SMK

SMK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES

**PROGRESS REPORT
ON THE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2011–2020**

PRIORITY 1. FLEXIBLE, COMPETENCE BASED, DIDACTICALLY AND TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED STUDIES

Social interaction is an essential element in learning.

Table 1 summarizes the data on achievement indicators and indicates reasons, for the failure to achieve the indicators.

Table 1.

	Indicator	Values of the assessed indicator		Notes
		Plan	Implementation	
1.	At least 90 per cent of study programmes are profitable every year according to the data on student admission and admission plan;	90 *per cent*	90 per cent	Based on the SMK admission results, every academic year admission to at least 90 per cent of study programmes is implemented and student groups are formed.
2.	At least 85 per cent of graduates are employed or have their own business in one year after graduation from studies;	85 *per cent*	75 per cent	Based on the data of EMIS (Education Management Information System), even 78 per cent of graduates, who graduated from studies in 2017-2021, are successfully employed. 71 per cent of students work under employment contracts and 7 per cent of graduates work independently. Graduates of the following SP demonstrate the highest employability numbers: Banking and Investment Management (92 per cent), Law (90 per cent), Programming and Multimedia (85 per cent), Computer Games and Animation (88 per cent), Wellness and Recreation Industries (89 per cent), Catering Business (80 per cent), International Trade and Customs Logistics (84 per cent). The majority of graduates who work independently are former students of Video Creation and Media (67 per cent), Aesthetic Cosmetology (25 per cent), Wellness and Recreation Industries (21 per cent), Computer Games and Animation (13 per cent) SP.
3.	At least 40 per cent of students choose flexible study modes and mixed ways of learning, individualized learning, coordinate work and studies.	40 *per cent*	40 per cent	Approximately 40 per cent of entrants choose to study in the mode of session studies. Session studies are organized in sessions in a hybrid way. These students can attend lectures both in the SMK or from home. The schedule of session studies enable students to combine studies with professional or personal activity.
4.	The average assessment of student satisfaction with study quality is at least 4.5 in a five-point assessment scale.	4.5 point	4.5	The general study satisfaction of students is 4.5 points out of 5. The systemized information about student study satisfaction is presented in the reports of student surveys of in every study programme.

Long-term goals and measures:

1. To form the supply of study programmes, taking into account the trends in economic and social development of the region, country and Europe, the needs of the society and labour market.

Measures:

A successful analysis of the trends of the regional, country and Europe economy development and carrying out research of professional demand in order to identify the needs of study programmes in the relevant areas of business development.

In order to identify the demands for new study programmes in the relevant areas of business development, their compliance with the needs of the society and the labour market, the SMK systematically carries out research on professional demand. The research analyze international and national strategic documents, legal acts, that regulate professional field, analysis of macroeconomic and labour market statistical indicators is carried out, the opinion of experts, employers and social partners of the qualitative and quantitative demand for specialists in the labour market is assessed during the evaluation of the country's development and the context of human welfare. The following research on professional demand were carried out in the analyzed

period: research on professional demand of *general practice nursing, physiotherapy, wellness and sport management, energy management, pedagogics, human resource management, organization and community management, acting and storytelling art, logistics.*

Maintaining relations with employer organizations, organizing employer surveys and round table discussions in order to determine the demand for the lacking specialists.

In order to ensure the quality of a study process and to constantly improve it, the SMK also carried out research on professional demand, organizes meetings, discussions, surveys, common projects with social stakeholders, actively reacts to feedback results, discussing them during meetings and publishing in the E-Learning system of the College. There are several stages in the surveys of and meetings with employers:

- *Once a year a survey on the opinion of social partners of the quality of internship of students is carried out, as well as on the assessment of final theses, based on the organization of final theses defence. Social partners are actively involved in opinion surveys, because they understand the importance of a prepared specialist for the labour market.*
- *social partners participate in the activity of SP committees, where they express their opinion of the quality of the implemented studies and its improvement;*
- *social partners participate in round table discussions concerning the implementation of the existing study programmes and the preparation of new ones;*
- *every year social partners participate in the research on professional demand concerning the compliance of the trained specialists with the needs of the labour market.*

Preparation of new unique study programmes in all study fields, taking into account the trends of economic and social development, global needs of the society and labour market.

During the analyzed period the SMK prepared several new unique study programmes: *Organization and Community Management, Acting and Art of Storytelling.*

Informing entrants of the offered study programmes and formation of the society opinion about the promising specialties, that offer great employment possibilities.

The order of admission is published in the SMK website *www.smk.lt, LAMA BPO website www.lamabpo.lt, informational publication "Kur stoti?"*, informational material published by the SMK. Information of the admission requirements for the implemented study programmes is also presented when participating in the exhibitions of Higher Education Studies, when attending Career Day events in the Lithuanian secondary, vocational schools and gymnasiums as well as participating in other presentational events of professions organized by different organizations and associations and etc.

2. To promote an open, student-oriented and learning outcome based model of holistic education, that develops a person's professional, conceptual and social competences.

Measures:

Creation and introduction of an authentic teaching methodology, based on the carried out research and educational experience, supported by synergic model, that integrates the principles of holistic and experimental.

The SMK applies methods of experiential teaching (approved in the meeting (22-05-2020 No.2) of the Academic Board of the SMK). On the basis of the methods, attention is paid to the education of students as young professionals. Lecturers, experts in their areas, help them solve real business challenges, enable them to experiment, make mistakes and learn from their own mistakes as well as to learn to think critically and cooperate with other members of the team.

Implementation of an integral model of developing professional competences and person's general abilities, personal characteristics and value attitudes when reorganizing the content and structure of study programmes.

Students in all study fields have possibilities to individualize their studies. Every academic year studetns can choose optional course units that they want to study and that best reflect their, as future specialists, professional expectations. Students are provided with a possibility to choose optional course units, aimed at developing interdisciplinary studies and general competencies. The foreseen volume of optional course units - **12 credits.** Every year, on the order of the Director, every study field implemented in the SMK has an approved list of Optional Course Units.

Development of social competences and responsibilities of students, involving them in the activities of consulting, mentoring, volunteering and seeking harmony learning outcomes.

The SMK emphasizes the value of volunteering, sees it as the basis for the formation of a sustainable and civically responsible society, for the acquisition of useful professional and general skills that are important when integrating and adapting to the changing working and business environment. Therefore lecturers themselves initiate and implement initiatives, that are beneficial for the society, integrate them in the study process, involving students, as well, e.g. every year, students of Creative and Entertainment Industries SP prepare a cultural event programme and visit "Caritas" Elderly Care Home. Among other social initiatives worth mentioning: annual solidarity event "Uždek žvakelę" ("Light a candle"), when students take care of abandoned graves and memory candles are lit; students initiated social event with the representatives of Order of Malta "Padovanok lėkštę sriubos vienišam senoliui" ("Give a plate of soup to a lonely old person"); organization of intercultural workshop of international students for pupils of "Smiltelė" orphanage in Klaipėda; marking the Global Animal Care Day 2019, the SMK students organized an event "Ištiesk leteną" ("Stretch out your paw") and invited to contribute to the improvement of the working conditions of organizations, that care for animals.

3. To create a modern teaching and learning environment, that ensure study quality and an open learning, based on synergy and cooperation.

Measures:
Development and maintenance of e-study system, usage of a virtual teaching (learning) platform and other technical tools and infrastructure of e-studies, development of e-learning tools and usage of open learning resources in order to improve student provision with learning resources.

Lecturers of the SMK actively use virtual learning environment "E-Learning", where students are provided with the learning material of a course unit, a clear and detailed information of studies, tasks of self-evaluation, interim tests and exams, assessment system of a course unit.

4. To introduce flexible study forms, methods, integral study models aiming at study availability, compliance with the expectations and possibilities of students.

Measures:
Increasing study availability through the application of a flexible and advanced technical and technological tools – virtualizing studies and providing them in a distant manner, providing persons with possibilities to choose study mode and ways in accordance with their needs and interests, forming an individual study profile and etc.

Studies in the SMK are individualized when students can choose a study schedule that is convenient for them: full-time or session. Lectures according to part-time study schedule are implemented during daytime, lectures usually start at 8:30 a.m. Studies for students on the schedule of session studies are organized in sessions in a hybrid manner. These students can attend lectures both in the SMK and from home. Session study schedule provides students with conditions to coordinate their studies with the professional or personal activity.

Introduction of the system of assessing and recognizing competencies acquired in an informal way and self-education, providing lifelong learning with favourable conditions.

When implementing study quality assurance policy, the SMK has clearly regulated and consistently implements recognition of qualifications, periods of study and previous informal as well as self-directed learning. E-Learning environment and smk.lt website publishes the orders of recognizing qualifications acquired abroad, periods of study and previous informal as well as self-directed learning.

During implementation of the Project "Creation and introduction of a system of assessing and recognizing competences acquired in an informal way" (VP1-2.1.-ŠMM-04-K-03-001) 3 methods of assessing competencies acquired in an informal way were prepared: "Transport and Logistics Business", "Finance Accounting", "Applied Programming and Multimedia".

Preparation to organize studies for students with special needs.

The SMK pays a special attention to students, whose results are very good and excellent, who have special needs of learning and self-realization. Students who want to be actively involved in a scientific applied activity, get additional consultations of lecturers. These students are involved in project activities, they are provided with conditions to realize themselves when developing projects and participating in them, e.g., *R. Lukošiūtė, a final year student of Aesthetic Cosmetology, carried out a research "Effect of Makeup Cosmetics on the Condition of Problematic Facial Skin in the period of Adolescence" in Gargždai Vaivorykštė Gymnasium; D. Gedvilaitė, a student of International Trade and Customs Logistics Programme carried out research on the relationship between organizing teamwork and motivation in logistics companies of Klaipėda Region; D. Jovaišaitė, a student of International Business and Communication programme, carried out a research on the order "Linveka", JSC – "Efficiency of Organizing Teamwork".*

The SMK provides students with special abilities, with the conditions to fully participate in the study process and activities of the community. Every branch of the SMK has elevators, special surfaces of stairs, sanitary units, if necessary lifts and other means are used. The disabled students, or those who have a temporary health disorder, can individualize their studies. The SMK administration and lecturers try to adapt the study environment and study material to the individual needs of the students. During the analyzed period, the SMK had 247 physically disabled students.

5. To aim at the conformity of the study content and structure to the foreseen learning outcomes, responding to the relevant trends in the global progress of science and technologies, socio-economic changes and legal acts, that regulate higher education.

Measures:

Updating the content and structure of study programmes aiming at harmony and conformity to the provisions of the European Higher Education Area, as well as strategic provisions of the Lithuanian education and higher education quality assurance.

The content and structure of study programmes in all study fields is updated taking into account the changes and needs in the labour market. The aims of study programmes implemented in study fields, their learning outcomes, content of the study programmes, structure also comply with the aims of the Bologna Process when creating the European Higher Education Area, the documents and recommendations of the European Union higher education development and legal documents of the Republic of Lithuania, that regulate academic and professional requirements for a business creation specialist:

1. Law on the amendment on the Law No.XI-242 on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania. 29 June 2016 No. XII-2534.

2. Decision of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania "On the Approval of the Descriptor of Lithuanian Qualifications Framework". 4 May 2010 No. 535.

3. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania "On the list of study fields and field groups, that are used for studies in higher education institutions, the order of its modification, approval of the principles of forming set of qualifications and making study programme titles". 1 December 2016 No. V-1075.

4. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania "On the approval of the descriptor of study cycles". 16 November 2016 No. V-1012.

5. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania "On the approval of the descriptor of general requirements for study implementation". 30 December 2016 No. V-1168.

6. Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). 2015.

7. Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council 2006/962/EB "On the general abilities of lifelong learning". 2006.

8. Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council 2008/C 111/01/EB "On the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning ". 2008.

9. ECTS User Guide. The European Commission Publication "ECTS User Guide", 2009. Translated by the national Bologna expert Raimonda Markevičienė.

10. Study Regulation of the Public Institutions SMK University of Applied Social Sciences, approved by the Director. V(20)-0071, 26-10-2020.

A constant update of the content of study programmes and the foreseen to be achieved learning outcomes, taking into account the trends in the progress of science and technologies, socio-economic changes, needs of the society and social stakeholders.

In order to justify the compliance of the study aims and learning outcomes of study programmes in study fields with the needs of the society and the labour market, the SMK periodically carries out research on professional demand. The research analyze international and national strategic documents, legal acts, carry out analysis of macroeconomic statistical indicators and those of labour market, assess the opinion of experts, employers and social partners on the qualitative and quantitative demand for specialists in the labour market, during the assessment of the context of country's development and human welfare.

6. Introduce the overall system of assessing student achievements, based on criteria and oriented towards learning outcomes, that would ensure the culture of assessment quality and promote the progress of students and aim at lifelong learning.

Measures:
Preparation of assessment strategies, that foresee innovative models and methods for the assessment of the achieved learning outcomes and that enable to develop student abilities to apply the available knowledge and to act creatively in the real professional life.

The implementation of study programmes in the study fields follows ***The Order of Assessing Learning Outcomes in the SMK,*** that foresees the application of cumulative assessment system. Following the principles of consistency and systematicity, the course unit programmes foresee interim tests, that assess certain learning outcomes of a course unit. Taking into account the complexity of a learning outcome, the weight of every interim test for the final grade is determined. The methods and measures of assessing achievements, the content criteria and level of complexity of certain assessment tasks depend on the complexity of the checked learning outcome. Studies of every course unit end with an exam. Students also demonstrate the achieved learning outcomes of a study programme when defending fina l thesis.

Implementation of a constant monitoring of assessment system, in order to ensure the clarity, objectivity of the applied assessment system and to foresee the actions of improvement.

- The Descriptor of the Order of Assessing Learning Outcomes sets the principles and criteria of assessing learning outcomes of course units, the order of implementing and assessing exams and other academic tests in the SMK.
- to assess the learning outcomes of course units, the SMK applies cumulative assessment, which is carried out during the entire semester and exam session. During the application of cumulative assessment, learning outcomes are assessed by interim tests and the final grade sums the grades of interim tests and exams.
- assessment criteria are given course unit programmes and detailed in the assessment system of a course unit prepared by a lecturer.
- to assess knowledge, comprehension and abilities, the SMK applies criteria system of assessing achievements, by using a ten-point scale, supporting every point by clear assessment criteria, related to the learning outcomes of a study programme and a course unit.

7. To mobilize and retain academic staff which is highly-skilled, constantly learning, receptive on innovations, able to create and transfer knowledge.

Measures:
Creation and constant development of programmes of improving didactic competence of lecturers.

Mobilization of academic staff, capable of applying the study methodology, based on the principles of authentic holistic and experimental education, created by the SMK, and its preparation for pedagogical activity.

The number of academic and non-academic staff in the SMK is determined by the raised strategic goals, the tasks and indicators planned for their achievement, social and economic trends in the country, the number of implemented SP, the change in the number of students, financial possibilities, changes in the structure and other factors.

Assessment of the first (2011) and the last (2020) years of the analyzed period shows that the total number of lecturers grew by 56 per cent. This was caused by a significant increase in the total number of students and SP (from 13 to 18), Kaunas Branch opened in 2018.

Developing international academic exchange of academic staff in accordance with different international programmes and cooperation initiatives, in order to take over and adapt experience of foreign countries, to act innovatively and creatively..

Staff mobility under Erasmus+ programme depends on the amount of the granted funding for higher education institutions. Though the grant for the international mobility of staff is used 100 per cent, the need, with the expanding supply of SP, the increasing number of lecturers and employees, is significantly higher compared to the received grant. Every year 15-20 employees, the majority of whom – academic staff, can use the possibilities of international mobility, taking into account the granted funding (Erasmus KA103, KA 107, KA171 programme, VB grant).

All in all, during the analyzed period, 99 international mobilities and 13 virtual mobilities were implemented, with the participation of both academic and non-academic staff. For the implementation of these mobilities, the grant for international mobility was used 100 per cent. 45 mobilities were implemented on the purposes of teaching, 54 mobilities – on the purposes of learning.

Lecturers actively participate not only in teaching, but also in learning mobilities in order to take over the good experience, to discuss cooperation possibilities, common initiatives in project, scientific-applied activity, to get acquainted with the material study base in partner institutions.

8. To involve social partners and other market participants in the creation of study content and implementation of study programmes, orientating towards the principles of social amity.

Measures:

Creation of a cooperation model and mechanisms, that involve social partners in the process of creating and improving study programmes.

Social partners of the SMK participate in: *the meetings of Study Programme Committee, round table discussions. Public defence of final theses. Surveys on the demand of specialists in the labour market. In the formulation of business challenges. When providing with the places of teaching and final internships of professional activity. In the events organized by the SMK, e.g., "Career Day" and etc. When organizing outgoing and public lectures.*

Preparation of student final theses on the orders of business companies, economies, other organizations, matched with the requirements of the SMK for the theses.

One of the possibilities to contribute to the impact on regions and the country is analysis of topics, relevant to certain regions, the country, when preparing student final, independent/project, ordered research. When organizing a FT preparation, presentation, defence and assessment, the SMK follows the Law on the Amendment of Law No. XI-242 on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania; Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania "On the approval of a descriptor of the general requirements for study implementation"; study field descriptors approved by SKVC, SMK Study Regulation (2020), the SMK Descriptor of the Order of Preparing, Defending and Storing Final Theses and other documents. The SMK Descriptor of the Order of Preparing, Defending and Storing Final Theses and methodological instructions on preparing final theses in separate SP regulate the practical applicability of FT, the current relevancies in the labour market, innovative trends, that ensure the relevance of FT for the development of the region and country.

9. To create innovative study products, using the possibilities of study internationality.

Measures:

Creation and implementation of joint, double degree, continuous study programmes in cooperation with international partners, participation in the implementation of intense studies and periods of study.

The number of study programmes implemented in English has grown from 1 to 5 programmes – International Business, Tourism and Recreation, Programming and Multimedia, joint degree study programmes "Technology and Innovation Management", "International Marketing and Branding".

Assurance of internationality of the implemented study programmes in the aspects of content, implementation and quality assurance.

All study programmes/study fields implemented in the SMK are evaluated positively by international foreign experts. Therefore there is study quality not only on a national, but also on an international level.

PRIORITY 2. VARIETY OF MODES, METHODS AND POSSIBILITIES OF LEARNING, THEIR HARMONY, AVAILABILITY AND CONTINUITY

The SMK 2011 – 2020 Integrated Development Strategy establishes the lifelong learning priority, promotes diversification of the SMK income, recognition of competencies acquired in an informal way, the supply of implementation of different lifelong learning activities to the society, active involvement of the SMK lecturers in the provision of lifelong learning services. Table 1 presents information of the indicators of 4 long-term "Lifelong learning" achievements foreseen in the Integrated Development Strategy (2011-2020) during the reporting period, i.e. 2011-2020:

Table 1. Long-term indicators of the achievements of lifelong learning priority

	Indicator	Values of the assessed indicator		Notes
		Plan	Implementation	

1.	Every year income from the provision of lifelong learning services must make at least 30 per cent of the income in the structure of the SMK	10-15 per cent.	The indicator was not achieved during the reporting period, because of the lack of sales competence of persons in charge. Therefore it is planned to collect a sales team that will implement the sales of the SMK lifelong learning services.	
2.	At least 80 per cent persons, whose competencies acquired in an informal way were assessed, became students of the SMK and acquired a qualification.	100 per cent	5 assessments of competencies acquired in an informal way were carried out during the reporting period. 100 per cnet of them continue studies in the SMK.	
3.	At least 30 per cent income from lifelong services are generated through the provision of services in a distant manner.	42 per cent	During the reporting period, 42 per cent of income from lifelong learning services were generated through the provision of services in a distant manner. This was caused by the SMK experience in managing digital tools, the available distant learning infrastructure, establishment of video studio in Vilnius Branch and requirements of the global epidemiological pandemic Covid-19d.	
4.	At least 60 per cent of the SMK lecturers participate in the provision of informal teaching services	49.5 per cent.	During the reporting period, 49.5 per cent of the SMK lecturers participated in the provision of informal teaching services. The indicator was partly achieved because of lecturers being very busy.	

The SMK, acting in the international market of education, aims at providing modern services of education, that respond to the business needs of the country and regions. Next to the studies of higher education, the SMK creates other learning possibilities for various target groups, e.g.: *teachers, youth, business representatives, representatives of public sector, the society.* Every year the SMK organizes thematic conferences, trainings and seminars, events of good practice dissemination and other forms of raising qualification. The total number of organized events and participants according to the group of Lifelong Learning Activities in the reporting period is given in Table 2. In order to create and develop the system of lifelong learning, that includes a spectrum of service provision for different age groups, the SMK implemented 650 lifelong learning activities during the reporting period.

Table 2. Lifelong learning activities in the SMK

Group of lifelong learning activities	Number of events	Number of participants
Trainings, seminars, consultations	375	15362
Conferences, forums	207	182648
Competitions	68	4053

The SMK experience in the provision of different education services for different target groups, a basis of competent lecturers, the available material basis and technological equipment (video lab, computer classes, nursing and aesthetic cosmetology labs) make favourable conditions to offer both contact and distant lifelong learning services. Namely these measures helped the SMK to quickly reorientate to the provision of lifelong learning services in a distant manner, when the restrictions related to the management of the COVID-19 pandemic occurred.

The SMK updates the topics of lifelong learning activities taking into account the needs of target groups, the changing trends and introduced new education technologies. This happens through the cooperation with target groups, i.e. social partners, state institutions. Lecturers-practitioners also help to identify the need as they see and assess the arising needs in the sector of the directly

represented market. Both the academic and administrative staff of the SMK participate in the activities of various working groups, committees, are members of associated structures. Namely this participation of staff in the activity of social groups helps identify and monitor the need for lifelong learning tools developing in the market.

For example, cooperation with UAB "Muita" and Customs Practitioners Association started with the need to prepare an online course to acquire a Customs Intermediary qualification. In 2020, in cooperation with the SMK, UAB "Muita", Customs Practitioners Association, "CC Learning", UAB and Vytautas Magnus University, was prepared and approved in the Customs Teaching Centre " The Order persons, wishing to provide customs representation services in the territory of the Republic of Lithuania".

The activities of Culture Pass programme and summer camps are implemented for the target audience of pupils. The SMK International Relations Department, in cooperation with a non-governmental organization Caritas has offered the Lithuanian language courses to the residents of the third countries since 2019. During the period, 112 persons from 7 countries (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, China, Egypt, India, Nigeria) acquired the basics of the Lithuanian language.

Until 2020, qualification raising events for teachers were organized through project funding. In 2017 a programme of informal education of adults and continuous learning was implemented with the participation of 120 teachers from the institutions of Klaipėda city pre-school, general education and vocational education. After attracting the funding of Klaipėda City Municipality in 2019, the project "Creativity lab" was implemented, which was aimed at providing the adult residents of Klaipėda city with the knowledge of creative thinking, writing (Storytelling), public communication, the art of presentation and body reading and at giving practical examples of how the knowledge and skills can be useful in the personal and professional activity of the participants. 2019 also saw the implementation of the project "My Successful Interdisciplinary Project", when during conference pupils and their teachers had a possibility to present interdisciplinary projects, implemented at schools. Since AY 2020/2021, the initiatives for pre-school, general education and vocational training teachers, were combined under the movement of changes in education Eduaction.

During the reporting period, the SMK, based on the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania and the Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania "On the approval of the strategy of ensuring lifelong learning", provides persons with different needs and abilities with the conditions to acquire, improve and change qualification and competences, that help them establish themselves in the labour market, that guarantee the progress, competitiveness and sustainable development of a country's economy. In cooperation with Klaipėda City Municipality Administration and implementing the aim of the 2016-2022 local development strategy of the local activity group of the integrated investment territory of Klaipėda city – to encourage the residents be entrepreneurial and active in the labour market and in the life of the community, the task – to motivate the inactive population of working age to acquire professional qualification, to requalify and join the labour market, in 2019-2020 the SMK implemented the Project "Beauty Embassy". Action 1.2.1 of the Strategy was carried out during the project – provision of the services of informal vocational education and integration in the labour market for persons, inactive in the labour market in order to prepare specialists of demandable professions and to make assumptions for the creation of workplaces. The project activities are aimed at promoting entrepreneurship of economically inactive Klaipėda city residents and acquiring competencies of the professions demandable in the market. During the project 62 participants got 194 hours training courses, were encouraged to create themselves workplaces and to make the acquired modern theoretical and practical knowledge competitive in the market. During the project implementation, business start-up consultations were given in the areas of marketing, finance management, business plan preparation and implementation, sales management.

Every year the SMK aims at involving Alumni in lifelong learning activities. They are invited to make reports in conferences organized by the SMK, to participate in the activity of the commission

of different competitions, to give open and invited lectures for the students of the SMK. The SMK Alumni also become clients, who, in cooperation with the SMK, initiate public initiatives, such as: equal rights forum "Free, but equal?", which was organized on the initiative of the SMK Alumni together with the SMK in 2020. The forum was watched by more than 59000 members of the society (more information: https://www.delfi.lt/video/transliacijos/anonsai/diskusija-laisvi-bet-ar-lygus.d?id=85804711)

When implementing the policy of ensuring study quality, the SMK has clearly regulated and consistently implements the recognition of qualifications, periods of study and previous informal as well as self-directed learning. The E-learning environment and the website smk.lt publish the orders of recognizing qualifications acquired abroad, periods of study and previous informal as well as self-directed learning. Three methodologies of assessing competences acquired in an informal way were prepared during the implementation of the Project "Creation and introduction of the system of assessing and recognizing competences acquired in an informal way" (VP1-2.1.-ŠMM-04-K-03-001): "Transport and Logistics Business", "Finance Accounting", "Applied Programming and Multimedia".

Recognition of qualifications acquired abroad and periods of study in the SMK is implemented following the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania, the 24 April 2017 Order No. V-277 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania "on the recognition of competencies acquired as a formal education for persons, who wish to continue studies in a higher education institution, as a descriptor of the order of a part of SP". The entrants are consulted on the procedures of academic recognition of secondary education acquired abroad, by the staff of the International Relations Department, who implement admission of foreigners to studies. Currently the SMK has no right to recognize foreign qualifications, therefore consultations are used to help entrants to deal with the necessary documents in the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. Observing the increasing number of persons, who acquired qualifications abroad, we see the need to gain the right to implement academic recognition of foreign qualifications, therefore the AY 2021-2022 plan foresees the analysis of possibilities of gaining the right to carry out academic recognition of education and qualifications, related to higher education and acquired according to education programmes of foreign countries and international organizations, and to carry out the related preparatory works (to train the staff for the assessment and academic recognition of foreign qualifications, to cumulate the necessary information sources for the recognition of foreign qualification, to prepare the system of assuring decision-making quality and etc).

Assessment of learning achievements acquired in an informal and a self-directed way is implemented in the SMK based on Clause 4 of Article 17 of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania (Žin., 1991, No. 23-593, 2003, No. 63-2853; 2004, No. 103-3755) and 24 April 2017 Order No. V-289 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania On the approval of the general principles of assessment and recognition in a higher education institution of competences acquired in an informal and self-directed way and related to higher education[1]. Heads of certain SP are responsible for the coordination of the process. During the analyzed period, 5 persons used the approved order of assessing and recognizing competencies acquired in an informal and self-directed way and continued studies in the SMK.

In order to develop the provision of lifelong learning services using modern information technologies and methods of mixed learning, open distant learning courses (MOOCa) were created during the reporting period – Introductory Course to Civil Servants, Management of Crisis Situations at Work with the Families of Social Risk Groups, Occupational Burnout Prevention (in social work). More information: http://kursai.mvc.lt/ .

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[1] 24 April 2017 Order No.V-289 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania On the On the approval of the general principles of assessment and recognition in a higher education institution of competences acquired in an informal and self-directed way and related to higher education. Online access: https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/7f369150292911e79f4996496b137f39?jfwid=-fa58h42s9

During the reporting period the SMK provided access to use online information sources, such as: International databases: Science Direct, EBSCO Publishing, EBSCO ebook Academic Collection, Taylor & Francis, SpringerLink, Emerald Management eJournals. Lithuanian databases and e-book collections: Legal database "Infolex court practice"; KTU e-books; VGTU e-books.

The lifelong learning events organized by the SMK are implemented both in the premises of the institutions and in customer workplaces, or (or if it necessary) in the city spaces, e.g.: conference centres, movie theaters, arenas. Since the announcement of state of emergency caused by the spread of Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, all the activities were moved to a distance. The following national conferences and seminars can be mentioned as examples of organizing distant lifelong learning activities: Video seminars "Eko'logika", online forum "Free, but Equal?". Online event links:

https://www.delfi.lt/video/transliacijos/anonsai/diskusija-laisvi-bet-ar-lygus.d?id=8580471
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujIpaL5OScU&t=59s
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2TzT7CqpK54&t=56s
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePTCkyK_y5g&t=2s

More than 60000 participants took part in these events.

During the reporting period the SMK aimed at creating and introducing an efficient system of career monitoring. The main sources of the data on graduate employment are the career management information system of the Consortium of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions (www.karjera.lt) and Education Management Information System (ŠVIS). The module of graduate career monitoring in the platform www.karjera.lt is aimed for collecting, analyzing and presenting objective data on the graduate employment rate, the positions occupied, amount of salary and subjective satisfaction with studies, work, career. Objective data of Student Register and the State Social Insurance Fund Board under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour are used to monitor the graduate career. Data on the employment of the graduates of the higher education institution are collected 5 years after graduation from studies. Education Management Information System (ŠVIS) collects data on the demographic, social and employment states of the country's residents, relating them to the acquired education. The SMK uses this statistical information to analyze the transfer of graduates to the labour market, to assess the correlation between the acquired education and position occupied, modelling the needs and trends of the labour market. The SMK itself organizes graduate survey 6 months and 3 years after graduation from studies. This survey helps monitor the position of graduates in the labour market, to improve study quality.

Since 2015 the SMK has joined the Career Management Information System (KVIS) of students and graduates of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions. The system aims at providing information, tools and services, necessary for personal career management, that would improve young people employment level and their career satisfaction. Currently the KVIS system has registered more than 2000 SMK students and graduates. The University students are taught a course unit Personal Management and Career, and students get a comprehensive and timely set of career management and consultation services.

In 2012 the SMK established an association SMK Alumni Club (the Incorporation Agreement signed 02-05-2012). Its membership provides the SMK graduates with possibilities to participate in the trainings of Mutual Learning and Self-Education Programme organized by the SMK (e.g., "Foster kindness, learn from volunteering", "Introduction of a new brand", "A possibility to be beneficial to one's country"; "Successful speech for a successful presentation"; Association Youth Debate project#YourWordSummer debate "Democracy today" and etc.), share experience, professional knowledge and insights, to participate in the projects implemented by the SMK and the community events (e.g., Discussions "How to tell one's life story", "How to inspire oneself and others" and etc.), to expand the network of contacts.

The SMK has developed a brand "HeyReady". This brand joins students, alumni and business companies. One of the priority initiatives of "HeyReady" – to foster the SMK Alumni community and develop relationships with them, Alumni contact basis is constantly supplemented. "HeyReady"

is a dynamic a future-concentrated brand of the SMK Career Centre and provides all the important information related to the SMK study and career perspectives. It is a brand that defines the services of the SMK to prepare students for career and creates a career bridge that connects the SMK students and graduates with the business community, state institutions and organizations.

PRIORITY 3. INTEGRATION OF STUDIES, RESEARCH AND BUSINESS, DEVELOPING THE RELEVANT FIELDS OF RESEARCH AND TURNING SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE INTO INNOVATIONS

Long-term goals and measures are foreseen when implementing priority 3 of the integrated development. To determine the level of the priority achievement, the main indicators of long-term achievements have been foreseen, the implementation of which is analyzed in the subsection (Table X):

No.	Priority 3 indicators	Implementation of the indicator
1.	Foreseeing the fields of scientific applied research	Foreseen and approved 5 fields of scientific applied research in the SMK
2.	The research carried out by the SMK lecturers are published in international publications	The indicator achieved by promoting lecturers to publish in the publications of international conferences, other scientific publications, referred in the EBSCO publishing database and etc. The order of payment for scientific activity has been updated.
3.	The research carried out by the SMK lecturers in *Thompson Reuters* database	The indicator has been implemented in a lower volume – 1 publication announced.
4.	The SMK lecturers carry out research with foreign scientists	The indicator implemented in a lower volume: · 1 publication announced with scientists from Azerbaijan, · participation in the preparation of 2 international collective monographs.
5.	The SMK lecturers participate in the implementation of projects and carrying out ordered research	The indicator achieved by promoting lecturers: · to participate in project activity, when common research with foreign scientists were carried out, methodological tools were prepared; · to carry out the ordered scientific applied research for companies and other social partners.

In order to achieve the strategic objectives, SMK anticipates the importance of approving new SMK priority research areas, taking into account national priorities and priorities of the European Research Area. To distinguish SMK research areas, international and national documents were analysed, which enabled to plan SMK direction and created opportunities for the development of applied research activities.

During the analysis of documents of national importance, the importance of societal development is observed, with particular emphasis on public safety, sustainable activities, health, and the assurance of the engagement of society. In the competitive priority research programme **"Society of Prosperity"**, approved by Order No. V-340 of the Chairman of the Research Council of Lithuania of 17 June 2019, the targets and measures for the implementation of the programme are established. SMK contributes to the implementation of the programme through its applied research activities in the context of Target 1: **to justify with scientific research the development of a safe, sustainable, healthy and inclusive society in Lithuania** by analysing the social structure (stratification), values, attitudes and behavioural changes, emigration and re-emigration factors, social inequality and social exclusion, health, social, economic and other factors affecting the quality of life. The research topics at SMK are linked to the measures established in this programme:

"[...] 23.1. studies on *the social and psychological quality of life* of various social groups, main mental health issues (aggression, violence, suicide, alcohol consumption, etc.), *the choice of a healthy lifestyle, sustainable behaviour, sustainable development of the health system, and the use of modern technologies to engage society in the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and the prevention of disease*s;

23.2. *Studies* on changes in the Lithuanian social structure (stratification), *values, attitudes and behaviour*, social, national and religious identity, population attitudes towards social justice and redistributive equality, development of democracy and civil society, and the health and safety of the population;

23.3. *studies* on demographic changes, migration, *changes in social and economic structure, social investments, social, economic, cultural*, health, *educational and scientific factors* and inequalities and the possibilities of reducing them *in the context of globalisation and the instability of economic development*;

23.4. *studies on societal inequalities, social and regional development inequality*, rural-urban disparities, social justice, the structure and development of employment rate and labour market of the country's population, the possibilities of *increasing motivation for work* and reducing unemployment, quality employment, *social and cultural inclusion, social cohesion, the new prosperity needs, and equal opportunities.* [...]".

(https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/e3db44a2caff11e9a56df936f065a619).

At SMK, analyses on social inclusion, and social exclusion of women who have experienced violence are conducted, the concept of social inclusion innovation is substantiated, and applied research in health and other fields is conducted. The following research results can be noted, which were generated by the teachers working/having worked at SMK:

Foreseeing the fields of scientific applied research

1. 2010, Socialinės technologijos'10: iššūkiai, galimybės, sprendimai = Social technologies'10: challenges, opportunities, solutions. Research of Social Attitudes Toward Innovations, Life Quality and Financial Situation: Application of Path Analysis (Ignas Dzemyda). Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania.

2. 28-04-2011. Институт развития образования Калининградской области, I международная научно-практическая конференция „Проблемы формирования экономического мышления и предпринимательской культуры молодежи. Pranešimo tema: „Влияние формирования общества знаний на развитие предпринимательской культуры молодежи (Dementjeva J.).

3. Ordered applied research carried out in 2011: The Peculiarities of Concluding, Implementing and Terminating Separate Types of Labour Contracts (R. Kvietkovskis, S. Tarasevič), Influence of Organization Environment on the Activity of Freight Forwarding Company "MDI Transport", JSC (Šateikienė D., Skarbaliūtė O.), Analysis of the Activity of Cargo Transportation by Car in "MS", JSC (Šateikienė D., Beržonskienė J.).

4. Moksloturas (2014); Conference "3eS European Future Vision: Safe, Balanced, Smart" (2014); Scientific-practical conference "The Role of Media in the Creation of Responsible Society" (2013); Scientific-Practical Conference "Economic and Social Transformations in the Era of Smart Technologies" (2013); Scientific-Practical Conference "Management. Economics. Society. Changes and a Country's Sustainable Development" (2011);

5. Scientific publication "Applied Research – for the Change of Society No. 6" (2011).

6. 2017-07.3-5 m. Edulearn17- 9th International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies (Spain, Barcelona). Presentation: Education for battered women at support institutions: empowerment or disempowerment? Valencia, Spain (Gelbūdienė E.);

7. 2017 Satisfaction of Sports Centre Clients with Wellness Services to Meet Their Gender-Related Needs (Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė I.) – publication in EBSCO, Science and Educational Processes;

8. 2017 Changes in Eating Habits when Engaged in Sport (Jonušys M.; Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė I.) – publication in EBSCO. Science and Educational Processes;

9. 2017 Changing Clients' Behaviour to Enhance Their Wellness Awareness. (Karalienė E.; Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė I.) – publication in Ebsco. Science and Educational Processes;

10. 2018.04.12-13 International Conference on Gender Research ICGR 2018. Presentation: The Experience of Battered Women at Intervention Centers", Porto, Portugal (Gelbūdienė E.);

11. 2018.10.12 conference of the 2nd Lithuanian Scientific Research Association (LERA). Report: Experiences of Battered Women Who Have Experienced Domestic Violence in Specialised Support Centres, (Gelbūdienė E.);

12. 2018.11.30 Republican Scientific and Practical Conference "The Social Exclusion Paradigm: Challenges and Opportunities of Marginalisation. Report: Educational Empowerment of Battered Women Who Have Experienced Domestic Violence at SSC: Results of a Study. This event included training for Battered Women. (Gelbūdienė E.);

13. 2019 The Impact of Risk Factors on the Health of a Cosmetologist. (*Stankevič, J., Gierasimovič, Z.*) publication in the journal Slauga (Eng. Nursing). Research and Practice

14. 2019.05.24-25. International Scientific Conference SOCIETY. INTEGRATION. EDUCATION (SIE 2019). Presentation: Educational Empowerment of Battered Women: What Knowledge do They Really Need?" (Latvia, Rēzekne) (Gelbūdienė E.);

15. 2019 m. Educational empowerment or secondary victimization of battered women at support institutions: approach of specialists // London international conference on education (LICE-2017), in collaboration with World Congress on special needs education (WCSNE-2017), Uk, London (Gelbūdienė E.)

16. 2019 The Effect of Massage Techniques on the Moisture Level of Dehydrated Skin. (Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė I.; Vilčiauskaitė, I.) – publication Ebsco, Science and Educational Processes.

17. 2020 Effects of Fruit Acids on Mature Facial Skin. (*Karčiauskaitė A. M., Juškutė D., Pagojūtė G*., Gierasimovič Z.) - publication in Slauga. Research and Practice,

18. 2020-10-09. conference of the 4th Lithuanian Scientific Research Association (LERA). Report: "The Community of a Specialised Support Centre as a Lifelong Learning Environment" (Gelbūdienė E.).

19. 2020 Theoretical Overview of the Advantages of the Use of Selected Natural Active Ingredients in Cosmetics. (Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė, I.) – in Ebsco, Science and Educational Processes.

In order to enhance the SMK engagement in applied research activities in the field of social and societal development, SMK teachers conducted the following training:

1. Non-formal educational training for economically inactive persons "Beauty Embassy" (2020);

2. Training "If I could do it, you can do it", "Social Network Posts: How to Get Noticed?" (2020);

3. "Culture Passport" workshops for youth (2019);

4. Youth Festival "Vibelift" – training for teachers (2019).

Contributing to the implementation of societal development activities, SMK organised a commissioned virtual event in 2020 – the Forum "Free but are we Equal?" via a national online broadcaster. The event brought together more than 59,472 members of the public. During the event, three discussions on different topics with newly elected politicians, youth representatives and prominent public figures were conducted:

1. A discussion regarding youth – "Does Young Means inexperienced?";

2. A discussion on LGBT+ – "Is there and will there be no prince and prince in Lithuania?";

3. A discussion on the integration of foreigners – "Does Lithuania dislike foreigners?".

More information is provided at: https://www.delfi.lt/video/transliacijos/anonsai/diskusija-laisvi-bet-ar-lygus.d?id=85804711

Moreover, SMK has been engaged in active applied experimental research development activities during the strategic period. The following can be noted as important results of these activities:

1. Applied research carried out in 2020: "RESEARCH OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S OPPORTUNITIES AND ENGAGEMENT IN KLAIPĖDA CITY"; SMEs HRM Attraction, Retention and Performance Enhancement Network, a study on a facial scrub...

2. Commissioned research carried out in 2019: a research study "Synergy of Human Microelements with Well-Being" – UAB "Nivela", "Human-Computer-Environment Interaction Technologies in the Creation of Smart Cities" – UAB "Inovaciniai projektai";

3. Commissioned applied research carried out in 2018: a research study "A Study on Public Awareness of Improving the Quality of Environmental Air" (*Ruginis*, T.) – commissioned by the Klaipėda City Municipality; Evaluation of the Dissemination of Ethnic Culture via Regional (Local) Television: A Case Study of the Association of Regional Television (*Bylaitė-Žakaitienė*, *A*., Kulakauskienė, D.) – the Council for the Protection of Ethnic Culture under the Ministry of the Republic of Lithuania;

4. Commissioned applied research conducted in 2017: 21st c. education: Wants, Needs and Supply (*Savickienė*, I.) – Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania; and other published research – Energy Distribution Planning Models Taxonomy and Methods of Distributed Generation Systems (Stanelyte D., Gudzius S., *Andriusiene L.*)

SMK as a higher education institution also contributes to the implementation of the provisions of the Lithuanian Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030" (https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.425517). The following key areas for changes to be implemented are outlined in the strategy: smart society, smart economy and smart governance. SMK, contributing to a smart economy, smart society and smart governance, initiates and participates in applied research experimental activities.

1. *Research:* "Youth scientific conference "My Successful Interdisciplinary Project (2019);

2. *Training:* Workshops, eco-training "Eko'logika" (2020); "The Breakthrough of Change: How to Accept and Survive it?" (2020); "Professional Burnout and Mental Health Hygiene; Emotional Intelligence Training" (2020); "Conflict Management" (2020); "Increasing Sales through Social Networks" (2020); Adult Non-Formal Education Programme "Creativity Lab" (2019); Training – Creativity Lab for Youth (2019); "Search Engine Optimisation SEO" (2019);

3. *Events:* International Fashion Conference "10X in Fashion Business Sales" (2019); Science Forum "Artificial Intelligence: Challenges, Experiences and Insights" (2019); Forum "Beauty Innovation Forum" (2019);

4. *Publications*: Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė, I. D., Julie, D., Maršíková K. et al. (2019). Good Practice Handbook for Human Resources Management in Regional SMEs.

Through its research activities, SMK aims to be aligned with international trends outlined in various documents. The European Research Area (ERA) aims to create a common borderless area for scientific research, innovation and technology across the EU. A document prepared by the European Commission "A Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe" enshrines the values and principles of scientific research and innovation focusing on such values as the ethics and continuity of scientific research and innovation, freedom of scientific research, gender equality and equal opportunities for all. The main principles enshrined are as follows:

1. *Work better* by focusing on the free movement of researchers, and staff, movement of knowledge and technology, the pursuit of excellence, value creation and societal and economic impact;

2. *Work together* (in partnership) by focusing on coordination, coherence and commitment of activities conducted, as well as participating in information publication activities and engaging interested parties and stressing societal responsibility.

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/research_and_innovation/strategy_on_research_and_innovation/documents/ec_rtd_era-pact-factsheet.pdf

Joint Programming Initiatives are developed in a structured and strategic process where EU countries agree on a voluntary basis on common visions and Strategic Research Agendas (SRA) to address major societal challenges. The Joint Programming process was launched by a Communication of the Commission in July 2008.

Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs) are needed and even though European national research programmes are among the best in the world, they cannot tackle some of today's major societal challenges alone (https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/joint-programming-initiatives).

These challenges include: addressing climate change, ensuring energy and food supply, and the healthy ageing of citizens. In 2020 SMK joins these programming initiatives by setting scientific research areas to have its own input in dealing with these challenges and coming up with certain results of scientific activities and projects. The main areas of scientific research in SMK are: *Digital Communication Ecosystem; Management of Cultural and Creative Industries; Health Technologies and Management; Sustainable Development and Technologies; Knowledge Management and Educational Technologies*.

The joint programming process aims to pool national research efforts in order to make better use of Europe's research and development resources and tackle common European challenges more effectively.

The following Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs) have been launched to date (https://www.consilium.europa.eu/lt/council-eu/preparatory-bodies/european-research-area-innovation-committee/#):

- A Healthy Diet for a Healthy Life (https://www.healthydietforhealthylife.eu/index.php) – *Health Technologies and Management at SMK*

- Cultural Heritage and Global Change: A New Challenge for Europe – *Management of Cultural and Creative Industries at SMK*

- Connecting Climate Knowledge for Europe (http://www.jpi-climate.eu/home) – *Sustainable Development and Technologies at SMK*

- Urban Europe – Global Urban Challenges (https://jpi-urbaneurope.eu/) – *Sustainable Development and Technologies at SMK*

In order to get aligned with the joint programming initiatives, SMK researchers conducted scientific research in the field of quality assurance in higher education ***in collaboration with researchers from other countries*** (Azerbaijan) in 2019. The scientific research was conducted to identify key European standards for quality assurance in higher education in Azerbaijani universities. The data of the research conducted was published in the proceedings of an international conference "Internationalization of higher education in Azerbaijan and ways of increasing its competitiveness".

(Juknytė-Petreikienė, I., Dafoulas, G. A., Bayramova, G. (2019). Challenges To Implement European Quality Assurance Standards (ESG) In Azerbaijan Universities. *Materials of the international scientific-practical conference*, Baku, May 2-3, 2019. "Internationalization of higher education in Azerbaijan and ways of increasing its competitiveness". P. 69-76. http://bbu.edu.az/uploads/files/Konfrans/konfrans2019.pdf).

In cooperation with foreign scholars, SMK scholars participated in the preparation of collective monographs. The preparation of a collective monograph "*Development And Transformation Processes In The Tourism Industry Under The Conditions Of Globalization*" in 2019 brought together scholars *from not only Lithuanian higher education institutions* (SMK, Klaipėda State University of Applied Sciences, Mykolas Romeris University) *but also 9 foreign institution* – University of Strathclyde (Great Britain), University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Sciences and Technology of Tîrgu Mureș (Romania), Ventspils University College, Centre for Entrepreneurship Innovation and Regional Development (Latvia), ISMA University, (Latvia), Technical University of Ostrava (Czech Republic), University of Liepaja (Latvia), Tallinn University (Estonia), J. Selye University, Komárno (Slovakia), University Of Benin, Benin City (Nigeria), University of Iceland (Iceland), Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University (Ukraine).

Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė I. (2019). Human Resource Management Context in Wellness and Recreation Organizations. *Development and Transformation Processes in The Tourism Industry Under the Conditions of Globalization* (Collective monograph, ed. R. Kinderis). p. 151-164.

The preparation of a collective monograph "*Business Management Insights And Society Transformation Process*" in 2020 brought together scholars *from not only Lithuanian higher education institutions* (SMK, Klaipėda State University of Applied Sciences, Mykolas Romeris University) *but also 10 foreign institutions* – the International University of Tourism in Samarkand (Uzbekistan), Narxoz University (Kazakhstan), Tashkent State University of Economics (Uzbekistan), Lomza State University of Applied Sciences (Poland), University "Dunarea de Jos" Galati (Romania), Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani University (Georgia), Yanka Kupala University of Grodno (Belarus), Karlovac University of Applied Sciences (Croatia), University of Benin (Nigeria), Voronezh State Technical University (Russia), Central University of Technology (Free State Republic of South Africa), Halmstad University (Sweden).

Iždonaitė-Medžiūnienė I. (2020). Practical Connections Between Employee Qualification Development and Job Satisfaction in Hotels Context. *Business Management Insights and Society Transformation Process* (Collective monograph, ed. R. Kinderis). p. 123-133.

An international collaboration between scholars has also taken place in various projects. *For example,* the SHARPEN project was carried out in 2016 – an intensive 3 years of work included: the **creation of an e-Handbook for SMEs** as well as carrying out **a survey and research** to provide a unique comparable international set of data **on specifics of HR processes in SMEs** in project partner´ countries to help understand this environment and develop tools to help SMEs attract prospective employees. The research and other project outcomes were carried out by a group of international scientists from Kajaani University of Applied Sciences (KAMK) Finland, Technical University Liberec (TUL) Czech Republic, Zwickau Westachsische-Hochschule (ZUAS) Germany, The University of Huddersfield (UoH) the United Kingdom and SMK University of Applied Social Sciences (SMK) Lithuania.

The project aimed to increase and develop youth workers' competencies in Career Guidance/education services for underprivileged youths in Sub-Saharan Africa regions. Project objectives have been achieved:

- Capacity building of 21 youth workers, youth organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa in the field of career guidance/education (CGE) and increased quality of work in the mentioned field in participating countries through developed CGE methodologies and tools;

- 3 Career Centres in Partner countries established for quality CGE services for underprivileged youth;

- Methodologies and tools on CGE among participating organizations have been transferred and exchanged;

- Active participation and non-formal learning within the EU and Africa during 45 career guidance/education sessions for local youth have been promoted.

Moreover, through joint research with scholars from other Lithuanian institutions, teachers from Klaipėda State University of Applied Sciences and Kaunas University of Technology have prepared for publications refereed in **"Thomson Reuters" databases**.

Stanelytė, D. Gudžius, S., Andriušienė, L. (2016). Energy Distribution Planning Models Taxonomy and Methods of Distributed Generation Systems, *Energy Procedia, 107*, 275-283. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.egypro.2016.12.150

The numbers of publications prepared by SMK are provided in Table X:

Type of scientific publication	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	In total
Add after a revision Publications in refereed publications in international databases	-	-	1	1	2	4
Publications in other publications refereed in "Thomson Reuters" databases	1	-	-	-	-	1
Scientific monographs, research studies, other books or parts of books	1	1	-	1	2	5

Articles in periodic and one-off peer-reviewed publications	1	4	3	5	-	13
Articles in publications that publish conference works	-	-	-	-	-	-
					In total:	**23**

Horizon Europe's first strategic plan 2021-2024: Commission sets research and innovation priorities for a sustainable future, Brussels, 15 March 2021 (*Horizon Europe Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024 (2021). Directorate-General for Research and Innovation. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. doi:10.2777/083753*).

The strategic plan sets out four **strategic orientations** for research and innovation investments under Horizon Europe for the next four years and SMK integrates these strategic priorities (orientations) into the conduct of its research activities, research directions and sub-topics:

Horizon Europe's first strategic plan 2021-2024 orientations	Directions of SMK scientific research	Scientific research topics
Promoting an open strategic autonomy by leading the development of key digital, enabling and emerging technologies, sectors and value chains;	1. Digital Communication Ecosystem	Interactions between new and traditional media, hybrid media Media literacy (disinformation, fake news, etc.) Communication in social networks Multimodal communication in media Corporate Storytelling Rhetoric in the media
Restoring Europe's ecosystems and biodiversity, and managing sustainably natural resources;	2. Management of cultural and creative industries	Audiovisual arts industry Arts, including the visual and performing arts Creative business and management Creative methods for business innovation and development Creative solutions for cultural heritage and tourism Innovation in product design and visual expression in contemporary markets
	3. Health Technology and Management	Human Augmentation/Empowerment in Healthcare Wellness Technologies Quality of Life Improvement Solutions for the Future Well-Being of Society Development of Anti-Ageing and Anti-Stress Health Promotion Programmes
Making Europe the first digitally-enabled circular, climate-neutral and sustainable economy;	4. Development and technology of sustainable growth	Development of a Sustainable Business Model Business Operations Optimization Environmental Management CSR strategy development Development of Bio/Eco-Innovation through Design Solutions + Product Lifecycle Analysis Eco-Certification Consulting Impact of the Change in Socio-Economic Processes on

		the Future Well-Being of Society
Creating a more resilient, inclusive and democratic European society	5. Knowledge management and educational technologies	Lifelong Learning (LLL) The space for the concept of competence, improvement and development of competences Creation of educational environments that empower students for studying (or LLL) The application of experiential education methodology to enhance learner motivation Innovative educational technologies The formation of a knowledge society in a context of global changes Issues and challenges of gender equality in contemporary society Training quality of primary education teachers Development of emotional intelligence

The European Commission's document "A new ERA for Research and Innovation", of 30 September 2020 states that "Europe is currently facing deep societal, ecological and economic challenges, aggravated by the coronavirus crisis. Delivering on Europe's recovery is a pressing priority, while the green and digital transitions (twin transition) are more important than ever".
(https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2020%3A628%3AFIN).

The rest of the decade up to 2030 is referred to as the Digital Decade therein. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of cutting-edge digital technologies based on European values for economic and societal resilience. Digital transformation is also a key condition for the Green Deal. The Industrial Strategy, the European Strategy for Sustainable Competitiveness, social equity and resilience, the Digital Education Action Plan and the New European Education Area are the strategies that will guide the development and implementation of digital technologies as well as the development of digital skills in the EU. (https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2020%3A628%3AFIN).

Moreover, the Higher Education for Smart Specialisation (HESS) project has been launched in 2016 in collaboration with education, youth, sports and cultural organisations and aims to engage interested parties of higher education in regional development processes and regional innovation ecosystems in order to ensure that higher education contributes to regional and European development and transformation processes (https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/en/w/higher-education-for-smart-specialisation-a-handbook-1).

The separated applied research directions, conducted research and experimental development (R&D) activities, and scientific publications confirm that SMK is in line with the provisions of the Research Area and other documents adopted by the European Commission on the conduct of scientific research and innovation.

At SMK, studies on measuring the sustainability of enterprises were conducted and the results were monitored during the period 2011-2020:

SMK University of Applied Social Sciences (SMK) is a private higher education institution that strives to create an inclusive, sustainable and just environment within its stakeholders' network. These include students, lecturers and researchers, administration employees, social partners and business clients, public authorities, general society etc. SMK is aiming at sustainability in education within social, economic and environmental aspects of its activities. Thus, in order to ensure its own sustainable business practices, SMK has willingly participated in the open access university ranking on sustainability, UI GreenMetric World University Rankings 2020.

SMK participation in the rankings required detailed measurements of various sustainability parameters and data collection as well as processing thereof so that to present the results as per the

questionnaire requested by ranking organizers. Since SMK is present in three major cities of Lithuania all three campuses were assessed for the reporting within UI GreenMetric World University Rankings 2020 (The ranking results can be found at http://greenmetric.ui.ac.id/overall-rankings-2020/). The assessment has entailed the following areas:

- Infrastructure;
- Green areas within and outside SMK infrastructure;
- Use of smart and energy-saving technologies;
- Use of electricity, water, heating and other;
- Waste management practices;
- Use of vehicles and commute to/from SMK by students, staff and lecturers;
- Sustainability-centred courses in the study curriculum (e.g. student competencies).

SMK also participated in the virtual 2020 UI GreenMetric World University Rankings Results and Awards on the 7th of December 2020. The ranking results can be found at http://greenmetric.ui.ac.id/overall-rankings-2020/ .

Furthermore, sustainability assessment for the ranking has stimulated extensive sustainability awareness consultations (both individual and group consultations) for employees. Likewise, greater discussion on SMK sustainability strategy and concept development has followed as a result of the sustainability assessment. Thus, by the end of the year, 2020 Sustainability Work Group has been formed to initiate analysis of SMK sustainability priorities and values, crystallization of sustainability aims and correlating indicators.

Consequently, SMK Sustainability work group led by Diana Garlytska has elaborated SMK Sustainability Road Map. This statement document serves as a general roadmap for further sustainability implementation within SMK University of Applied Social Sciences. Thus, Strategic aims for 2021-2022 academic year were identified as follows:

- Ensure 100% digital communication
- Decrease energy consumption per income EUR / year (kW)
- Enlarge total area of green areas (m2)
- Strengthen public communication on sustainability matters (number of releases)
- Enhance public discussion/event (number)
- Initiate sustainability encouraging initiatives (number)
- Investment in sustainability matters (Eur.)
- Increase sustainability-centred subjects and courses (number).

Publications on sustainability for the period of 2011-2020:
1. Subject textbook "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH", 2014
3. Prospects for the reform of the Ukrainian tax system in accordance with the requirements of the Association Agreement with the EU in the field of environmental protection", scientific journal Business Inform, No. 1-2017 – Kharkiv, Ukraine, 2017.
4. "Development of a Green Economy as a Key Component of Ukraine's European Integration, "Economic Analysis": a collection of scientific papers – Vol. 27 No. 2-2017 – Ternopil, 2017.
5. "Green Finance: a Road Map for Ukraine", journal "Rytai", 2018.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE HORIZONTAL PRIORITY "INTEGRAL INTERNATIONALISATION" DURING 2011-2020

The horizontal priority of "Integral Internationality" was set in SMK 2011-2020 Integrated Development Strategy in order to integrate global awareness into all activities, processes and

educational content of the institution. This priority has been given **5** key indicators for long-term performance.

During 2011-2020, 3 out of the **5** key indicators for long-term performance were achieved (and exceeded). Table 1 provides summarised data on performance indicators and the reasons for a failure to achieve them.

Table 1. Indicators for long-term performance of the Integral Internationalisation priority

No.	Indicator name	Indicator achieved (2020)	Justification for achieving the indicator
1.	no less than 15% of the total number of students participate in international mobility programmes	1.84%	During 2011-2020, **441** students participated in international mobility programmes for the implementation of which **100%** of the allocated grant for international student mobility was used. It should be noted that the number of students wishing to travel for international mobility programmes is three times higher, but the available funding does not allow meeting the entire need. The percentage of SMK students having participated in international mobility programmes does not differ from the national average. According to the State Audit Report[2], the funding provided by the Education Exchanges Support Foundation for international mobility activities only covers participation in mobility programmes for 3-4% of students, while the average "*student mobility in universities of applied sciences during AY 2017-2020 was around 2.9% (ranging from 1.2% to 3.8%)*" (State Audit Report, p. 42).
2.	no less than 20% of the teaching staff is an international academic staff	68.39%	The average number of teachers working at SMK during 2011-2020 is 193. During 2011-2020, **3-7** foreign teachers taught regularly at SMK, and **127** foreign teachers travelled to and taught at SMK under mobility programmes during 2011-2020. During 2011-2020, international academic staff accounted for **68.39%** of the total number of members of the teaching staff.
3.	no less than 30% of students are international full-time students	0.76%	During 2011-2020, there were **182** foreign full-time students at SMK. Each year, approximately 300-400 foreigners apply to study at SMK, but only a small number of them receive national visas allowing entry to Lithuania for studying.
4.	no less than 15% of SMK teachers participate in international mobility programmes	72.54%	During 2011-2020, **140** international mobilities with the participation of teachers were carried out, and **100%** of the international mobility grant was used. The average number of teachers working at SMK during 2011-2020 is 193, who participated in 140 mobilities (72.54% of the teachers had the opportunity to participate in Erasmus+ international mobility programmes). Moreover, **44** international mobilities for teachers were implemented having obtained funding from EU Structural Funds. The total number of international mobilities with the participation of teachers during 2011-2020 was **184**. It should be noted that the grant for international mobility is not only for the mobility of the teaching staff but also for the mobility of non-academic staff. During 2011-2020, 90 international mobilities with the participation of non-academic staff of SMK were implemented. The available Erasmus+ grant for the implementation of international mobilities allows implementing ~15 mobilities of teachers for

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[2] State Audit Report: Is quality of studies ensured in higher education institutions. 2021-07-08, No. VAE-6. Vilnius: State Control.

			learning and teaching purposes per annum. The insufficiency of the grant for the implementation of the mobility of the teaching staff is also confirmed by the common national statistics. According to the EMIS[3] data, the teachers who have travelled abroad for teaching visits (%) during 2017-2020 in universities of applied sciences amounted to 6.3-12.2%.
5	no less than <u>30%</u> of foreign students and graduates actively participate in the ambassador programme	31%	During 2011-2020, ~**55** foreign students and graduates were actively engaged and participated in the ambassador programme to promote SMK, help students integrate into Lithuania, and provide internship opportunities in their established companies. **10-20** foreign students and graduates get involved in the ambassador programme per annum.

Objective reasons such as insufficient funding for the implementation of mobility measures, strict migration policy and underdeveloped network of Lithuanian embassies and consulates in the SMK target markets for attracting foreign students, low recognition of Lithuania in Asian and African countries, the limited conduct of positioning activities of Lithuania as a country for studies abroad, the lack of a strategic document on internationalisation approved at the state level, which would cover the objectives, measures and funding of the country's internationalisation development, have resulted in only partial achievement of some of the planned long-term performance indicators (1, 3).

In order to achieve the **5** key long-term performance indicators, 9 long-term objectives and specific measures to achieve them were formulated for the priority of *Integral Internationalisation*. The key performance indicators for each set objective are provided below.

The **key achievements** of the first objective "*To strengthen partnerships within and outside the European Union by attracting the best students, teachers and researchers*" during 2011-2020 are as follows:

• A *database* of international partners and visiting teachers has been created and continuously updated;

• The number of visiting teachers/experts from foreign partner institutions (under the Erasmus+ programme) has increased. During 2011-2020, *127 foreign teachers* travelled to SMK for teaching/learning purposes (see Fig. 1);

• *Two applications* for funding international mobility under Action KA1 of the Erasmus+ programme (see Fig. 2) (including mobility of teaching and non-academic staff) *were prepared and funded* each year;

• The *number of partner higher education institutions* with which collaboration is carried out to conduct international mobility *increased by 61%:* from 49 (2011-2012) to 79 (2019-2020);

• A network of partner higher education institutions in third countries has been developed, and *14 cooperation agreements* (memoranda) with higher education institutions in Belarus, Azerbaijan, Russia, Taiwan, Cambodia, Kosovo, Georgia, Ukraine, South Korea, China, Moldova, South Africa, USA and Laos.

The **key achievements** of the second objective "To increase the number of foreign students and seek their intercultural and national diversity" during 2011-2020 are as follows:

• During 2011-2020, there were 174 foreign full-time students at SMK. The number of foreign students admitted for full-time studies has doubled during 2011-2020 (from 9 students in 2011-2012 to 20 students in 2019-2020);

• 6 agreements were signed with foreign agents in target markets in order to increase the number of students coming for full-time studies. Countries/continents represented by the agents – Ukraine, Turkey, Africa, India, South East Asia, CIS countries;

• 2 staff members responsible for attracting international students were hired;

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[3] Education Management Information System.

The **key achievements** of the third objective "To promote the development of internationalisation competencies of the SMK community" during 2011-2020 are as follows:

- Each year, 10 initiatives to develop intercultural competencies (cultural evenings, international events, nations awareness evenings, film screenings, social campaigns, training, etc.) are organised in cooperation with the SMK teachers, non-academic staff and students;
- A course on Lithuanian language and culture is taught to first-year foreign students to ensure their cultural and social integration; there is a network of mentors to help them integrate both at SMK and in Lithuania; a study guide for foreign students was prepared and is constantly updated.

The **key achievements** of the fourth objective "To ensure an effective system of recognising and transferring credits acquired abroad" during 2011-2020 are as follows:

- In 2009, SMK became the first Lithuanian university of applied sciences to be granted the ECTS Diploma Supplement label, which was successfully extended in 2013 for the period of 2013-2016 (for subsequent periods, there was no longer a need to apply for the ECTS Diploma Supplement label);
- In 2011, the introduction of ECTS was prepared for, all existing study programmes were updated, focusing on the assessment of student knowledge and skills in accordance with the ECTS requirements, the duration and scope of the subjects were established, and the student's workload with emphasis on independent work and counselling, practical training and evaluation of study results was outlined, and preparations were made for the conduct of study programmes in a foreign language.

The **key achievements** of the fifth objective "To increase the internationalisation of study programmes by updating the study content and striving for the high quality of studies" during 2011-2020 are as follows:

- The number of study programmes delivered in English increased from 1 to 5 programmes – International Business, Tourism and Recreation, Programming and Multimedia and joint degree programmes "Technology and Innovation Management" and "International Marketing and Branding";
- During 2011-2020, 3-7 foreign teachers taught regularly at SMK, and 127 foreign teachers travelled to and taught at SMK under mobility programmes. During 2011-2020, international academic staff accounted for 68.39% of the total number of members of the teaching staff.

The key achievements of the sixth objective "To promote and develop international mobility of students and teachers" during 2011-2020 are as follows:

- *441 students* travelled abroad for part-time studies/internship within the framework of international mobility programmes. During 2011-2020, *184 international mobilities* with the participation of teachers (of which 44 mobilities had attracted additional support from the EU Structural Funds) were carried out. *100% of the grant* allocated for the implementation of the international mobility programmes was used;
- In order to create favourable conditions for student integration into the international labour market, student mobility abroad for internships was encouraged. During 2011-2020, *170 students carried out internships* in companies and organisations abroad;
- In order to ensure the quality of the international mobility programmes, quality monitoring of the mobility programmes was carried out regularly, i.e. feedback from participants in the mobility programmes was collected and analysed using a system developed by the EC.

The **key achievements** of the seventh objective "To increase the number, choice, accessibility and uniqueness of study programmes taught in foreign languages" during 2011-2020 are as follows:

- SMK was the first higher education institution in Lithuania to start delivering a *joint study programme "International Business"* with Portuguese and Romanian higher education institutions in 2009. Funding from the EU Structural Funds was attracted for the development and implementation of this programme – "Improvement and Implementation of the Internationalisation of the Joint Degree Programme in International Business" (Project No. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-02-059, project implementation period – 29/11/2012-29/05/2015);

- Funding from the EU Structural Funds was attracted for the preparation of *3 feasibility studies for the implementation of new joint degree programmes*: "Preparation of a Feasibility Study on Marketing/Advertising a Joint Study Programme in the Field of Management Studies" (project No. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-02-007; project implementation period – 20/04/2011-20/04/2012), "Preparation of a Feasibility Study on a Joint Study Programme in the Field of Technology Management" (project No. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-02-006, project implementation period – 20/04/2011-20/04/2012), "Preparation of a Feasibility Study on a Joint Study Programme in International Business Law" (project No. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-02-012, project implementation period – 21/07/2012-21/07/2013);

- *2 joint degree study programmes* have been developed, accredited and started to be delivered with funding from the EU Structural Funds: "Preparation and Implementation of a Joint Degree Study Programme "International Marketing and Branding" (project No. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-02-086, project implementation period – 29/11/2012-01/09/2015), "Preparation and Implementation of a Joint Degree Study Programme "Technology and Innovation Management" (project No. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-07-K-02-087, project implementation period – 29/11/2012-01/09/2015);
* Taking into account the fact that all three joint degree study programmes attracted few students, their implementation required significant additional financial resources, and it was difficult to ensure funding for the mandatory one-year period of studies in partner institutions, SMK has decided against further implementation of these programmes. Similar conclusions on the issues of joint degree study programmes are also provided in the 2021 State Audit Report[4], which states that "there is a lack of incentives from the state to develop new programmes for higher education institutions. In the European Higher Education Area's 2018 Bologna Process Implementation Report, Lithuania is marked as one of the countries where the central government does not support higher education institutions in developing joint degree study programmes" (State Audit Report, p. 41).

The **key achievements** of the eighth objective "*To strive for effective and added value creating participation in international associations and networks*" during 2011-2020 are as follows:
- In cooperation with existing Erasmus+ partners, funding was attracted and *two intensive programmes*: „Intellectual Property Law in E-environment: Industrial Property, Copyright and Related Rights' Protection" (project No. LLP-ERA-IP-2013-LT-0912, project implementation period – 01/09/2013-31/08/2014). During the project, a two-week intensive programme on "Intellectual Property Law in the Electronic Environment: Industrial Property, Copyright and Related Rights' Protection" for 36 students from 6 different countries and "E-Work – Promoting Innovations in Economy and Globalization" (project No. LLP-ERA-IP-2013-LT-0913, project period – 01/09/2013 - 31/08/2014) were organised. During the project, a two-week intensive programme "E-Work – Promoting Innovations in Economy and Globalization" for 24 students from 4 different countries;
- To strengthen relations with foreign partners and to increase internationalisation at all levels, SMK *organises Erasmus+ International Weeks every year*;
- *10 international collaboration projects* under the Erasmus+ programme were implemented during 2011-2020 on the basis of an established international partnership;
- During 2011-2020, SMK was involved in advanced and globally recognised networks (CEEMAN, NIBS, PRME (Rio+20), EAIE, BMDA, etc.).

The **key achievements** of the ninth objective "*To promote the joining of SMK students in international clubs, societies and associations*" during 2011-2020 are as follows:
- In AY 2012-2013, the *International Student Network* (ISN) was established. Lithuanian and foreign students participate in this network to implement a student mentoring programme to watch over foreign full-time and Erasmus+ students. Each year, ~10 student volunteers join this network;

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[4] State Audit Report: Is quality of studies ensured in higher education institutions. 2021-07-08, No. VAE-6. Vilnius: State Control.

- *A student mentor programme* was developed and is implemented each year to prepare future mentors for high-quality work with full-time foreign and Erasmus+ students.

In summary, it can be stated that most of the objectives set for 2011-2020 were achieved, and some to a greater extent than anticipated. However, natural adjustments to the targets and achievement indicators took place as well, taking into account the changes of the times, societal needs, the changing situation of higher education institutions and the legal environment in which SMK operates (e.g. During the strategic period of the Integrated Development Strategy, the legal framework did not have conditions for remote studies, particularly limited funding for the implementation of joint programmes limited the attractiveness of these programmes among prospective students, particularly strict Lithuanian migration policy and the limited network of Lithuanian embassies abroad did not provide prerequisites for SMK to secure a significant increase in the number of foreign full-time students).
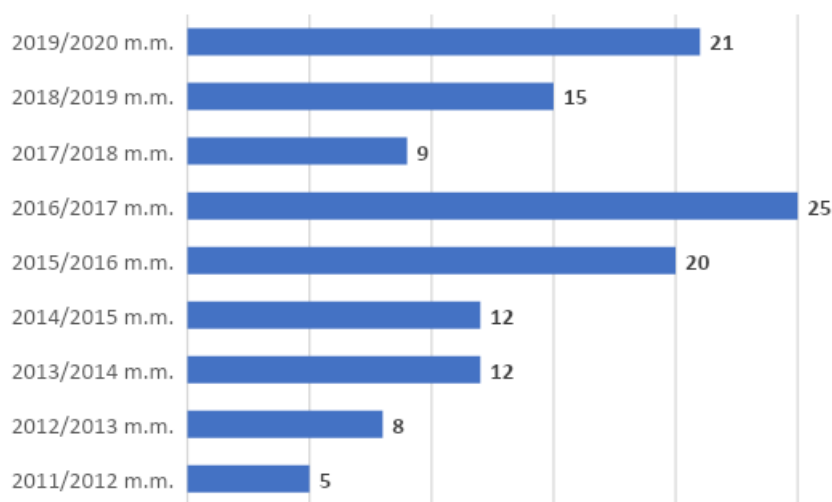
List of figures:

Fig. 1. Incoming mobility dynamics

It should be noted that restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic were introduced during the 2019-2020 spring semester which resulted in the cancellation of planned physical international mobility activities.
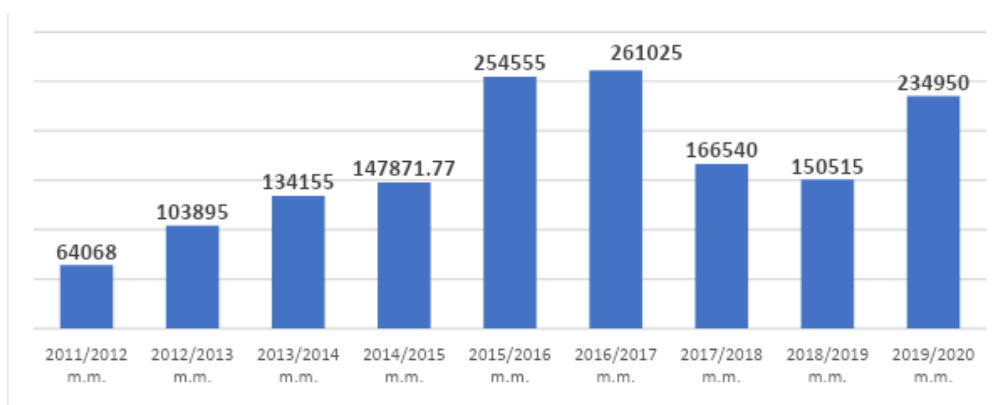

Fig. 2. Grant for international mobility in 2011-2020

HORIZONTAL PRIORITY: MONITORING RECOGNISED QUALITY

<u>**Long-term objectives and measures:**</u>

4 main indicators of long-term achievements were foreseen for this priority.

2011-2020 to achieve (and exceed) 4 of the planned 4 key long-term achievement indicators during the period. Table 8 presents the summarized data of the achievement indicators and indicates the reasons that led to the non-achievement of the indicators.

Monitoring Recognised Quality is a horizontal development priority of the University of Applied Social Sciences, which is integrated into all of the main SMK activities: studies, science and lifelong learning.

Indicators:

	Indicators	Values of evaluated indicators		Notes
		Plan	Implement ation	
1.	SMK quality management system is fully aligned with all the provisions of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education	100%	100%	A Quality Assurance System has been developed and approved at SMK (the quality policy, objectives, described processes and procedures). The Quality Assurance Policy is made official and publicly available on the SMK website and in the E-learning environment.
2.	No less than 90% of achieved results are in line with the planned ones.	90%	90%	
3.	No less than 90% of study programmes received a positive evaluation by external international experts and were accredited for the maximum period;	90%	90%	In AY 2010-2020, SMK was delivering 16 accredited study programmes. During 1999-2020, an external evaluation process of SPs was carried out in Lithuania, and all SMK SPs received a positive evaluation.
4.	The SMK activities received a positive evaluation by external experts and were accredited for the maximum period.	90%	90%	In 2014, an external evaluation of the 2007-2013 SMK performance was conducted. It was accredited for a maximum period of 6 years by Order No. SV6-46 of 20 August 2014 of the Director of the Study Quality Assessment Centre.

Quality in higher education is an important dimension of performance, as it is essential to the success and recognition of a higher education institution. Quality is both an aspiration, as it obliges to improve continuously, and a necessity, as it determines the level of customer satisfaction with services. The increasing competition between higher education institutions and rising consumer expectations encourage searching for new systematic measures to improve and manage the quality of SMK studies.

1.   To develop and implement a unique quality management system and certify it.

Measures

Creation of a quality management system model that includes SMK performance processes, their evaluation, monitoring and improvement, as well as monitoring of balanced indicators.

During 2011-2013, through the implementation of the project "Development and Implementation of the Internal Study Quality Management System at the University of Applied Social Sciences" and aiming at the compliance of the Quality Management System with the ISO 9001 standard, SMK improved the internal quality management system and developed a unique Quality Management System model, which was transferred to the modern electronic information system QPR (www.qpr.smk.lt), which not only helps to analyse and evaluate the quality indicators of SMK activities but also to effectively plan the activities as well as to outline their improvement directions.

Indicators of key activities are in line with the indicators outlined in the Long-term Development Strategy and are monitored and measured in the QPR process model. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the internal quality management system, management and support activities are monitored as well, and their indicators are aligned to the SMK long-term development objectives.

2. To strive for high international quality evaluation and accreditation for SMK.

Measures
The preparation for international evaluation of study programmes and the organisation of expert visits.

In AY 2010-2020, SMK was delivering 16 accredited study programmes. During 1999-2020, an external evaluation process of SPs was carried out in Lithuania, and all SMK SPs received a positive evaluation.

In AY 2010-2014, external evaluations of 4 ongoing study programmes (Advertising Creation, Public Relations, Applied Programming and Multimedia, Law) were carried out by international expert teams. In AY 2010-2014, 3 ongoing study programmes were successfully accredited by international external evaluators for the maximum possible period of 6 years.

In AY 2014-2016, external evaluations of 2 ongoing study programmes (Tourism and Hospitality, International Business and Communication) were carried out by international expert teams. In AY 2014-2016, these study programmes received a positive evaluation and accreditation for 3 years.

From 2020, a new process of external evaluation and accreditation of fields of study has started in Lithuania. When evaluating study fields according to the external evaluation plan for study fields approved by the Study Quality Assessment Centre (SQAC), SMK submitted self-evaluation summaries for study fields of Marketing (the study field study received a positive evaluation and accreditation for a period of 3 years) in AY 2020-2021, Business (the study field study received a positive evaluation and accreditation for a maximum period of 7 years), Tourism and Recreation (the study field study received a positive evaluation and accreditation for a maximum period of 7 years), Finance and Media Arts (evaluation and accreditation will take place in October 2022) in AY 2021-2022, and Law and Management will be submitted in the spring of AY 2022-2023.

The preparation for international institutional external evaluation and the organisation of an expert visit.

In 2014, an external evaluation of the 2007-2013 SMK performance was conducted. It was accredited for a maximum period of 6 years by Order No. SV6-46 of 20 August 2014 of the Director of the Study Quality Assessment Centre. According to the conclusions of the international experts, the SMK good practice is expressed through the loyalty and commitment of the Management and the entire staff to the organisation, SMK is active on the regional scale; the HEI actively participates in research and development activities: it is eager to invest in the development of internationalisation.

3. To implement advanced quality management models and methods consistently and systematically and apply the principles of the total quality management.

Measures
The organization of the activities of the Quality Council.

At SMK, the responsibility for developing, updating and publicising the Quality Manual lies with the formed work team. The work team is responsible for reviewing the quality assurance by implementing changes to the Quality Manual no less than once per annum. Recommendations for improvement of the Quality Manual become apparent during the SMK strategy sessions (no less than once per annum) and Management Meetings (twice per month) On their basis, the quality management processes are adjusted and the implementation of the processes is monitored.

The conduct of feedback surveys in order to identify issues and shortcomings. Feedback is a core part of the SMK quality assurance system (see Fig.). The forms and methods of organising feedback at SMK, the periodicity, the procedure for organising feedback surveys, data analysis and publicity at SMK are regulated by the SMK Procedure for Organising Feedback (approved by the Director's Order V(21)-006 on 22 November 2021), the feedback includes the feedback from students, teachers, graduates and employers, as well as the feedback and evaluations from social partners and other social stakeholders. The results of the feedback surveys help to identify issues and shortcomings in processes and activities and are used to improve study programmes and their content. The survey results are discussed with social stakeholders during meetings and published in the E-learning system.

Feedback and close cooperation with social stakeholders lead to timely updating of the content of studies and the study process and allow the training of competent specialists.

The creation of an e-document management system. In 2017, SMK purchased and, in 2018, automated the Document Management System (DMS) to monitor, store and manage work with documents. The DMS helps to ensure unified document management throughout the entire HEI.

The SMK staff use digital tools in their work: Google calendar, Google drive, academic database Unimetis, Dream Apply (international student admission management and monitoring system); CRM database – PipeDrive. SMK implemented the GDPR (change of data management concept).

The conduct of self-evaluation procedures. The self-evaluation procedures are carried out every school year. All social stakeholders are engaged in the self-evaluation processes. The evaluation of study programmes is carried out annually by SMK teachers, students, last-year graduates, employers in companies in which students have carried out internships, and members of qualification commissions. SMK systematically surveys students on the quality of studies (twice per annum); monitors the general system of final thesis evaluation, evaluation of graduates' competencies from the point of view of employers (once per annum), monitoring of graduate employability (once per annum). The academic community is regularly acquainted with the self-evaluation results.

The organisation of management review meetings. Management meetings are organised twice per month at SMK, the Director is responsible for organising and chairing the management meetings, as well as approving the decisions adopted during the management meetings. Heads of branches and departments attend the management meetings. Other staff of the University of Applied Social Sciences may be invited to the management meetings by the Director's decisions. During the management meetings, issues are discussed and decisions adopted, required actions are determined, responsible persons are appointed and implementation deadlines are set.

4. To develop quality policy principles that are understood and implemented in a collegial manner

Measures
To create and foster an organisational structure and environment that promotes a culture of quality. The SMK management levels, the subordination and interrelationships of the structural departments are reflected in the organisational management structure. The SMK organisational management structure is optimal, in line with the size of SMK and its activities, and is based on horizontal links between departments and units. The supervision of SMK key activities is distributed by their nature among the most senior managers, who are responsible for the relevant departments within the structure.

Continuous updating of the Quality Policy in order to be aligned with the Quality Guidelines for European Higher Education.

This Quality Manual approved by SMK, which regulates internal quality assurance, is in line with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania.

Quality Assurance Policy and procedures.

A Quality Assurance System has been developed and approved at SMK (the quality policy, objectives, described processes and procedures). The Quality Assurance Policy is made official and publicly available on the SMK website and in the E-learning environment.

SMK social stakeholders (students, teachers, social stakeholders, Alumni) are actively involved in ensuring and improving the quality of their studies through their participation in the SMK's decision-making and management processes. Representatives of students, teachers, social partners and Alumni are included in the SMK Council, Study Programme Committees, and Self-Evaluation preparation groups of the current study programmes. The opinion of all social stakeholders is important for monitoring and improving study programmes at SMK.

Feedback is a core part of the SMK quality assurance system.

The forms and methods of organising feedback at SMK, the periodicity, the procedure for organising feedback surveys, data analysis and publicity at SMK are regulated by the SMK Procedure for Organising Feedback (approved by the Director's Order V(21)-006 on 22 November 2021), the feedback includes the feedback from students, teachers, graduates and employers, as well as the feedback and evaluations from social partners and other social stakeholders.

Development and Approval of Study Programmes.

The SMK Strategic Operational Documents include targets for the development of new study programmes and the improvement of ongoing ones.

At SMK, the Quality Assurance Process for Intended Study Programmes, which is followed by the creators of new study programmes when developing new study programmes has been approved. In order to justify the need for intended SPs, define the professional field of the specialists to be trained and identify the most relevant subject and generic competencies of the specialists, occupational needs surveys are conducted at SMK.

The Study Programme Committees are responsible for the quality assurance and continuous improvement of the study programmes. In accordance with the Study Programme Committee Regulations, SP Committees are responsible for updating/improving the study programmes and compliance with the market needs and the latest developments in science and technology and the regulating legal acts. The SP Committee considers projects for the improvement of study programmes proposed by the members of the teaching staff who teach study subjects, coordinate them with improvement plans for the study programme, monitor the relevance and competitiveness of the SP, participate in discussions between the members of the academic staff who teaches the SP, social partners, students and other interested partners on the quality of the SP implementation and improvement, and participate in the preparation of the reports for the purpose of both internal and external evaluation and accreditation of the study programme. The SPs are also improved taking into account the comments made during the external expert review.

The scope of the study programmes delivered at SMK is defined by the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania and the Description of General Study Requirements. The volume of a study programme is 180 ECTS credits. The scope of a programme is designed taking into account the objectives, the sought competencies and study outcomes. The total amount of study programme hours is 4,800 hours. The duration of the studies is 3 (full-time) or 4 years (part-time). At the end of the studies, a bachelor's thesis is to be prepared and defended.

Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Evaluation.

At SMK, the experiential learning methodology (approved during the SMK Academic Council meeting (No.2 of 22 May 2020)) is applied. Pursuant to this methodology, the focus is on the development of students as young professionals. Teachers, experts in their fields, help them to solve

real business challenges, allow making and learning from their mistakes, as well as learning critical thinking and collaborating with other team members.

It is enshrined in the SMK 2020 Study Regulations (approved by the Director's Order No. V(20)-0071 of 26/10/2020), that SMK uses a cumulative grade to evaluate the studying outcomes in study subjects. The components of the cumulative grade are designed to assess different study outcomes or parts of a subject/module, depending on the complexity of the study outcomes. At the beginning of each semester, in accordance with the procedures established by SMK, the teaching staff conducting the study programme coordinate the ratio of the students' workload for lecture and independent work throughout the semester, the deadlines for mid-term and final reports and inter-disciplinary links. Simultaneously, the teaching staff analyses the relevance of the subject content to the expected study outcomes and the logical links between the subjects in order to avoid duplication of content and overlapping of topics.

Each semester, a teacher, before starting to teach a subject, prepares a Study Subject Evaluation System, where they outline the content of the individual work, and assignments. The overall evaluation of the study outcomes of a subject/module is determined in accordance with the evaluation system outlined in the programme of that subject.

SMK teachers actively use the virtual learning environment "E-Mokymas", which provides students with study materials for the study subject, accurate and comprehensive information on the studies, self-control, mid-term and exam assignments, and an evaluation system of a study subject.

Each semester, the heads of the SP monitor the "E-mokymas" environment for the information therein.

Student Admission, Progress, Recognition and Issue of Diplomas.

Research and higher education institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and publicly available rules that cover the entire cycle of studies, e.g. student admission, progress, recognition and issue of diplomas.

SMK creates the necessary conditions and provides support for students in their academic life.

SMK approves the Admission to the University of Applied Social Sciences Rules each academic year and makes them publicly available.

The information on the ongoing study programmes is published on the SMK website.

The information on the procedures for the recognition of qualifications obtained abroad, partial studies and previous non-formal and self-directed learning is publicly available and published on the SMK website.

The information on the evaluation and accreditation of study programmes delivered by SMK is available and published on the SMK website.

Teaching Staff

SMK follows clear, transparent and fair processes for the performance and employment conditions of the teaching staff as a recognition of the importance of teaching.

Study Resources and Student Support.

Quantitative student surveys (twice per academic year) and qualitative student surveys (once per academic year) are carried out periodically where students are asked questions regarding

the financial, personal and academic support provided and the effectiveness of the support. As the systematised results of the student surveys reveal, students have sufficient information about the support provided, the information is accessible and clear to students, and students use the support provided. In order to further improve the effective spread of information on the available support, students are provided with repeated information on the types of support and availability during their introductory lectures each year.

the recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal and self-directed learning. The systematised results of the student surveys reveal a trend that students do not always know where to turn for the recognition of foreign qualifications, partial studies and prior non-formal

and self-directed learning. Taking this into account, the SMK administration provides additional information to students on these issues during the introductory lectures.

SMK has introduced questions on the sufficiency, adequacy and availability of SMK material resources in quantitative student and teacher surveys. Students and teachers are asked to rate the SMK material resources. The systematised results of the surveys reveal a trend that students and teachers are satisfied with the material resources available at SMK and that they meet their study needs.

The systematised results of the student surveys are presented at the group meetings of the heads of SPs, teachers, and student class representatives and published in the SMK E-learning environment.

The systematised results of the teacher surveys are presented at the group meetings of the heads of SPs and published in the SMK E-learning environment.

Information Management.

The following data is collected and stored periodically and systematically:

Student progress indicators (twice per academic year). The systematised results are presented at the group meetings of the heads of SPs, teachers, and student class representatives and stored in the SMK document management system.

Numbers of students who successfully completed studies and or dropped out, as well as the reasons for dropping out (once per academic year). The systematised results are presented at the group meetings of the heads of SPs and teachers and stored in the SMK document management system.

Data from quantitative student surveys (twice per academic year). The systematised results are presented at the group meetings of the heads of SPs, teachers, and student class representatives and published in the SMK E-learning environment.

Data from qualitative student surveys (once per academic year). The systematised results are presented at the group meetings of the heads of SPs, teachers, and student class representatives and stored in the SMK document management system.

Career monitoring data of graduates (6 months and 3 years after graduation). The systematised results are presented at the meetings of the heads of SPs and teachers and published in the SMK E-learning environment.

Performance data on the applied research (art) activities (by 1 April each year) are collected and submitted to the LMT for evaluation.

Self-evaluation data of academic staff performance (after the end of the semester) is collected and considered in study programme committees, meetings of the heads of study programmes and meetings of the teaching staff.

The data collected during the feedback process are made public, i.e. the entire SMK community is acquainted with it during the meetings, the survey results are made available in the E-learning environment, and SMK social stakeholders are acquainted with it during the meetings of the SMK Council and the SMK Academic Council.

Public communication.

The information on the ongoing study programmes is published on the SMK website.

The information on the documents regulating the studies is available and published on the SMK website and in the E-learning environment.

The information on the evaluation and accreditation of study programmes delivered by SMK is available and published on the SMK website.

Continuous Monitoring and Periodic Evaluation of Study Programmes.

SMK regularly monitors and evaluates its study programmes:

The Study Programme Committees (hereinafter referred to as the SP Committee) are responsible for the quality assurance and continuous improvement of the study programmes at SMK. In accordance with the Study Programme Committee Regulations, SP Committees are responsible for updating/improving the study programmes and compliance with the market needs and the latest developments in science and technology and the regulating legal acts. The SP Committee considers

projects for the improvement of study programmes proposed by the members of the teaching staff who teach study subjects, coordinate them with improvement plans for the study programme, monitor the relevance and competitiveness of the SP, participate in discussions between the members of the academic staff who teaches the SP, social partners, students and other interested partners on the quality of the SP implementation and improvement, and participate in the preparation of the reports for the purpose of both internal and external evaluation and accreditation of the study programme. 18 Study Programme Committees operate at SMK. Minutes of the SP Committee meetings are uploaded to the SMK document management system.

SMK participated in the external evaluations of study programmes by study fields, which took place during 1999-2020 when the experts of the Study Quality Assessment Centre were evaluating the study programmes conducted at the HEI.

Periodic External Quality Assurance.

SMK quality management system is fully aligned with all the provisions of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education

Making the quality policy public to the community. The SMK internal quality assurance is carried out pursuant to the Quality Manual approbated by the Academic Council and approved by the Director's order, which includes the quality policy, objectives and values, the quality management system, the operational processes (managerial, main and supporting) and their stages, as well as the internal quality assurance system. The purpose of the Quality Manual is to establish the management procedures for the defined processes, their purpose, responsibilities, goals and clear indicators of specific activities. It is the main SMK operational quality assurance document, which is in line with the SMK strategic objectives and organisational culture. The responsibility for developing, updating and publicising the Quality Manual lies with the formed work team. The work team is responsible for reviewing the quality assurance by implementing changes to the Quality Manual no less than once per annum. The Quality Manual is available in the E-learning environment and on smk.lt website.

The improvement of the competencies of members of the SMK community in order to obtain the commitment of each member of the community to implement the agreed and accepted principles of quality management.

The SMK timely and systematic development of staff qualifications consists of staff participation in training, seminars, and conferences organised by SMK, 2) national and international projects, 3) training organised by other institutions, 4) mobility programmes, 5) doctoral studies,

SMK organises 1) training and seminars, which enables staff to develop several groups of competencies: teaching/learning, research and general competencies (digital, leadership, intercultural).

SMK staff actively contributes to expert, research and educational activities in the regions and nationally. SMK creates conditions for them to participate in national and international projects implemented by SMK.

The number of staff members who were improving training during the analysed period was **1230**.

SMK provides opportunities to improve qualifications and acquire new competencies by travelling abroad for practical training under exchange programmes. During the analysed period, 103 international mobilities with the participation of SMK staff were implemented. SMK used 100% of the grant allocated for international mobility.

5.   To ensure the universal and open implementation and improvement of the principles of the study quality system

The implementation and continuous improvement of the study quality assurance principles.

The quality assurance system of studies at SMK is based on the involvement of the entire academic community in the quality evaluation, assurance and monitoring processes.

The study process is administered by the Study Departments headed by the Heads of the Study Process in each SMK branch. The Study Department ensures the implementation of external and internal normative legal acts regulating the study process and implementation, prepares schedules, maintains study records, provides academic and social support to students, and distributes information on study issues.

Certain structural units have been established to develop individual activities complementary to the study process. The Project Manager organises teacher and student exchanges and practical training, maintains contact with foreign partners-higher education institutions, implements national and international projects, and, together with the Heads of the Study Programme, ensures the integration of the results of these projects into the study process. By collaborating with employers and employment agencies, Partnership Managers provide students and graduates with information on internship spots and employability issues.

SMK has a student representative office, whose delegated representatives actively participate in the SMK management and quality assurance processes, solve emerging problems and represent student interests. Currently, there are 2 students of Finance Studies in the student representation office.

The Head of the Programme coordinates the performance and implementation of study programmes in each city. The work of the Heads of the Study Programme is coordinated and supervised by the Head of Academic Activities.

The Study Programme Committees are responsible for the quality assurance and continuous improvement of the study programmes at SMK.

Continuous internal evaluation of the study quality through social stakeholders. SMK social stakeholders (students, teachers, social stakeholders, Alumni) are also actively involved in ensuring and improving the quality of their studies through their participation in the SMK's decision-making and management processes. Representatives of students, teachers, social partners and Alumni are included in the SMK Council, Study Programme Committees, and Self-Evaluation preparation groups of the current study programmes. The opinion of all social stakeholders is important for monitoring and improving study programmes at SMK.

The improvement of the evaluation system of study outcomes. The SMK procedure for the evaluation of study outcomes which outlines the application of a cumulative evaluation system. Following the principles of consistency and systematicity, subject programmes incorporate interim assessments during which specific study outcomes of the subject are assessed. Depending on the complexity of the study outcome, the weight of each interim assessment for the final grade is determined. The methods and means of assessment, the content of specific assessment tasks, criteria and the complexity level depend on the complexity of the tested study outcome. The study of each subject is completed by an exam. Students also demonstrate the achieved study outcome of the study programme during their thesis defence.

Continuous updating of the study environment that ensures the quality of studies and created conditions for proper learning.

SMK ensures the sufficiency of material resources required for studies, research activities and other activities, as well as compliance with legal, qualitative and technical requirements. The SMK material resources are systematically planned, and investments are continuously made to the development of rooms dedicated to studying and IT equipment, the expansion of the library, and the implementation and promotion of research (art) activities.

SMK continuously improves its infrastructure, strengthens and invests in the competencies of its staff, and ensures the needs of the study process, the student's learning and creative space, as well as software and computer equipment at the higher education institution.

SMK is located in Klaipėda, and also has branches in Vilnius and Kaunas. During the 25 years of its operation, a modern study base equipped with the latest teaching aids has been developed, the infrastructure was expanded, and its library collections are regularly supplemented.

In Klaipėda, the studies are conducted at **Nemuno g. 2 and Liepų g. 83B**, in Vilnius – at **Kalvarijų g. 137 E** and in Kaunas – at **Vilties g. 2.**

The Vilnius SMK building has **39** lecture rooms (**1423** seats), **3** lecture rooms for joint lectures (**540** seats), **6** computer rooms (**114** seats), including one APPLE room, and 2 rooms for meetings and hearings or presentations (36 seats); **5** laboratories for health sciences (**78** seats), a dance studio (**18** places), a video creation studio (**8** seats), a student representative office, an open access point, leisure/recreation areas, a café, an internet area with computers for public use, etc.

Kaunas SMK has **12** lecture rooms for joint lectures (**415** seats), a conference hall (**128** seats), **4** computer rooms (**58** seats), a library, **4** recreation areas and a café.

Klaipėda SMK has 8 conference rooms (**280** seats), a library, **6** laboratories for health sciences (**35** seats), **4** computer laboratories (one of which is APPLE) with 76 computerised workstations, recreation areas, a student representative office, recreation areas and a café.

The provision of public information on the evaluation of the SMK performance, including the programme evaluation results.

SMK publishes information on the evaluation and accreditation of programmes on its website.

Periodic updating and monitoring of study programmes. The Study Programme Committees (hereinafter referred to as the SP Committee) are responsible for the quality assurance and continuous improvement of the study programmes at SMK. In accordance with the Study Programme Committee Regulations, SP Committees are responsible for updating/improving the study programmes and compliance with the market needs and the latest developments in science and technology and the regulating legal acts. The SP Committee considers projects for the improvement of study programmes proposed by the members of the teaching staff who teach study subjects, coordinate them with improvement plans for the study programme, monitor the relevance and competitiveness of the SP, participate in discussions between the members of the academic staff who teaches the SP, social partners, students and other interested partners on the quality of the SP implementation and improvement, and participate in the preparation of the reports for the purpose of both internal and external evaluation and accreditation of the study programme.

The Study Programme Committee Regulations stipulate that the SP Committee is composed of the Head of the Study Programme, the teachers who are teaching the SP, representatives of the social partners, a student representative and the SMK Alumni.

There are **18 active SP** Committees at SMK.

The organisation of external evaluation of study programmes.

SMK participates in the external evaluations of study programmes by study fields, which took place during 1999-2020 when the experts of the Study Quality Assessment Centre were evaluating the study programmes conducted at the HEI. 90% of study programmes/areas received a positive evaluation by external international experts and were accredited for the maximum period.

Each year, the deadlines for the evaluation of study programmes/areas set by the Study Quality Assessment Centre, as well as the persons responsible, are included in annual action plans.

HORIZONTAL PRIORITY: VALUE CREATION FOR SOCIETY

The SMK 2011-2020 Integrated Development Strategy raises a horizontal "Value creation for society" priority, aiming at integrating the perception of global world into all activities, processes and education content of the institution.

4 main indicators of long-term achievements were foreseen for the priority. In the period 2011-2020, 4 main indicators of long-term achievements out of 4 were achieved (and exceeded).

Table 1 presents the generalized data on the achievement indicators and the reasons, that caused a failure to achieve the indicators, are given.

Table 1. Long-term indicators of achievements of value creation for society priority

	Indicators	Values of the assessed indicator		Notes
		Plan	Implementation	
1.	At least 60 per cent of the SMK community members are actively involved in in a voluntary and social activity	65 per cent	In order to identify the good examples of the involvement of the members of the SMK community in voluntary activities both in and out of the SMK, in 2020 the institution carried out a survey of the community's voluntary activity. 65 per cent of the SMK community actively contributes to the implementation of a voluntary and social activity.	
2.	Social stakeholders assess the social significance and usefulness of the SMK activities with an assessment of no lower than 4 points on a five-point assessment scale	Not measured	Social stakeholders are actively involved and participate in the SMK activity, join common projects, participate in the activity of various committees, commissions and boards, accept students for internships and etc. Social stakeholders also invite the SMK community members to become partners, to carry out common initiatives, events, projects. actively and willingly involving social stakeholders show that they acknowledge and value the SMK as a significant and important partner. Assessment of social stakeholders and the SMK acknowledgement are not measured on the foreseen assessment scale. Aiming at an objective assessment the SMK assesses this achievement indicator through the implemented common initiatives with social stakeholders, who better reveal the social significance and usefulness of the SMK as well as its recognition among social stakeholders.	
3.	At least half of the SMK implemented projects and initiatives are implemented on the grounds of cooperation	69 per cent	110 projects were implemented during the reporting period: 64 national projects; 17 partner projects; 26 international projects, 3 SRED projects. 76 out of 110 carried out projects were implemented in cooperation with the regional, national and/or international partners.	
4.	Scholarships for students established by social stakeholders increase by at least 20 per cent every year	20 per cent	During the reporting period, the talented and active students are awarded premiums/scholarships of social partners and municipalities. They are awarded for exceptional academic achievements, significant scientific research, being socially active. Scholarships for students established by social stakeholders increase by at least 20 per cent every year	

In order to strengthen the SMK social partnership and to develop relations with social stakeholders – employer, business associations, local self-government, non-governmental organizations, graduates, during the reporting period the SMK developed active cooperation relations with more than 250 business, public sector organizations and companies. Every member of the SMK community contributes to the development of cooperation with business and public sector organizations: Heads of study programmes, lecturers, alumni, Project Managers, the Director, Heads of Branches and etc.

In order to increase the involvement of social partners – employers, business associations, local self-government, non-governmental organizations, graduates – in the SMK activity, common science and business cooperation initiatives and projects are created on the basis of cooperation. During the development of cooperation goals, scientific applied activity is carried out as well as prepared science studies, published scientific articles and publications. Active partnership helps identify the real market needs when training future specialists, creating and improving lifelong learning services and products. During the development of cooperation, the SMK students are provided with the possibilities of modern career to carry out teaching and final practices in famous companies in the national and international markets. Students are provided with possibilities to use the modern material basis of companies during studies. The basis conforms to the future technological market trends. Partners constantly consult the SMK on the issues of study programme preparation and improvement, actively participate in the processes of practical teaching of students. Social partners often offer real workplaces to students in order to involve them in professional activity

already during studies and help integrate in the labour market after studies in the higher education institution. Constant exchange of good experience on the basis of cooperation take place during national and international conferences.

In order to contribute to the development of different areas in regions, on national and international level, the SMK is actively involved in the activities of institutionalized associations. The SMK is the most active in the activities of the following associated units: EUMMAS (European Marketing and Management Association), INFOBALT, FEST (Federation for European Storytelling), NBSM (Nordic Baltic Storytelling Meeting), LBTA (Lithuanian Biotechnology Association), LKDK (Lithuanian College Director Conference), LATIA (Lithuanian Clothing and Textile Company Association), Klaipėda Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, Lithuanian Business Confederation, Lithuanian Social Innovation Cluster, Lithuanian Association of Hotels and Restaurants, Vilnius Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, Kaunas Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, Staff Manager Club. The fields of active membership activity help the SMK maintain close relations with subjects of different areas in business, science and public sector, create common strategic goals, implement synergistic activities and projects, that strengthen economic, social, innovation potential and breakthrough in regions.

In order to develop the attractiveness and uniqueness of the changes in the areas of education and science, economic breakthrough, the SMK not only actively participates in the activities of various associations, but also initiates the establishment of new thematic cooperation networks. In September 2020, the Lithuanian Non-state Education Confederation was established on the initiative of the SMK and other non-state education institutions. On the principle of volunteerism, the association connects Lithuanian non-state education institutions, non-governmental organizations that operate in the area of education, associations, and, in exceptional cases, other legal entities as well. Currently 18 members have joined the activity of the Confederation. These are non-state pre-school, primary, secondary education, vocational training and higher education institutions, that aim at raising the quality and efficiency of the system of non-state education, at ensuring equity and justice in the area of non-state education, promoting cooperation between non-state education institutions and organizations, increasing the accessibility and autonomy of non-state education, representing members in the relations with Lithuanian authority institutions, municipalities, public and international organizations and other persons, seeking change and quality improvement in education policy.

On the basis of cooperation contract, the Baltic Digital Innovation Centre was established in 2019. The SMK is one of the first 12 partners, that initiated the creation of this centre and attraction of additional project funding. It was decided by contract to initiate the development of new services and products, to provide consultations on the implementation and management of digital innovation projects, to develop the cooperation between public sector, business and science, to prepare an infrastructure suitable for scientific research and experimental development in Klaipėda region. A 5.47m worth project for the construction of the Baltic Digital Innovation Centre was approved in 2020. 2022 saw the beginning of construction of over 2.000 sq. m. area of space with 3D printing, robotics, digital design, electronics, neuromarketing, metal and wood processing, IT laboratories, where members and customers of the Baltic Digital Innovation Center will be able to perform tests using the most advanced technologies. Expert help and consultations will be provided on the areas of technology creation, artificial intelligence, digital engineering solutions, production planning and innovative project funding. It is believed that the services of the Centre will be of particular importance to the organizations operating in the sectors of industry and maritime economy, paying most attention to the start-ups with a potential for growth and organizations that create high added value.

In 2020 the SMK, together with business companies initiated the establishment of Digital Innovation Centre "Smart Society". Centres of digital innovations are a part of the Lithuanian innovation ecosystem, the policy of which is coordinated by the Ministry of Economy and Innovation.

The centre is also included in the Catalogue of Digital innovation Centres of the European Commission as a fully operational member. The activity of the centre matches and conforms to the goals of the Digital Europe Programme, contributes to the implementation of the Lithuanian Innovation Development 2014-2020 Programme of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, responds to the Priority Scientific Research and Experimental Development and Innovation Development (smart specialization) priority implementation program approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the selected smart specialization priority "Inclusive and creative society". Digital Innovation Centre "Smart Society", coordinated by the SMK in cooperation with advanced companies and organizations that provide services and products of education, IT, human resource management, new media technologies, orientated towards strengthening competition of companies in the central and western Lithuania in the following areas: modern education technologies and processes; technologies and products of design and audiovisual media; social and cultural innovations to create the products and services of the society development, innovative business models; flexible and applied process management technologies. Digital Innovation Centre "Smart Society" maintains the cooperation between public and private sectors, for an efficient implementation of transfer of knowledge and technologies when commercializing SRED and innovation results.

Active involvement of the SMK in the area of changes in education and creation of innovations does not go unnoticed during the reporting period. In 2019 Vilnius Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts awarded the SMK for the achievements in the area of higher education. In the Summit of Leaders 2019 (Oxford, UK) "Socrates Awards Ceremony" the SMK was nominated a "Prestigious International Award Best Educational Institution". Association "Mano miestas Klaipėda" ("My City Klaipėda") for merits in the field of education and love for the Klaipėda region, awarded the SMK with the order of the decade of the association. Lithuanian Free Market Institute thanked the SMK for the promotion of economic literacy in Lithuania.

Since 2014, the SMK has developed the area of storytelling activity and is therefore involved in NBSM (Nordic Baltic Storytelling meeting), FEST (Federation for European Storytelling) networks, that unite the experts in the area. In 2021, on the decision of FEST executive committee and FEST members, the SMK was granted a right to organize annual FEST conference in Lithuania in 2022. Every year the SMK organizes at least one Storytelling event for the society, e.g.: training for young specialists "Digital Storytelling", training for business "Usage of Storytelling method in Sales Promotion", international conference "Stories for Impact", international Storytelling festival "StoryFor.Me 2018". The SMK is included in the map of the European Storytelling organizations. In 2019-2021 it implemented an international project for youth "Picture your story", aimed at popularization of digital Storytelling. Storytelling methods and the latest trends are also integrated in the implementation of study programmes (e.g.: Creative Entertainment Industries, Marketing and Advertising Creation study programmes) when preparing the specialists that respond to the modern needs of the market.

Regional development needs are discussed in round table discussions and bilateral meetings with the representatives of the regional authorities, public sector and business. Representatives of Klaipėda, Kaunas and Vilnius cities are frequent participants of the SMK events, communicating of the visions of regional development to the academic community. The SMK members are actively involved in the preparation of strategic documents of the local authorities and consultations, e.g.: in 2020 by participating in Klaipėda City Municipality Administration working group, preparing the concept of the Lithuanian Youth Capital competition; in 2018 m. by participating in Klaipėda City Municipality Administration working group and preparing an Integrated Action plan for Klaipėda in accordance with URBACT III action programme project "GEN-Y-CITY"; in 2020-2021 by participating in Klaipėda City Municipality working group for preparation of strategic development plan 2021–2030 and drawing plans for Economic and Business Environment as well as Education, Sport and Culture environment; in 2017-2019 participating in Kaunas City Municipality activity of

the Commission of Procurement for Cultural City Events; in 2018 participating in the Board of Marijampolė Region Development.

In order to identify the good examples of involvement of the members of the SMK community in the voluntary activities both in and out of the SMK, in 2020 the SMK carried out a survey on a voluntary activity of the community. During the reporting period the SMK students, lecturers and employees of administration mostly choose volunteering in the following areas: help for children and youth (Order of Malta, Youth Line, Red Cross), activity of local community (Culture Community Centres, Campaign "Darom"), help for the elderly (Lithuanian Caritas, Social service centres, "Maisto bankas" ("Food Bank") charity and support fund, Lithuanian Red Cross, Lithuanian Parkinson Disease Community), care of animals ("Šiaulių letenėlė", PI "Dogspotas", PI "Tautmilės globa" Organization of Care of Animals, Shelter "Lesė", PI "Save Animals"), health protection, nursing, help for the disabled (Child Heart Association, Association Children of Lithuania, Šiauliai Long-term Treatment and Geriatrics Centre, Lithuanian Library for the Blind, PI Vilnius University Hospital Santaros Klinikos), art and culture (music festivals, VYTA Art Therapy Institute, museums), sport (PI centre "Eik", international marathons, "Sport Volunteer Union"), psychological/social and consultation lines/organizations (Women Helpline, Social Integration Institute, Klaipėda Family Centre), adult education, teaching (Alumni Clubs, Youth Entrepreneurship Education Centres).

During the reporting period, a growing number of persons who participated in the activities organized by the SMK can be observed (e.g.: competitions, public campaigns, project activities, conferences and etc.). Later they become constant and long-term receivers (customers) of the SMK services, who later continue studies in a higher education institution, participate in training, youth camps, education workshops, commercial events.

During the reporting period, skillful and active students are awarded premiums/scholarships of social partners or municipalities. They are awarded for exceptional academic achievements, significant scientific research, active social activities. During the reporting period the SMK students were awarded 2154 monetary premiums and/or incentives from social partners (e.g. "Avitelos prekyba", JSC, "Western Shipyard", SC, PI "RV Agency", PI "Family Institute", Saulius Jokužys Publishing and Printing House, Šiauliai Bank, Swedbank and etc.). Klaipėda City Municipality, in order to promote young people to study in Klaipėda higher education institutions, every year awards 100.00 EUR worth scholarship to skillful and talented I year students. The scholarship was awarded to 2 students in the SMK Klaipėda Branch. Also Klaipėda City Municipality every year organizes a competition "Final Theses of Graduates of Klaipėda Higher Education Institutions, relevant to Klaipėda City" and awards monetary premiums for FT relevant for the city. During the analyzed period 5 students of the SMK received these monetary premiums.

110 projects were implemented during the reporting period: 3 SRED projects; 64 national projects, 17 partner projects; 26 international projects. 76 out of 110 carried out projects were implemented in cooperation with the regional, national and/or international partners.

SRED projects:
1. Creation of an integral model of psychological welfare and human-area interaction
2. Creation and testing of a smart system of providing saturated drinking water
3. Development of designs of innovative services of the SMK
National projects:
1. Beauty Embassy
2. Ekologika
3. MESS SRED Project 2020
4. Short Film Creative Workshop Competition "Mano atrasta Klaipėda. Miesto ritualai" *("The Klaipėda I Found. The City Rituals")*
5. The SMK Indoor Football Tournament
6. Creativity Sprint „Deep" (Discover, Extend, Experience, Present)

7. *Choose Klaipeda – North – South "Jaunimo horizontai: kurk, atrask, patirk" ("Youth Horizons: Create, Find, Experience")*

8. *MESS SRED Project 2019ŠMSM MTEP projektas 2019*

9. *Light Marathon*

10. *Creativity Lab*

11. *Youth Scientific Conference "My Successful Interdisciplinary Project"*

12. *Innovation Popularization Event "ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: Challenges, experiences and insights"*

13. *Creativity Lab for Youth*

14. *Creative Talent Summer Academy for Children and Youth "100 minučių Lietuvai" ("100 minutes for Lithuania")*

15. *Health Week 2018*

16. *Know the Cultural Heritage of the Western Lithuania in the Eyes of Youth"*

17. *Create, Live, Study in Klaipėda*

18. *MESS SRED project 2018*

19. *Business Labyrinths*

20. *Youth Programme "Motyvacinių mokymų ciklas "Galim viską" ("Motivational Teaching Cycle "We Can Do Everything")*

21. *Active Citizenship – Your Vote Matters*

22. *Youth Creativity Festival „Galiu kurti prie jūros" ("I Can Create by the Sea")*

23. *12 success stories*

24. *Klaipėda Youth Activity Promotion Programme 3D: DALYVAUK, DARYK, DALINKIS! ("3D: PARTICIPATE, DO, SHARE")*

25. *Theatricalized Musical Procession "Klaipėdos istorijos kelias" ("On the Roads of Klaipėda History")*

26. *Transfer of an advanced experience of the Norwegian Kingdom in the areas of social care and health aiming at welfare of the Lithuanian society*

27. *A survey on the reasons study termination during the first study year and its prevention*

28. *Cinema Nostalgy*

29. *Analysis of physical activity and wellness of students in a higher education institution: student needs and opportunities"*

30. *Anticorruption and plagiarism prevention in a higher education institution*

31. *Creation and introduction of a model of student participation in the management of a higher education institution*

32. *Development of Regional College Alliance "INNO S2B (Innovative services for business)"*

33. *Creation and implementation of an integrated communication strategy in the company "Baltic Auxilium"*

34. *Creation and introduction of image assessment mechanism in "CER – Create, Evaluate, Renew" in "Ergolain projektai", JSC*

35. *Image formation in "NAUJASIS TURGUS", JSC, in order to become a leader of the Western Lithuania in trade market*

36. *D.R.A.U.G.E. – implementation of attractive forms of intercultural education in strengthening the ability of the Lithuanian society to adapt to a variety*

37. *International European Future Forum "Sustainable Economics and Sustainable Society: Future Visions and Current Actions"*

38. *Science week "MoksloTuras"*

39. *Strengthening competences of the members of the SMK student clubs through participation in decision making of the higher education institution*

40. *Erasmus for the Lithuanian Schools 2013*

41. *Camp "Science and Technologies for Creative Progress"*

42. *EkoMokykla.LT- Environmental resource conservation and responsible behavior initiative in the Lithuanian education system*

43. *Preparation and implementation of joint degree study programme "International Marketing and Branding"*

44. *Preparation and implementation of joint degree study programme "Technology and Innovation Management"*

45. *Increasing internationality and implementation of a joint degree International Business Study Programme*

46. *Public Environmental Education Project "Sustainable development of Vilnius starts from the smallest"*

47. *Arab culture days: distribution of films presenting Arab culture to the youth of Klaipėda and Vilnius.*

48. *Science and Technology Popularizing Event "Know the World of Science"*

49. *Preparation of a feasibility study for a joint study programme of international business law*

50. *Erasmus for the Lithuanian Schools 2012*

51. *Spread of the cultural heritage of the old residents of Curonian Spit, using the tools of audiovisual art and information technologies*

52. *Internationalization of study programmes implemented in the SMK to prepare an open higher education institution for foreign students.*

53. *Promotion of the SMK study internationalization updating the specialties demandable in the labour market*

54. *Creation and implementation of internal study quality management system in the SMK*

55. *Creation and introduction of entrepreneurship education methods in Lithuanian schools*

56. *Erasmus for the Lithuanian schools 2011*

57. *Preparation of a feasibility study for technology management joint study programme*

58. *Preparation of a feasibility study concerning marketing/advertising joint study programme in management study field*

59. *A wide-scale public information campaign "Atgal į gamtą! Gyvenkime taip, kad nekenktume aplinkai" ("Back to nature. Let's live in such a way that we don't harm the environment")*

60. *Extend a Hand of Kindness*

61. *development of student managerial skills in a simulation business market*

62. *Updating study programmes in the SMK for the education of future specialists*

63. *Education of new generation lecturers in colleges – a step towards study modernization and real quality*

64. *Creation of integrated development strategies in the SMK and the Lithuanian Maritime Academy: methodological, practical and educational aspect*

International projects:

1. *STAR.APP: Student's Academic performance: a machine learning Approach for risk assessment and dropout prevention*

2. *FIT Financial literacy and new business models to boost women entrepreneurship possibilities*

3. *History behind a curtain*

4. *E-Tutoring: tools and web resources for study and career management Picture Your Story*

5. *Establishment and development of Quality Assurance Centers in Azerbaijani Universities*

6. *SHARPEN - SMEs Human resource attraction, retention and performance enhancement network*

7. *S4C: Strengthening Sub-Saharan youth career paths*

8. *Mobility of higher education students and employees between program countries and partner countries 2020*

9. *Mobility of higher education students and employees between program countries and partner countries 2019*

10. *Mobility of higher education students and employees between program countries and partner countries 2018*

11. *Mobility of higher education students and employees between program countries and partner countries 2011*

12. *A glimpse into the American Culture*

13. *Citizenship Language Pack For Migrants in Europe Extended (teaching migrants a state language in the European countries), Lifelong Learning Programme KA2 Language*

14. *Intellectual Property Law in E-environment: Industrial Property, Copyright and Related Rights' Protection*

15. *E-Work – Promoting Innovations in Economy and Globalization*

16. *Cooperation between university and business, inspired by success stories*

17. *Violence prevention Club in Europe*

18. *Training manual on Social Integration of Refugee Children and unaccompanied for developing social workers' competences*

19. *Debtless „Think Twice debt is a serious issue*

20. *Senior volunteering in Europe*

21. *Development of Youth Leader School in Kurzeme and Klaipeda regions*

22. *Citizenship Language Pack For Migrants in Europe (teaching migrants a state language in the European countries)*

23. *Sectorial Learning-Outcome Transparency*

24. *ULMA – Upbringing learning motivation of adults*

25. *From School to Professional and social life in an open European space*

26. *Interregional SME Supply Clusters along the Northeast Corridor – BalticSupply*

Partner projects:

1. *Community Integration Centre in Vilnius City (Bendruomeninis integracijos centras Vilniaus mieste (Applicant - Caritas)*

2. *Camp – Cinema Art Lab "Slenkstis II" ("Threshold II) (Applicant PI "TV Vizijos")*

3. *CREAzone- the first step towards entrepreneurship and creativity (Lithuanian Business Confederation)*

4. *"KURK: kurianti, unikali, rūpestinga karta" ("CREATE: Creative, Unique, Caring Generation") (Applicant - KVK)*

5. *Smart practice (Applicant – Lithuanian Association of Hotels and Restaurants)*

6. *Volunteering – the first step towards successful career*

7. *Development of humanities and social sciences for sustainable change of the society and to increase international competitiveness of economy*

8. *eLABa creation and development of integral services*

9. *Creation and introduction of a system of assessing and recognizing the competences acquired in an informal way*

10. *Assuring study availability for students with special needs*

11. *Decisions of young leaders*

12. *Improvement of training specialists in humanities and social sciences, to promote the development of economy*

13. *Development of infrastructure of career education and career monitoring in higher education institutions*

14. *Creating a model of practices / internships of lecturers and I-II cycle students of Lithuanian higher education institutions in foreign (ES, ELPA and NATO countries) companies and international organizations*

15. Development and introduction of the models of career education and career monitoring for students in higher education institutions

16. Creation and introduction of a model of organizing professional practice in management and economics study programme

17. Creating scientific and practical medium for knowledge management and social innovations

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

4 main indicators of long-term achievements were foreseen for this priority.

2011-2020 to achieve (and exceed) 2 of the 3 key long-term achievement indicators envisaged during the period. Table 10 presents the summarized data of the achievement indicators and indicates the reasons that led to the failure to achieve the indicators.

Indicators

	Indicator	*Values of evaluated indicators*		
		Plan	*Implementation*	*Notes*
1.	A new building for studies in Vilnius has been built and fully equipped with cutting-edge technical and software equipment, and the preparations were made for the construction of a new integrated centre for studies, science and business in Klaipėda;	100%	100%	In *newly equipped rooms* in Klaipėda, the studies are conducted at Nemuno g. 2 and Liepų g. 83B, in Vilnius – at Kalvarijų g. 137 E and in Kaunas – at Vilties g. 2
2.	No less than 20% of SMK income structure consists of private investments for the development of studies and research;	20%		
3.	Student satisfaction with the leisure, after-school and sports activities was evaluated at least 3.6 on a 5-point scale;	3.65 points	4.1 points	According to a *quantitative student survey* conducted twice per annum, as much as 91% of students rate the *infrastructure for leisure, after-school and sports activities* as good or very good.

The key objective of infrastructure development is to develop an open-plan, student-centred teaching and learning environment based on modern technology and engineering solutions, which would be a centre of attraction and an attractive space for socialisation, interaction and independent learning.

It can be achieved through the implementation of the following objectives:

To develop and maintain a modern teaching and learning infrastructure based on cutting-edge technology and engineering solutions.

SMK is located in Klaipėda, and also has branches in Vilnius and Kaunas. During the 27 years of its operation, a modern study base equipped with the latest teaching aids has been developed, the infrastructure was expanded, and its library collections are regularly supplemented. The Study Department is responsible for the organisation of studies and the Head of Infrastructure is responsible for the maintenance of the study base. The Information Technology Administrators are responsible for the maintenance of the information and organisational technical tools. The library resources are managed by the Information Resources Manager.

In Klaipėda, the studies are conducted at Nemuno g. 2 and Liepų g. 83B, in Vilnius – at Kalvarijų g. 137 E and in Kaunas – at Vilties g. 2.

The Vilnius SMK building has 39 lecture rooms (1423 seats), 3 lecture rooms for joint lectures (540 seats), 6 computer rooms (114 seats), including one APPLE room, and 2 rooms for meetings and hearings or presentations (36 seats); 5 laboratories for health sciences (78 seats), a dance studio (18 places), a video creation studio (8 seats), a student representative office, an open access point, leisure/recreation areas, a café, an internet area with computers for public use, etc.

Kaunas SMK has 12 lecture rooms for joint lectures (415 seats), a conference hall (128 seats), 4 computer rooms (58 seats), a library, 4 recreation areas and a café.

Klaipėda SMK has 8 conference rooms (280 seats), a library, 6 laboratories for health sciences (35 seats), 4 computer laboratories (one of which is APPLE) with 76 computerised workstations, recreation areas, a student representative office, recreation areas and a café.

To modernise the teaching and learning process by introducing the latest hardware, software and technologically advanced educational solutions.

During the analysed period, SMK has allocated funds to: Computer equipment – EUR 262,351; Software – EUR 48,001; Study hardware and laboratory equipment – EUR 135,828; Hybrid teaching equipment – EUR 36,118.

To increase the material SMK resources taking into account the needs of study and research development.

In order to ensure the quality of studies and meet the needs of students, SMK library funds have accumulated over 32,487 thousands of individual and 7,243 titles of books and journals in Lithuanian and foreign languages. The main library fund consists of educational literature – approx. 21,400 items, scientific literature – approx. 4,472 items, fiction – approx. 2,356 items, and other (official, information publications, manuals, etc.) – 4,259 items. Every year, SMK allocates upwards of EUR 5,000 for printed publications (books and periodicals). During the analysed period, SMK has allocated funds to: Furniture – EUR 230,666; Subscriptions – EUR 17756; Membership fees – EUR 51,678.

To create conditions for students from other countries or regions to stay in dormitories.

SMK does not have its own dormitory and provides accommodation for students in cooperation with other educational institutions. SMK plans to improve its existing infrastructure in this area.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The main objective of the Human Resources Plan is to establish and maintain an innovative and modern information technology-based human resources management and information system that ensures that the competencies of the teaching and administrative staff allow achieving the institutional strategic objectives.

3 main indicators of long-term achievements were foreseen for this priority.

2011-2020 achieve (and exceed) 3 of the planned 3 key long-term achievement indicators during the period. Table 11 presents the summarized data of the achievement indicators and indicates the reasons that led to the non-achievement of the indicators.

Indicators

	Indicator	Values of evaluated indicators		Notes
		Plan	Implementation	
1.	Students give a good evaluation for at least 80% of teachers' pedagogical, subject-specific and general cultural competencies;	80%	85%	According to a quantitative student survey conducted twice per annum, as much as 85% of students rate teachers' pedagogical, subject-specific and general cultural competencies as good or very good.
2.	90% of teachers and 90% of administrative staff are satisfied with the professional qualification improvement	90%	95%	Based on the results of a quantitative teacher survey conducted once per annum and an evaluative interview with teachers, 95% of teachers are

	system and opportunities at SMK;			satisfied with the professional qualification improvement system and opportunities at SMK. Based on the analysis of the annual interviews of the administrative staff with the Director and/or the Head of a branch, it can be stated that 94% are satisfied with the professional qualification improvement system and opportunities at SMK.
3.	80% of the SMK administrative staff confirm that an effective technical base (databases, information sharing mechanisms, etc.) for information sharing and collaboration, as well as collaboration mechanisms, have been developed.	80%	100%	Based on the analysis of the annual interviews of the administrative staff with the Director and/or the Head of a branch, it can be stated that an effective technical base for information sharing and collaboration.

The key objectives of the Human Resources Plan are the following:

To ensure that the competencies of the teaching and administrative staff allow striving for the institution's strategic objectives by selecting the appropriate measures and methods for the development of their professional, subject-specific, general and intracultural competencies.

The qualification of the SMK academic staff is in line with the provisions of the General Study Requirements, the relevant Descriptions of Study Fields, and the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania.

The General Study Requirements stipulate that more than half of the teachers of the study programme must have at least 3 years of practical work experience in the field of the subject they teach.

In all SMK study programmes, approximately **21%** of the volume of collegiate subjects is taught by researchers or recognised artists (art subjects). During the analysed period, Klaipėda SMK employed approximately. Vilnius SMK – approximately 28% and Kaunas SMK – approximately 22% of the teachers with doctoral degrees and recognised. The number of this staff increased from 44 in AY 2017-2018 to 64 in AY 2021-2022.

To improve the lifelong learning skills of the teaching and administrative staff.

By operating in the international education market, SMK aims at providing modern education services that meet the business national and regional needs. In addition to higher education studies, SMK also develops other learning opportunities for different target groups, such as: educators, young people, business representatives, representatives of the public sector, and the public. Thematic conferences, training and seminars, the spread of good practice and qualification improvement events in other forms are organised annually. During the analysed period, SMK implemented 319 LLL activities with a duration of 4,324 hours. The training activities were such as: A Beauty Day. What is Behind my Smell?

Sexual Harassment: How to Recognize and Whom to Contact?; Creativity Training; International Experience and Global Thinking: Why is it Important in the Modern World?; Lecture: Emotions and the Modern Man; SMK OPEN HOUSE on-line; Remote seminar "ECO'LOGIKA"; Uniqueness – a second skin, etc.

To involve the SMK community in social responsibility initiatives and to implement a culture of fostering intercultural values.

SMK emphasises the value of volunteering, and sees it as the basis for the formation of a sustainable and civically responsible society, and for the acquisition of useful vocational and general skills that are important for integrating and adapting to changing work and business environment. For this purpose, the teachers themselves initiate and implement socially useful initiatives and integrate them into the study process engaging students as well, e.g. every year the students of the SP of Creative and Entertainment Industries organise a cultural event programme and go to the "Caritas" retirement home. Among other social initiatives, the following are listed: the annual solidarity

campaign "Light a Candle", during which abandoned graves are cleaned, and memorial candles are lit on them; the social campaign "Gift a Bowl of Soup to a Lonely Elderly Person", initiated by students along with the Order of Malta; the organisation of intercultural workshops by international students for the children of the Klaipėda Children's Orphanage "Smiltelė"; to commemorate the World Animal Welfare Day in 2019, SMK students organised the campaign "Lend a Paw" inviting to take part in improving the working conditions of animal welfare organisations.

To develop and adapt databases (student, teacher, documents, virtual learning environments, etc.) for versatile use and to establish communication mechanisms.

SMK teachers actively use the virtual learning environment "E-Mokymas", which provides students with study materials for the study subject, accurate and comprehensive information on the studies, self-control, mid-term and exam assignments, and an evaluation system of a study subject.

To engage the administrative staff in forming operational and strategic objectives by delegating more responsibilities and respectively granting them more decision-making power and authority.

SMK strategic sessions are held once per annum to discuss the objectives, priorities and changes of the Long-Term Strategy 2030. In order to achieve a smooth and quality-oriented implementation of the **SMK Strategic Action Plan**, close work with the entire academic community and social stakeholders is carried out. SMK holds **strategic sessions** twice per annum. Their aim is to discuss the progress, intermediate achievements and results of the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan.

MARKETING AND AWARENESS-RAISING

The aim of marketing and awareness-raising is to develop a system of marketing tools based on modern communication technologies, which would form an attractive image of the University of Applied Social Sciences, and increase its recognition by the public and popularity among the entrants.

3 main indicators of long-term achievements were foreseen for this priority.

2011-2020 achieve (and exceed) 3 of the planned 3 key long-term achievement indicators during the period. Table 12 presents the summarized data of the achievement indicators and indicates the reasons that led to the non-achievement of the indicators.

Indicator	Values of evaluated indicators		Notes
	Plan	**Implementation**	
The new SMK brand was created and patented.	A brand was created	A brand was created	A new SMK brand was patented and is easily recognizable.
The number of foreign students has increased by 20%.	20%	50%	During 2011-2020, there were *174 foreign* full-time students at SMK. The number of foreign students admitted for full-time studies has doubled during 2011 and 2020 (from 9 students in 2011-2012 to 20 students in 2019-2020).
The number of users in national and international social networks is increasing by 20% each year.	20%	The total increase exceeds 50% annually	**Facebook** 16,813 followers **Instagram** 4,183 followers **LinkedIn** 12,317 followers **Youtube** 961 subscribers **Google Analytics** data (since the website's launch) 11,449,394 views **MailerLite** newsletter system 26,788 subscribers

			A **Facebook** page targeting foreign students was created in 2020 – 2,072 followers. In addition, a Facebook group for foreign students was created in 2021 – 917 members.

The aim of marketing and awareness-raising is to develop a system of marketing tools based on modern communication technologies, which would form an attractive image of the University of Applied Social Sciences, and increase its recognition by the public and popularity among the entrants.

To achieve it, the following objectives were implemented:

To create an attractive and reliable SMK image.

Each year, the main annual objectives are identified in the marketing activities and a coherent marketing and communication plan (with actions and deadlines) is developed, which includes all the steps and measures to build a high-quality SMK image.

A new admissions campaign with a special message to an entrant is developed each year, visual and textual material is prepared, a coherent plan of advertising tools is implemented, and its implementation and monitoring are carried out.

To enhance the SMK competitive advantage in the market

A competitive analysis is carried out annually in the Lithuanian and foreign markets. Study programme innovations, pricing, and the distribution of entrants among higher education institutions are reviewed. It is delightful to see that SMK is currently the leader among private higher education institutions in Lithuania by the entrants' choice.

To enhance the SMK prominence and popularity among entrants.

We consistently communicate in Lithuanian and English on social networks. Each year, SMK prepares a marketing plan, which is implemented consistently. We collaborate with the largest Lithuanian portals and ensure both promotional and organic content. We implement banner campaigns according to an annually developed admissions campaign. We produce various articles and make them public to target audiences. We create broadcasts on study programmes and participate in portal LIVE broadcasts with SMK leaders and the most active community members.

We actively carry out online advertising in Lithuanian and foreign markets according to the need and the set goal of the campaign. We organise various events, and open days for Lithuanian and foreign markets and participate in study exhibitions. Each year we are raising the profile of SMK in chosen target foreign markets. We create plenty of video content conveying life at SMK and its advantages. Using marketing tools, we facilitate admission procedures for students by providing information in video format in English to prospective students. SMK collaborates with one of the largest foreign study portals - Educations.com, where we have our own profile, and publish promotional material and newsletters for the flow of potential students in our priority markets.

According to the plan, we prepare articles in English and Russian for relevant audiences in foreign journals.

We engage not only Lithuanian but also foreign student ambassadors in the SMK content creation, promotional materials, open days and other events.

We actively communicate with SMK foreign agents by providing them with detailed information on SMK admissions, SMK study programmes in English, etc. We share with them the available content for advertising in English.

We publish strategic online advertising for specific foreign markets.

We participate in virtual foreign exhibitions in markets relevant to us.

We organise international events at SMK, thus attracting international partners and raising SMK profile abroad (International Staff Week, FEST, etc.).

To promote network marketing by engaging the SMK community.

There are active groups within the SMK community that are engaged in the active spread of information on SMK, its activities, achievements and ongoing study programmes:

- *SMK Student Representative Office*

- *SMK Sports Activity Group*
- *Ask the Student*
- *SMK ISN (SMK International Student Network)*
- *SMK teaching staff*
- *SMK Alumni*
- *Closed SMK first-year groups*

To create a socially responsible SMK image in society.

SMK is a competitive organisation with clearly defined and strong social cohesion; SMK is open, and transparent and expresses itself through ethical business practices.

All main information about the University of Applied Social Sciences is published on the website www.smk.lt.

To strive for effective and high-quality spread of the information on the SMK activities on social networks.

SMK has active social networks (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Youtube) where it consistently shares information on the SMK life, events, and news and naturally involves the entire SMK community in sharing it. A unique hashtag #SMKLIFE is active in the social space, the use of which is encouraged by SMK students, alumni and teachers – they share SMK daily life and news, and express their opinion about SMK.