

The **Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre** (LMTA) is a tertiary level higher education institution which trains artists for a professional career in music, theatre, dance, and film and offers related theoretical studies. Founded in 1933, the Academy now hosts over 1,000 students in three study cycles (Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral) in its three faculties, two of which are based in Vilnius and one in Klaipėda.

The LMTA is an active member of European associations AEC, CILECT, ANMA, ECMA, ECMTA, EDE, and E:UTSA as well as international networks for regional Nordic/Baltic cooperation NordClassic, Nordpuls, NordOpera, Nordtrad, Norteas, Cape, and Act-in-Arts. Participation in international associations, platforms and networks for classical music, film and television, improvised music, interdisciplinary cooperation, and artistic research opens wider possibilities and creates closer cooperation opportunities with leading schools in Europe and beyond.

LMTA 2030, a long-term **strategy**, stands on three pillars: sustainability of activities, internationalisation, and inclusive culture. The LMTA promotes modernisation and internationalisation of music, theatre, film, and dance education by creating and developing various settings for virtual mobility, courses in foreign languages, blended study modules, and other modern teaching and learning opportunities including diverse cross-sectoral cooperation, academy-industry cooperation, project-based activities, and recognition of non-formal learning. The LMTA is committed to developing a sustainable internationalisation strategy by maintaining reciprocal exchange of teachers and students with *Erasmus+* partner institutions, enhancing quality of activities, participating in strategic and capacity-building projects, and developing joint study programmes that correspond to the institutional priorities. One of the fundamental priorities communicated by the *LMTA 2030* strategy is the vision to attract more foreign students, take leadership in the field of internationalisation, and become an international school that carefully fosters European values.

The LMTA joined the *Erasmus* programme in 1999. Since then, both our partnership network and the number of mobility and international projects have significantly increased. By participating in *Erasmus+ 2021-2027*, the LMTA aims to reach sustainable growth of its international community by providing attractive and high-quality education, supporting its teaching staff in implementing competence-based traditional and digital learning approaches, providing each community member with a variety of learning opportunities, supporting mobility opportunities aimed at acquiring international and intercultural competences both abroad and at home, and encouraging the students and staff to be open, inclusive, successful, and proactive European citizens. By 2030, working or studying abroad will have become a norm; therefore, student and staff mobility will be prioritised and diverse mobility opportunities (virtual, blended, short-term mobility, mobility for studies and traineeships) will be offered. By 2027, the impact of *Erasmus+* on the LMTA is expected to have resulted in enhanced key competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes required for personal development, employability, social inclusion, and active citizenship) of our staff and students, increased international visibility of the LMTA as an open, socially responsible and competitive higher education institution that attracts highly qualified staff and talented students with an international background.

The LMTA intends to streamline education by collaborating with strategic partners and enhance the quality of activities by participating in capacity-building projects. International associations such as AEC, ANMA, CILECT, and EDE will be involved as partners for dissemination, communication, and evaluation in order to deploy the unique network of contacts, international events, and experts in the field of higher education in music, theatre, dance, and film. By 2021, the long-term goals related to the LMTA digitalisation will be set, and the strategic partnerships are to be further developed and strengthened.

The bilateral agreements signed by 2020 and including over 150 partners will be now extended by expressing preference for *Erasmus+* partner countries in order to reach wider geographical coverage and provide greater cooperation opportunities. The agreements in force will be reviewed to ensure the partners are active and the cooperation is mutually beneficial. New strategic cooperation agreements will be concluded with world-leading higher institutions of a similar profile by identifying areas of mutual interests and benefits. Special attention will be given to the partnerships sharing membership at the same international associations and networks and to partners from the prioritised regions (Eastern Partnership, Eastern Mediterranean, Latin America, Developing Asia, the USA, and Africa). For a long time, the LMTA has been using EU funds and programmes for curriculum development, staff training, and quality enhancement; therefore, KA107 partnerships will be developed in two directions: (1) transferring knowledge

and practices from partners and networks in the field of highly developed modern education and culture, and (2) sharing the best LMTA practice and expertise with the partners who can benefit from our experience in networking, teaching and learning, and administration.

In order to reach the above-mentioned internationalisation goals and become an internationally acclaimed higher education institution, the LMTA strives to achieve the following:

- enhance the study facilities by building a new LMTA campus with state-of-the-art equipment, facilities adapted for disabled people, and environmentally friendly solutions, so-called the GREEN ACADEMY (2024);
- improve the quality of teaching by engaging more teachers in exchange programmes and increasing the number of teaching staff with international background;
- develop internationalisation of studies: 80% of the study programmes at the LMTA to be delivered either in both Lithuanian and English or in the English language (2030);
- ensure transparent information: updated course catalogues to be available on the LMTA website (2025);
- increase the number of graduates by recruiting higher numbers of talented students from the EU and non-EU countries (20% of international students by 2030);
- increase the number of graduates with international key competences by offering physical, blended, and virtual mobility opportunities and mobility windows (20% of graduates by 2027);
- ensure effective administration and digital management of the *Erasmus+* programme and digitalisation of other administrative processes at the LMTA (2025);
- internationalise studies at home by offering physical, blended, and virtual learning (2024);
- increase strategic cooperation (five projects by 2027);
- increase cooperation with the partner countries (2027);
- develop joint study modules (seven modules by 2025);
- develop joint study programmes (two programmes by 2027).

Quality assurance and high level of activity performance will always be a priority that will ensure the education is being delivered or received on an international level.

The LMTA will participate in *Erasmus+* mobility actions in the programme countries and partner countries, strategic partnership projects, capacity-building projects, and joint study programmes.

Staff mobility, project-based, activities and e-learning tools are key elements for internationalisation of studies at home; therefore, staff mobility will be considered as one of the most important *Erasmus+* activities. During the period of 2021-2027, the LMTA will keep a balance between outgoing and incoming teachers, encourage reciprocal exchanges, prioritise integrated teacher mobility (blended teaching, intensive courses), and invite staff from enterprises (up to 20% of the total incoming staff) in order to help the students develop real-world approach. *Erasmus+* opportunities for staff include staff mobility for teaching, staff mobility for training, virtual mobility, cooperation in blended modules, participation in strategic partnership projects, participation in capacity-building projects, and teaching in joint study programmes. The LMTA will maintain close contact with the International Relations Office at the partner institutions, discuss the teacher mobility flows, issue the relevant documents (the mobility agreement before the visit and the confirmation document after the visit), and coordinate mobility flows. Monitoring visits to the partner

institutions (four or five visits per academic year) and live communication with the majority of coordinators at the partner schools during the annual meetings for international relations coordinators under the umbrella of AEC, ANMA, CILECT, EDE, and other international associations and networks will ensure a smooth and effective implementation of mobility plans. The LMTA is responsible for recognition of staff mobility and considers this experience as professional development. The teaching staff will be encouraged to take part in the mobility programme and project-based activities and in this way to contribute to the internationalisation of art and cultural studies.

Student mobility is a highly prioritised *Erasmus+* activity. Aiming to increase the level of internationalisation, the LMTA will offer such *Erasmus+* opportunities for students as mobility for studies, mobility for placement, virtual mobility, blended modules, short-term mobility, and intensive courses (international weeks, project-based activities, joint studies with the partner institutions). The LMTA will also offer virtual opportunity placements for digitally competent students. The goal is to accept up to five candidates per year in Sound Engineering, Composition and Digital Production, and Audiovisual Production studies as well as projects involving video-conferencing and live streaming. At the same time, the LMTA will send the students to international companies for traineeships to boost their digital competences required to succeed in their professional career.

Students across all disciplines at all three study cycles – Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral programmes – will have equal opportunities. It is intended to facilitate student mobility by introducing mobility windows in Bachelor's and Master's studies. By 2025, LMTA will be offering 80% of its courses in either in both Lithuanian and English or in the English language, and the course catalogues will have been published on the website and annually updated. Relevant departments at home and host institutions are responsible for fair and transparent selection of outgoing and incoming students. The LMTA gives priority to the applicants with fewer opportunities. The applications and Learning Agreements are submitted on-line using the EASY digital platform. The final decision of acceptance or rejection is made by the host institution because of individual nature of art studies (a one-to-one setting). Digitalisation of mobility processes is encouraged and implemented at all levels: before, during, and after mobility. The LMTA obliges to recognise the mobility study period and results obtained without any restrictions.

The LMTA International Relations Office (IRO) is responsible for coordinating the approved mobility flows and administrating, monitoring, and reporting on the student and staff mobility. The principles of non-discrimination, transparency, inclusion, and promotion of environmentally-friendly practices – including digitalisation of mobility and its management – are complied with in all activities.

The LMTA is experienced in **project-based activities** and has coordinated a number of EU projects such as Erasmus IPs *Erasmus Conducting Course*, *Session of European Chamber Music Academy*, *We Make an Opera*, an Erasmus IP *Summer Video Studio*, and an EU Media training project *Summer Media Studio*. As a partner institution, the LMTA has participated in a number of international projects: Tempus JEP *InMusWB*, Erasmus+ strategic partnership projects *METRIC*, *ECMA – Next Step*, *ACTA*, *Entrepreneurial Approaches to Higher Theatre Education*, *INTERMUSIC*, *European Opera Academy – Competence Centre for Shared Education of Opera Training*, an Erasmus+ capacity-building project *DEMUSIS*, and projects for virtual learning and digitalisation of resources (EU projects *Harmos*, *Variazioni*, *Foremi*). A Master's joint study programme *ECMAster* is a successful outcome of the Erasmus+ project *SP ECMA – Next Step*. During the next Erasmus+ programme period, the LMTA will broaden and deepen international partnerships including cooperation in strategic partnership, capacity building, and joint study programmes. At least five strategic partnership projects aiming at modernisation and internationalisation of studies and green initiatives, a capacity-building project, and at least two joint Master's programmes will have been launched by 2027.

Staff and student mobility and participation in project-based activities are the core elements that create opportunities for personal growth and develop international cooperation among individuals and partner institutions, enhance the quality of education at the LMTA, and encourage the European dimension. Diversification of international activities includes a road map for actions where international projects leading to quality enhancement, transformation of the LMTA culture, improved services, capability, added value, and sustainability will be prioritised. The LMTA is committed to the quality of Erasmus+ activities and responsibility for added value achieved through the process of internationalisation.

The LMTA encourages student and staff mobility and strives to increase the number of mobility activities so that by 2027, 20% of graduates will have participated in international credit mobility (physical, virtual, or blended) and 50% of the LMTA teaching staff will have acquired international experience either by physical or virtual mobility or will have participated in international activities at home. The portfolio of Erasmus+ strategic partnership projects includes five projects related to modernisation and internationalisation of studies (digitalisation of content, digitalisation of activities, and development of international curriculum), and two capacity-building projects that will have been implemented by 2027.

Equal development of all art disciplines (music, theatre, film, dance, art education, art studies, and art research) is promoted. Priority will be given to interdisciplinary projects and projects aimed at enhancing the LMTA internationalisation and strategic approach leading to implementation of innovation, internationalisation of studies, artistic and creative activities, cultural diversity, lifelong learning and inclusion, and internationalisation of the LMTA community. The overall strategy is led by a vision to increase visibility and attractiveness of the LMTA for international students.

The strategy *The Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre 2030* declares the values of openness, sustainability, academic freedom, responsibility, tolerance, and equal opportunities. The major processes such as teaching and learning, research and artistic research, arts and life-long-learning are monitored by the Academic Board (Senate) that includes representatives of both the teaching staff and the student body. The study programme committees include student representatives, too. Decisions made by the LMTA Board, Senate, Dean's Office or Rector's Office are transparent. Strategic documents and policy statements are well communicated and available for the LMTA community. The principles of non-discrimination, social responsibility, tolerance, equal opportunities, and transparency are outlined in The LMTA Code of Academic Ethics. Appeal procedures against the decisions taken are public and stipulated in The Code of Ethics, The Appeal Procedures Against the Evaluation of Learning Outcomes, and The Guidelines for the Organisation of Erasmus+ Studies and Placement. The procedures are clear and transparent.

The LMTA is open to talented individuals from all backgrounds and offers academic, administrative and financial help for students with fewer opportunities – students coming from socially disadvantaged families and students with disabilities and special needs. Students with special needs are eligible for financial support allocated as state grants, special scholarships, and tuition fee exemption. Complying with the principles of The Erasmus Student Charter, Erasmus students are exempted from any fees while the students with special needs and socially disadvantaged students receive an extra grant according to the Erasmus guidelines. The LMTA provides administrative and academic support for students with special needs by providing a flexible and individual study schedule. Students receive psychological support at special group lectures and can also apply for individual psychological counselling sessions.

The new LMTA campus (estimated to be constructed by 2024) will be disabled-friendly for students, staff, and visitors with special needs.

A new policy statement stipulating the principles of non-discrimination, transparency, and equal opportunities will be developed, approved by the LMTA Senate, and published in 2021.

The digitalisation goals of the Erasmus+ programme are considered a very important part of the programme. Already in 2016, the LMTA joined *European Online Application EASY*, an initiative by the AEC that is relevant and related to the European Student Card Initiative. By using the EASY platform, the management of student mobility for study (SMS) at the LMTA has become fully digitalised. The EASY platform is a unique subject-specific, multinational and multi-programme system that enables online management of both incoming and outgoing applications for SMS. Using the platform, students can directly apply and coordinators can nominate students. A digital Learning Agreement that can be managed and signed online by the three parties involved is also integrated in the EASY system. Furthermore, the EASY system enables the exchange of applications between institutions who have joined the system and

institutions that are external to the system: they can still receive and view applications, update their contact details in the system, and nominate students in the online format.

Back in 2017, the AEC signed Memorandum of Understanding with EUF, the organisation developing the Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) Ecosystem, to follow each other's developments in EASY and EWP. The AEC is currently studying the documentation produced by EWP in order to connect EASY and EWP through the APIs developed by EWP aiming at being fully compliant with the timeline proposed by the ESC provided that the tools at disposal are suitable for the following goals: in 2021, to manage inter-institutional agreements and online learning agreements; in 2022, to send and receive student nominations and acceptances; and, in 2023, to exchange transcripts of records related to student mobility. If for technical or other reasons, one or more of the functionalities of EWP could not be integrated in the EASY platform on time, the LMTA, from 2023, will be ready to complete them using the free Dashboard.

The LMTA is working on the **Green Academy Policy** that will be a part of the strategy *LMTA 2030*. Initiative is taken to promote sustainable consciousness in order to reduce environmental impact. Green Academy supports the following areas: environmentally-friendly infrastructure; careful use of natural and human resources; digitalisation of academic and administrative processes; promotion of blended and virtual mobility; "greener" travels (using bus, train, direct flights and longer travels), online teaching and learning; library digitalisation; digital marketing and advertising, and management of Erasmus+ without paper. By 2027, 20% of all Erasmus teachers and student mobility activities such as virtual teaching and training, blended teaching for teaching staff, and virtual and blended courses for students are expected to be taking place online. The LMTA will be offering virtual and/or blended courses (by 2027, 20% from the total number of courses). By 2023, the LMTA is likely to have developed online courses in digital competence training, immersive sound, multiculturalism, communication, creative writing, survival Lithuanian language for students and staff as well as other relevant courses.

The LMTA International Relations Office organises regular meetings with local students – at least twice per year – to present ERASMUS+ programme opportunities, benefits, and social inclusion in the community of mobility participants. ERASMUS alumni are invited to share their experience and encourage others to join the community of Erasmus students. During the mobility period, the students keep in touch with the key contacts at the home institution and the local community via the international relations coordinator by e-mail and social media. They are encouraged to be active citizens and act as ambassadors of their own country and the EU. After the mobility period, the students are invited to join the LMTA ERASMUS alumni network and support those interested in mobility activities.

Incomings are mentored by the LMTA Student Union. The mentoring programme includes various services such as a pick-up service, introduction to the local culture and people, informal socialising, sightseeing, leisure, and special events. The intensive course *Introduction to the Lithuanian Culture* enables the incoming ERASMUS+ students meet each other. The network of contacts is developed through the LMTA ERASMUS+ students Facebook group, created on a yearly basis, where the students discuss their questions, share information about various activities and events, tell their stories, and stay connected. The incoming students are encouraged and supported to organise a special cultural event – a stage performance which brings together the incoming, local, and external ERASMUS+ students invited from other HEIs in Vilnius. After the mobility, some incoming ERASMUS students maintain contact with the LMTA via the Facebook group. These activities make the students feel being a part of larger ERASMUS+ community and encourage them to be proactive for positive social change.

The recognition of credits and study periods is regulated by The Recognition of Study Results at the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre. The document states that all the credits granted to the student following the Learning Agreement, which has been approved by the three parties, are recognised automatically without any restrictions. The credits gained for the study results during the studies or placement are fully recognized for all forms of mobility – physical, virtual, or blended. The information about

the study or placement periods abroad as well as the international credits received are included in the Diploma Supplement issued to each LMTA graduate.

The LMTA International Relations Office (IRO) is responsible for administrating and supporting staff mobility. Staff mobility opportunities are successfully promoted by announcing information on the LMTA website and communicating the relevant information with the academic and administrative staff members by e-mail, at information sessions, and individual meetings. To apply for a mobility period, a staff member submits an application (by May 15). In case of competition, the applicants go through a selection procedure performed by the LMTA Erasmus Committee which includes deans of the Faculties, Vice-rector for Studies, Head of Human Resource Office, and Head of International Relations Office. Priority is given to those staff members who aim at acquiring innovative teaching methods, developing new materials, transferring good practice from the partner institution to the LMTA staff, and are willing to contribute to the development of international cooperation. The LMTA departments submit their staff mobility plans for teaching (incoming and outgoing) to the International Relations Office by May 15 for the next academic year. After having approved the plans, the IRO is then responsible for coordinating, administrating, and monitoring the mobility process and collecting relevant information from the staff participating in the mobility. Communication with the partner institutions is maintained throughout all the stages of the mobility, i.e. before, during, and after the visit. Additional support – linguistic support, preparation of teaching materials, digitalisation of teaching/learning resources, and other teaching-related needs – is provided from the mobility organisation grant. Participation of staff in the mobility for teaching and training is recognised as professional development in compliance with The Regulations for Professional Development of the LMTA Staff. Since 2019, the most active teachers and departments have been motivated by receiving an award for the best internationalisation performance at a ceremony taking place at the meeting of Academic Board (Senate).

The Erasmus Policy Statement will be posted on the LMTA website in English <https://lmta.lt/en/english-international-relations/english-erasmus/> and Lithuanian <https://lmta.lt/lt/tarptautiniai-ryusiai/erasmus-plus/>

Erasmus activities are promoted for each target group through the following channels: during information sessions organised for the outgoing students at least twice a year and also during numerous individual meetings with the applicants. Each month, the LMTA website announces information about all incoming teachers and special events organised at the partner schools within Erasmus+ such as international weeks, concerts, and creative workshops. ERASMUS+ mobility participants are encouraged to share their experience on the social media LMTA ERASMUS+. KA2 projects and their outcomes are usually disseminated both on the project websites and the LMTA website. The project outcomes are also presented during information sessions at weekly meetings of the Rectorate and the sessions of the Academic Board (Senate) and disseminated during the annual meetings and congresses of international associations such as AEC, EDE, and others.

The principles of the Erasmus Charter and Erasmus Policy Statement will be communicated to all departments and each staff member at the LMTA. The document will be presented to the LMTA Board and the Student Union and published on the LMTA website. The LMTA International Relations Office will be responsible for monitoring the application of the EPS principles at all levels of the LMTA and reporting back to the Rector's Office during the annual report at least once per academic year.