveness“. The panel feels that LMTA could improve its focus in this respect and recommends that *in order to secure the Academy’s impact on regional and national development; it should improve its monitoring analysis, evaluation and effectiveness of different measures and activities in order to find out which activities are most needed and effective for national and regional development. It should also develop an action plan with clear objectives and implementation measures. A better coordinated approach to its interaction with cultural institutions in all regions is recommended. A further recommendation is to expand the field of artistic means to include theater, cinema and dance activities.*
139. Among the clearly positive features of LMTA is the strong link between its study programmes and the employability requirements of Lithuania, which is underpinned by the large number of professional artistic events organized in various parts of the country. There is a clear impact of graduates upon the creative industries that serve Lithuania at regional and national levels, which are endorsed by the social partners met by the review panel.
140. Following the interviews with internal stakeholders and external partners of LMTA, the panel believes that LMTA study programmes in both the Vilnius and Klapėda campuses meet the needs of society in Lithuania, both in terms of traditions and regional requirements on the one hand, and through a contemporary and international dimension on the other.

#### 4.2. Assurance of conditions for life-long learning:

- 4.2.1. *The higher education institution monitors and analyses the need for life-long learning;*
- 4.2.2. *The higher education institution anticipates the diversity of forms and conditions of life-long learning and ensures their implementation;*
- 4.2.3. *The higher education institution performs the evaluation of assurance of conditions for life-long learning.*

141. The Strategy 2030 aims to “expand non-formal and continuing training” and identifies indicators to be met. The target is to cater to 1000 persons per year under this scheme. Along with that, LMTA aims to improve its PR and communication vis-à-vis the public about its offers. LMTA has also recently prepared a detailed Procedure for Organizing Non-Formal Adult Education and Continuing Teaching/Learning that sets out the implementation paths.
142. Life-long learning schemes are identified as ranging from professional development courses for internal stakeholders, including teachers and non-academic staff, to educational and enrichment programmes for external stakeholders from the community and businesses. In 2020, the SER reports 38 life-long learning programmes with 943 participants.
143. Surveys about the benefits and outcomes of life-long learning programmes are conducted on a regular basis. These are analysed and used to sharpen the focus of the programmes to the needs of stakeholders. Additionally, LMTA consults its partners directly to garner feedback on needs and outcomes.
144. At this time, LMTA is drafting a new Life-Long Learning Action Plan and is seeking funding to develop online courses.
145. LMTA has collected its many life-long learning activities in its SER in preparation for the panel review and has developed documentary guidance and monitoring schemes for this activity. In addition to professional development for its academic and administrative staff, of which the panel heard examples and positive feedback in the site visit interviews, LMTA makes the most of its core activities to reach out to the general public not just via artistic performances but also the dedicated transfer of knowledge and skills within its profile.
146. The panel discussed in how far LMTA reaches the wider public not only in the main cities. The panel heard that the outreach extends to artistic performances but much less was revealed about life-long learning programmes in the country. Also, the panel wondered whether all faculties use their outreach capacity as much as possible. Therefore, the panel recommends that the Academy *review its approach to, and offerings for, life-long learning in order to ensure that its planned activities are focused and consistently implemented across the Academy and wider community. The review and analysis should lead to a revised strategy to improve its effectiveness and a clear focus on social responsibility.*
147. **In summary**, LMTA has an active presence throughout the country with its artistic performances. It also upholds active contacts with social partners in all the fields of performing arts. LMTA has set down a guiding document to lead its activities in its strategic priority of “transferable culture” and for monitoring the activities. An aspect where LMTA could improve is its outreach to areas in the country outside the major cities and not just with artistic performances but e.g. life-long learning offers.



148. **Judgment:** the area is rated as being developed systematically, without any major drawbacks, and is given 3 points.

149. **Recommendations for the area:**

150. In order to secure the Academy's impact on regional and national development, it should improve its monitoring analysis, evaluation and effectiveness of different measures and activities in order to find out which activities are most needed and effective for national and regional development. It should also develop an action plan with clear objectives and implementation measures. A better coordinated approach to its interaction with cultural institutions in all regions is recommended. A further recommendation is to expand the field of artistic means to include theater, cinema and dance activities.

151. The Academy should review its approach to, and offerings for, life-long learning in order to ensure that its planned activities are focused and consistently implemented across the Academy and wider community. The review and analysis should lead to a revised strategy to improve its effectiveness and a clear focus on social responsibility.

152. **Good practice example:**

153. There is a strong link between study programmes and the employability requirements of Lithuania. The clear impact of graduates upon the creative industries that serve Lithuania at regional and national levels is endorsed by the social partners met by the review team.

## IV. EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

The panel identifies the following examples of good practice in

### Management:

- The effective and strong leadership of the Rector, the Former Rector, the Council, the Senate and other committees of the Academy which has embedded externality into its management approach. This has ensured robust decision making and clarity of responsibility.
- The development of Strategy 2030 (built upon Strategy 2020), which has involved a wide range of stakeholders both internal and external to the Academy, and which outlines the Academy's broad strategic approach. The new strategy has also been built upon a process of positive cultural change that has been evident in the panel's meetings with staff and students.

### Quality assurance:

- The development of the quality policy and manual which has formalised roles and responsibilities and enabled the Academy to plan in a systematic way. This has been underpinned by the effectiveness of the Quality Management Office that has enabled a structured approach to quality management at departmental and faculty levels.
- The balance between the formal and informal processes to support the embedding of quality assurance processes across the Academy by all staff.
- The involvement and representation of students in all aspects of the deliberative structures of the Academy, which has ensured effective partnership working with students.



### **Studies and research (art):**

- Staff research and artistic activities enrich the Academy study programmes and offer opportunities for students to work alongside staff who are experts in their field, both as professionals and active artistic practitioners.

### **Impact on regional and national development:**

- There is a strong link between study programmes and the employability requirements of Lithuania. The clear impact of graduates upon the creative industries that serve Lithuania at regional and national levels is endorsed by the social partners met by the review team.

## **V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCEMENT**

The panel's recommendations for further enhancement are:

### **Management:**

- LMTA should further develop the International School 'implementation plan' within Strategy 2030 to create clearly articulated staging posts and concrete plans. This would benefit from having dedicated personnel in place for its co-ordination. These actions are needed in order to ensure the strategy is fully realised and implemented in a co-ordinated way. The key performance indicators should also encompass steps for the development of international studies, actively advertising LMTA activities abroad and the strengthening of international research projects.
- The Academy should review and revise the human resources strategy to support the ambitions of Strategy 2030, in particular the strategic priority to develop the International School. Achieving the key performance indicator target of 20% of teaching staff appointed to have received their education abroad requires indicators that include dedicated hiring practices that advertise positions internationally, training, mobility schemes, international research participation and others.
- To support the financial sustainability of the Academy, develop a clear plan or strategy to seek additional external funding to underpin the Academy's strategic ambitions.

### **Quality assurance:**

- The Academy should review its approach to disability support for both 'seen (for example mobility/stamina or fatigue) and unseen disabilities' (for example, autism, dyslexia, visual, auditory and mental health conditions) and the potential impact the review may have on both study programmes and the facilities the Academy offers.

### **Studies and research (art):**

- The Academy should reconsider its research strategy in order to forefront artistic research as a legitimate research activity. The re-articulation of the research strategy should demonstrate the impact of artistic research and demonstrate the value for government and other stakeholders.
- The Academy has a depth of experience in all relevant study areas and artistic research. The Academy is recommended to support greater cooperation and collaboration between faculty

staff and students, in order to exploit the rich range of opportunities available. This should be underpinned by concrete steps of action.

### **Impact on regional and national development:**

- In order to secure the Academy's impact on regional and national development, it should improve its monitoring analysis, evaluation and effectiveness of different measures and activities in order to find out which activities are most needed and effective for national and regional development. It should also develop an action plan with clear objectives and implementation measures. A better coordinated approach to its interaction with cultural institutions in all regions is recommended. A further recommendation is to expand the field of artistic means to include theatre, cinema and dance activities.
- The Academy should review its approach to, and offerings for, life-long learning in order to ensure that its planned activities are focused and consistently implemented across the Academy and wider community. The review and analysis should lead to a revised strategy to improve its effectiveness and a clear focus on social responsibility.

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