



**STUDIJŲ KOKYBĖS VERTINIMO CENTRAS
CENTRE FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

POLITICAL SCIENCE FIELD OF STUDY

OVERVIEW REPORT

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I. INTRODUCTION

Overview report is based on the external evaluation of the Political Science field of study in the following Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs):

- European Humanities University
- General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania
- Kaunas University of Technology
- Klaipėda University
- LCC International university
- Mykolas Romeris University
- Vilnius University
- Vytautas Magnus University

The external evaluation was organised by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC), Lithuania.

This Overview report focuses on the main findings of the external evaluation of the field of study from a general point of view. External evaluation reports containing more detailed information on the field of study in the relevant HEIs, including evaluation points, commendations, and recommendations, are available on SKVC's website.

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the decision has been made to give a positive evaluation to the following HEIs and cycles:

- European Humanities University, I and II study cycles
- General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania, I and II study cycles
- Kaunas University of Technology, II study cycle
- Klaipėda University, II study cycle
- LCC International university, I study cycle
- Mykolas Romeris University, I and II study cycles
- Vilnius University, I and II study cycles
- Vytautas Magnus University, I and II study cycles

Upon receiving a positive evaluation, SKVC decides to either grant full accreditation to the field of study and cycle for a period of 7 years or provide partial accreditation for a period of 3 years. If the field of study and cycle is given negative evaluation, it is not accredited.

II. OVERVIEW BY EVALUATION AREAS

This section of the Overview report highlights the overarching observations made by the expert panels regarding the positive aspects of the Political Science field of study in Lithuanian HEIs, as well as areas identified for improvement.

1. STUDY AIMS, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND CURRICULUM

The analysed higher education institutions (HEIs) demonstrate a generally strong alignment between study aims, learning outcomes, and curriculum design within the field of political science and related disciplines. While each institution reflects its specific mission and context, several common patterns as well as distinctive approaches can be identified.

Across most HEIs, study aims are clearly oriented towards ensuring graduates' employability and responding to labour market and societal needs. For example, Vilnius University and Mykolas Romeris University explicitly emphasise alignment with evolving professional demands and the development of forward-looking competencies, including digital and analytical skills. At the Military Academy of Lithuania, study aims are more specialised, focusing on preparing graduates for roles within the national defence system and aligning closely with national security priorities. Similarly, Klaipėda University and Kaunas University of Technology orient their programmes towards addressing contemporary security challenges and public policy needs. In contrast, LCC International University adopts a broader liberal arts perspective, aiming to develop globally minded graduates with a strong focus on peacebuilding, civic engagement, and community development. The European Humanities University distinguishes itself by incorporating the specific conditions of operating in exile, although its study aims and programme orientation require further adaptation to these realities.

In terms of learning outcomes, most institutions emphasise the development of analytical and critical thinking skills, adaptability, and the ability to apply knowledge in practical contexts. Interdisciplinarity is a prominent feature, particularly at Mykolas Romeris University and LCC International University, where political science is combined with fields such as economics, management, communication, or development studies. Many programmes also highlight research competencies, especially through structured thesis preparation processes present at institutions such as Vilnius University, the Military Academy of Lithuania, and the European Humanities University. However, several HEIs—most notably Vytautas Magnus University and the European Humanities University—face challenges in clearly articulating and consistently assessing learning outcomes, indicating a need for stronger constructive alignment between intended outcomes and teaching practices.

With regard to curriculum design, there is a general trend towards combining theoretical knowledge with practical application. Many institutions incorporate internships, guest lectures from practitioners, and applied learning activities to enhance labour market relevance. This approach is particularly evident at Vilnius University and the Military Academy of Lithuania, where close collaboration with employers and stakeholders ensures that curricula remain up to date and relevant. Interdisciplinary and research-informed curricula are also a key feature, particularly at Kaunas University of Technology and LCC International University.

At the same time, several challenges related to curriculum coherence and implementation can be observed. In some cases, there is an imbalance between different components of programmes, such as the limited integration between public policy and security at Kaunas University of Technology. At Vytautas Magnus University, ongoing programme restructuring has led to concerns about curriculum stability and the clarity of specialisation pathways. Similarly, Klaipėda University could further strengthen its curriculum by

leveraging its geographical advantages, particularly in the area of maritime security, and by improving the integration of research into teaching.

Another recurring issue across several institutions is the need to enhance the methodological and practical components of curricula. This includes strengthening training in research methods, data analysis, and academic writing, as well as expanding opportunities for student engagement in research activities and international experiences. Additionally, while many programmes involve social partners and employers, the systematic integration of their feedback into curriculum development remains uneven and could be improved further.

In summary, the reviewed HEIs demonstrate a solid foundation in aligning study aims, learning outcomes, and curriculum with labour market needs and academic standards. Strengths include interdisciplinarity, research integration, and a growing emphasis on practical learning. However, further efforts are required to improve the clarity and assessment of learning outcomes, ensure curriculum coherence and stability, strengthen methodological training, and enhance the systematic use of stakeholder feedback in programme development.

2. LINKS BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC (OR ARTISTIC) RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The reviewed higher education institutions (HEIs) demonstrate varying but generally meaningful links between scientific research and higher education, with research activities increasingly informing teaching and curriculum development. While the extent and consistency of this integration differ across institutions, a number of common strengths and areas for improvement can be identified.

At several HEIs, research is closely aligned with study programmes and actively integrated into teaching. Vilnius University provides a strong example of this approach, where research outputs are explicitly connected with academic programmes, ensuring that students are exposed to up-to-date knowledge and methodological advancements. This alignment supports a research-led teaching environment in which students benefit from the institution's high level of international publications and scholarly activity. Similarly, the Military Academy of Lithuania demonstrates a clear connection between research and teaching, with research priorities directly linked to national security needs and findings incorporated into academic instruction.

LCC International University also exhibits strong integration between research and education, particularly through its emphasis on student-centred and collaborative learning approaches. Faculty actively engage students in research activities, and the programme's focus on research methodology provides a solid foundation for student participation in academic projects. This contributes to a learning environment in which research is not only a source of knowledge but also a pedagogical tool.

Other institutions demonstrate progress in strengthening research output and its connection to teaching, though with some limitations. At the European Humanities University, research activity has increased in recent years, and both staff and students are involved in research processes. However, the level of international collaboration and participation in large-scale research projects remains limited, reducing the potential impact of research on teaching and programme development. A similar pattern is observed at Mykolas Romeris University, where research is internationally recognised in certain areas, yet disparities in faculty research engagement persist, and the overall volume of high-impact publications remains insufficient. In some HEIs, the integration of research into teaching is present but not yet systematic. At Vytautas Magnus University, research activities are relevant and address societal challenges; however, student involvement in research remains inconsistent and lacks a strategic approach. Klaipėda University faces similar challenges, with research activities not being sufficiently integrated into teaching and the overall research scope

appearing fragmented. Although students engage in research primarily through theses and assignments, opportunities for broader participation in research projects are limited.

Kaunas University of Technology presents a distinct case where research informs curriculum content, particularly through the incorporation of quantitative methods and data analysis. However, concerns have been raised about a potential imbalance, as the strong focus on research projects and grant acquisition may limit staff engagement in teaching and weaken the connection between research and the student learning experience.

Across the analysed institutions, student involvement in research represents a crucial but underdeveloped dimension. While many HEIs offer opportunities for participation in research activities—such as thesis writing, student projects, or collaboration with faculty—these opportunities are often limited in scope or not systematically embedded in the curriculum. Expanding student participation in research, particularly at the master's level, is identified as a priority in several cases.

Another cross-cutting issue concerns the internationalisation of research. Although some institutions, such as Vilnius University and the Military Academy of Lithuania, actively participate in international research networks, others demonstrate relatively modest engagement. Limited participation in international projects and collaborations reduces both the visibility of research and its potential contribution to teaching quality and innovation. Strengthening international research cooperation would therefore enhance both academic output and the global relevance of study programmes.

In summary, the link between scientific research and higher education across the reviewed HEIs is generally evident, particularly through the integration of research findings into teaching and the emphasis on thesis-based learning. Strong practices include research-led teaching, alignment of research priorities with programme content, and the use of research to support methodological training. However, further efforts are needed to ensure more systematic student involvement in research, improve the balance between research and teaching responsibilities, strengthen international research engagement, and enhance the overall coherence of research integration within study programmes.

3. STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT

The reviewed higher education institutions (HEIs) demonstrate well-developed systems for student admission and support, with generally transparent procedures and a strong commitment to ensuring student well-being and academic success. At the same time, several common challenges remain in terms of accessibility, awareness, and the effectiveness of support services.

Across all analysed institutions, admission procedures are clearly defined, transparent, and aligned with national regulations. Universities such as Mykolas Romeris University and the Military Academy of Lithuania follow structured and merit-based admission processes, ensuring fairness and consistency in student selection. Similarly, Kaunas University of Technology employs clear and accessible systems for both domestic and international applicants, while the European Humanities University ensures that its procedures are adequate and transparent. These practices contribute to equal access to higher education and support institutional accountability.

In addition to accessibility, several HEIs demonstrate flexibility in admissions, particularly in response to changing student profiles and geopolitical contexts. The European Humanities University, for example, adopts an individualised approach to student admission and support, reflecting the specific socio-political challenges faced by its student population. At Mykolas Romeris University, while overall enrolment numbers have declined, the quality of incoming students has improved, indicating effective admission strategies.

With regard to student support systems, all HEIs provide a comprehensive range of services, including academic guidance, financial assistance, psychological counselling, and social support. The Military Academy

of Lithuania stands out for its integrated model, offering scholarships, accommodation, meals, mentoring, and psychological services, all tailored to the dual academic and military context of its students. Similarly, Vilnius University and LCC International University emphasise strong mentoring systems and supportive academic communities that facilitate student integration and success. LCC, in particular, demonstrates a holistic approach by combining academic support with a strong focus on student well-being, including targeted assistance for students from vulnerable or conflict-affected backgrounds.

Many HEIs also provide structured support mechanisms for student integration and progression, such as introductory phases, mentoring programmes, and continuous academic guidance. These are particularly effective at institutions like Vilnius University and the Military Academy of Lithuania, where early-stage support helps students adapt to academic requirements and institutional expectations. Furthermore, monitoring systems, including surveys and feedback mechanisms, are widely used to track student progress and satisfaction, contributing to continuous improvement in support services.

Despite these strengths, several challenges and areas for improvement are evident. A recurring issue is the limited awareness and utilisation of available support services. At Mykolas Romeris University, for example, while a wide range of services exists, student awareness remains relatively low, suggesting the need for more active promotion and institutionalisation of support mechanisms. Similar challenges are observed at other institutions, where support systems are well-established but not always fully accessible or visible to students. Another common concern relates to internationalisation and accessibility of support, particularly for international and non-traditional students. The European Humanities University needs to improve the accessibility of key documents in multiple languages and strengthen students' English language competencies. At several HEIs, including Vytautas Magnus University and Klaipėda University, ensuring equal access to support services for international students remains an ongoing challenge.

Student mobility represents an additional area where support structures could be enhanced. While most institutions offer international mobility opportunities through programmes such as Erasmus+, participation rates remain relatively low, often due to students' work commitments or financial constraints. Strengthening financial, organisational, and academic support for mobility would help increase participation and further promote internationalisation.

Finally, while student feedback systems are widely implemented, their effectiveness varies. Some institutions face issues such as low response rates or limited stakeholder engagement, which can affect the quality and representativeness of collected data. Expanding feedback mechanisms and ensuring their systematic use in decision-making processes would further enhance the responsiveness of student support systems.

In summary, student admission and support across the reviewed HEIs are characterised by transparent procedures, comprehensive services, and a strong institutional commitment to student well-being. Key strengths include robust mentoring systems, inclusive support measures, and structured approaches to student integration. However, improvements are needed in raising awareness of available services, enhancing support for international and mobile students, and strengthening the effectiveness and utilisation of feedback mechanisms.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING, STUDENT ASSESSMENT, AND GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

The reviewed higher education institutions (HEIs) demonstrate a strong overall commitment to high-quality teaching and learning processes, with increasing attention to student-centred approaches, diversified assessment methods, and graduate employability. While numerous strengths are evident, several cross-cutting challenges remain in ensuring consistency, innovation, and alignment with labour market needs.

Across the analysed institutions, teaching and learning approaches are increasingly student-centred and practice-oriented. Many HEIs employ a combination of traditional academic instruction and active learning

methods, including problem-based learning, simulations, case studies, and collaboration with external stakeholders. Vilnius University, for instance, integrates internships, guest lectures, and simulated activities to enhance students' practical skills and engagement. Similarly, the Military Academy of Lithuania adopts active learning methods that combine academic knowledge with practical military training, fostering critical thinking and applied competencies. LCC International University stands out for its strong emphasis on collaborative and student-centred learning, supported by diverse teaching methods and close interaction between students and faculty.

Interdisciplinarity is another key feature of teaching and learning across several institutions. Programmes at Mykolas Romeris University and Kaunas University of Technology integrate political science with fields such as economics, communication, and data analysis, equipping students with a broad skill set relevant to complex professional environments. At the same time, increasing diversity in student populations, particularly the growth of international students, has created challenges in adapting teaching methods to varied educational backgrounds, as observed at Vytautas Magnus University.

Despite these positive developments, some institutions face challenges related to teaching delivery and student engagement. At Kaunas University of Technology, for example, the predominance of online teaching in a programme marketed as hybrid has affected the student experience, particularly for international students who relocated but continue to study remotely. In other cases, such as Klaipėda University, while teaching methods are appropriate, the level of innovation remains limited and could be further enhanced.

In terms of student assessment, HEIs generally employ structured and transparent processes aligned with learning outcomes. Continuous assessment, thesis work, and coursework-based evaluation are widely used. Strong emphasis is placed on thesis preparation and supervision, particularly at Vilnius University, the Military Academy of Lithuania, and the European Humanities University, where structured guidance ensures high-quality final outputs. At the same time, several institutions would benefit from further diversification of assessment methods. For example, the European Humanities University is encouraged to expand both formative and summative assessment approaches, while Mykolas Romeris University is advised to enhance staff capacity in assessment practices.

Another recurring issue relates to the alignment between learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment. While this alignment is well-developed in some institutions, others—such as Vytautas Magnus University—face challenges due to ongoing programme restructuring and inconsistent articulation of learning outcomes. Strengthening constructive alignment remains an important area for further development across the sector.

With regard to graduate employability, all HEIs demonstrate a strong focus on preparing students for the labour market. Many programmes align closely with specific sectors, ensuring high employability rates among graduates. The Military Academy of Lithuania provides a particularly clear pathway into employment within the national defence system, while Klaipėda University and Kaunas University of Technology prepare graduates for roles in security, public policy, and related fields. LCC International University graduates are well-positioned for careers in the third sector, diplomacy, and public service, reflecting the programme's emphasis on civic engagement and development.

Close collaboration with employers and social partners further supports graduate employability. Internships, practical projects, and guest lectures contribute to the development of relevant skills and facilitate the transition into the labour market. However, in several cases, practical skills training could be further strengthened, and more systematic labour market analysis is recommended, particularly at the European Humanities University.

At the same time, some institutions face challenges in tracking graduate outcomes and integrating feedback into programme development. While systems for monitoring employability exist, the availability of comprehensive, up-to-date data on graduate career progression varies. Strengthening these mechanisms

would enhance evidence-based programme improvement and better align education with labour market demands.

In summary, the analysed HEIs demonstrate strong and evolving practices in teaching and learning, student assessment, and graduate employability. Key strengths include student-centred teaching approaches, interdisciplinary curricula, structured assessment processes, and close links to the labour market. However, further efforts are needed to enhance teaching innovation, ensure consistent alignment between learning outcomes and assessment, diversify evaluation methods, strengthen practical skills training, and improve the systematic tracking of graduate outcomes.

5. TEACHING STAFF

The reviewed higher education institutions (HEIs) demonstrate a strong commitment to maintaining qualified and professionally active teaching staff, with clear efforts to support academic development, pedagogical competence, and research engagement. Overall, teaching staff represent a key strength across the analysed institutions, although challenges remain in ensuring balanced research performance, internationalisation, and long-term sustainability.

Across most HEIs, teaching staff are highly qualified and academically active, with a significant proportion holding doctoral degrees and contributing to research in their respective fields. This is particularly evident at the Military Academy of Lithuania and Vytautas Magnus University, where faculty expertise supports both teaching quality and research output. At LCC International University, academic staff demonstrate strong alignment between their research interests and teaching areas, contributing to the coherence and relevance of the study programme. Similarly, Vilnius University benefits from a growing number of international teaching staff and a strong research profile, enhancing both the academic and international dimensions of teaching.

A notable strength across institutions is the active support for professional and pedagogical development. Many HEIs provide structured opportunities for staff to enhance their teaching skills, including training in innovative methods, digital tools, and the use of artificial intelligence in education. For example, Mykolas Romeris University and Kaunas University of Technology offer targeted training programmes that support the integration of information and communication technologies and pedagogical innovation into teaching practice. At the European Humanities University, teaching staff are also engaged in continuous professional development through institutional and external training initiatives. These efforts contribute to improving teaching quality and adapting educational practices to evolving academic and technological environments.

In addition, several HEIs demonstrate effective integration of practitioners and external stakeholders into teaching, enriching the learning experience with practical insights. This approach is evident at institutions such as Kaunas University of Technology and Mykolas Romeris University, where social partners and professionals contribute to course delivery and link academic learning with real-world applications.

Despite these strengths, a number of challenges related to research performance and workload balance are observed. At Mykolas Romeris University, for example, disparities in research engagement among faculty members persist, with some staff struggling to maintain a consistent publication record. At Kaunas University of Technology, strong involvement in research projects and grant acquisition may limit staff availability for teaching, potentially weakening the connection between research and the student learning experience. Conversely, at Klaipėda University, limited research capacity and a small number of specialised staff reduce the depth and scope of academic expertise within the programme.

Another cross-cutting issue is the limited internationalisation of teaching staff. While some institutions, such as Vilnius University, demonstrate increasing international engagement, others—particularly Vytautas Magnus University and the European Humanities University—show relatively modest participation in

international teaching, research collaboration, and mobility activities. Strengthening internationalisation is important for enhancing academic quality, broadening perspectives, and increasing institutional visibility. Staff capacity and sustainability also present challenges in certain contexts. Smaller programmes, such as those at Klaipėda University and Kaunas University of Technology, face pressures related to limited staff numbers, which can affect programme delivery and continuity. Ensuring adequate staffing levels and strategic recruitment—particularly in emerging or specialised areas—will be essential for long-term programme development.

At the same time, many HEIs demonstrate strong internal cultures of collaboration, communication, and quality enhancement among staff. Open dialogue between academic and administrative staff, regular feedback mechanisms, and the involvement of faculty in programme development contribute to cohesive and responsive academic environments. These practices support continuous improvement and foster a shared commitment to educational excellence.

In summary, teaching staff across the reviewed HEIs are generally well-qualified, engaged in research and professional development, and supported by institutional frameworks that promote pedagogical innovation. Key strengths include strong academic qualifications, integration of research into teaching, and active staff development initiatives. However, further efforts are needed to address disparities in research performance, enhance internationalisation, ensure a better balance between teaching and research responsibilities, and strengthen staff capacity in smaller or specialised programmes.

6. LEARNING FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

The reviewed higher education institutions (HEIs) provide generally well-developed learning facilities and resources that support the effective delivery of study programmes and contribute to a positive learning environment. Across institutions, there is clear evidence of continuous investment in infrastructure, digital tools, and academic resources, although certain limitations related to accessibility, scale, and strategic utilisation remain.

Most HEIs offer modern physical infrastructure and well-equipped learning environments, including lecture halls, seminar rooms, and specialised facilities. Mykolas Romeris University and the Military Academy of Lithuania stand out for their comprehensive and high-quality facilities, including modern classrooms, computer laboratories, and specialised learning spaces designed to accommodate diverse teaching and learning needs. These environments are supported by ongoing investments and infrastructure development plans, ensuring that facilities remain aligned with evolving academic and technological requirements. Similarly, LCC International University is actively expanding and modernising its campus infrastructure through targeted development projects, demonstrating a strategic and forward-looking approach to resource management.

HEIs also provide strong access to informational resources, including libraries, databases, and digital learning materials. Libraries are generally well-stocked with relevant academic literature and offer access to international databases, supporting both teaching and research activities. Institutions such as the Military Academy of Lithuania and Klaipėda University ensure that their library resources are regularly updated and aligned with programme needs. In addition, many HEIs allow both staff and students to contribute to the selection of new resources, reflecting responsiveness to the needs of the academic community.

The development and use of digital learning environments is another significant strength. Most institutions provide virtual learning platforms that facilitate access to course materials, communication, and online or hybrid learning. For example, the European Humanities University offers a well-functioning virtual learning environment and access to essential digital tools, enabling both hybrid and remote learning. Klaipėda University similarly utilises a Moodle-based platform to support teaching and student interaction. These

systems are particularly important in ensuring continuity of studies and flexibility for students with diverse needs.

Accessibility and inclusivity are also increasingly reflected in institutional infrastructure. Several HEIs, including the European Humanities University and LCC International University, provide facilities adapted for students with disabilities, ensuring equitable access to learning environments and resources. Additionally, the integration of psychological and social support services complements physical infrastructure, contributing to a holistic learning environment.

Despite these strengths, a number of challenges and areas for improvement can be identified. In some cases, limitations in physical infrastructure exist, such as restricted library space at Klaipėda University, although these are partially mitigated by ongoing development efforts. Furthermore, while digital platforms are widely available, the standardisation and effective use of technological tools remain uneven across institutions, particularly in programmes with a high proportion of online teaching, such as at Kaunas University of Technology.

Another challenge concerns the student experience in hybrid or online learning environments. While digital infrastructure enables flexibility, it may also reduce opportunities for interaction and community-building, especially for international students who physically relocate but continue to study remotely. Addressing this issue requires not only technological solutions but also pedagogical and organisational adjustments.

In summary, learning facilities and resources across the reviewed HEIs are generally of high quality and support effective teaching and learning processes. Key strengths include modern infrastructure, comprehensive library and digital resources, and increasing attention to accessibility and inclusivity. However, further efforts are needed to ensure the consistent use and standardisation of digital tools, enhance the student experience in online and hybrid settings, and address specific infrastructural limitations where they exist.

7. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

The reviewed higher education institutions (HEIs) demonstrate well-established quality assurance (QA) systems and practices, reflecting a strong institutional commitment to maintaining and enhancing the quality of study programmes. At the same time, differences exist in the effectiveness, transparency, and stakeholder engagement of these systems, as well as in the accessibility and dissemination of public information.

Across most HEIs, internal quality assurance systems are structured, systematic, and based on data collection and feedback mechanisms. Institutions such as Mykolas Romeris University and the Military Academy of Lithuania have developed comprehensive QA frameworks that rely on regular student surveys, graduate feedback, and stakeholder input to monitor and improve programme quality. These systems are generally aligned with national and European standards, ensuring consistency in programme evaluation and accountability. In addition, many HEIs provide evidence of continuous quality enhancement through the implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations.

A common strength across institutions is the active involvement of stakeholders in quality assurance processes. Students, alumni, employers, and social partners are engaged—at least to some extent—in programme evaluation and development. For example, Vilnius University demonstrates a robust feedback system supported by strong interaction between students, staff, and alumni, contributing to a well-functioning quality assurance framework. Similarly, the Military Academy of Lithuania integrates stakeholder feedback into decision-making processes, ensuring responsiveness to the needs of both students and the labour market.

Despite these strengths, the systematic integration and utilisation of feedback remain uneven across HEIs. While data is often collected regularly, its effective use in programme improvement is not always consistent.

Institutions such as Vytautas Magnus University and Klaipėda University face challenges related to survey fatigue, low response rates, and limited engagement from alumni and employers, which may affect the representativeness and impact of feedback. Strengthening feedback loops and ensuring that collected data is translated into concrete actions remain key priorities.

Another important aspect concerns the transparency and accessibility of public information. Most HEIs comply with basic requirements for providing information on study programmes, admission procedures, and quality assurance processes. However, the clarity, accessibility, and visibility of this information vary. For instance, the European Humanities University is encouraged to improve the accessibility of documentation across multiple languages, while Vytautas Magnus University faces challenges related to the visibility of programmes and clarity of specialisation pathways online. Ensuring comprehensive, user-friendly, and multilingual information is particularly important in the context of increasing internationalisation.

Digital platforms play a significant role in both QA processes and public information dissemination. Many HEIs utilise online systems for surveys, feedback collection, and communication with stakeholders. While these tools enhance efficiency and transparency, their effectiveness depends on consistent use, data protection compliance, and user engagement. In this regard, the European Humanities University is advised to review its external communication platforms to ensure compliance with privacy regulations and GDPR standards.

The culture of quality enhancement is evident across the analysed institutions, with many demonstrating openness to evaluation and willingness to improve. Regular internal and external reviews, combined with stakeholder engagement and data-driven decision-making, contribute to this culture. However, further efforts are needed to strengthen institutional ownership of QA processes and to ensure that all members of the academic community are aware of and engaged in quality-related initiatives. For example, at Vilnius University, increasing awareness of existing policies, such as equality measures, could further enhance transparency and inclusivity.

In summary, quality assurance systems across the reviewed HEIs are generally robust, structured, and aligned with established standards. Key strengths include systematic data collection, stakeholder involvement, and a clear commitment to continuous improvement. However, improvements are needed in the effective use of feedback, increasing stakeholder participation, enhancing the accessibility and clarity of public information, and ensuring full engagement with quality assurance processes across institutional communities.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE POLITICAL SCIENCE FIELD OF STUDY

Strategic recommendations at an institutional level (for HEIs)

To strengthen the quality and relevance of study programmes, HEIs should focus on several key strategic priorities.

1. Institutions should ensure clear alignment between study aims, learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment, as inconsistencies remain in some cases.
2. Curricula should be regularly updated to reflect labour market needs, with stronger emphasis on practical skills, research methods, and clearer programme structures. The systematic involvement of employers and alumni in curriculum development should also be enhanced.
3. HEIs should strengthen the integration of research and teaching by increasing student participation in research and better linking research priorities to study programmes.
4. Further efforts are needed to promote internationalisation, including greater student and staff mobility, stronger international research cooperation, and better integration of international students.
5. Institutions should improve student support and engagement, particularly by increasing awareness of available services and strengthening support for mobility and career development.
6. Teaching and assessment methods should be further diversified, especially in digital and hybrid environments, ensuring stronger alignment with learning outcomes.
7. HEIs should continue investing in teaching staff development, while addressing disparities in research performance and enhancing internationalisation.
8. Institutions should strengthen quality assurance systems and public information, ensuring effective use of feedback, greater stakeholder involvement, and clear, accessible communication about study programmes.

Strategic recommendations at the national level (for the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport)

At the national level, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport should prioritise policies that strengthen the overall coherence, quality, and international competitiveness of higher education.

1. There is a need to support clearer alignment of study programmes with labour market needs, including the development of national-level guidelines for learning outcomes, methodological training, and employability skills.
2. The Ministry should promote stronger links between research and teaching by expanding funding schemes that encourage student involvement in research and integration of research into curricula.
3. Third, it is important to enhance internationalisation through increased funding for student and staff mobility, support for international partnerships, and measures to attract and integrate international students.
4. The Ministry should strengthen data collection and monitoring systems, particularly regarding graduate employability, career progression, and programme outcomes, to support evidence-based decision-making.

5. Further efforts are needed to improve quality assurance at the system level, including support for stakeholder engagement, reduction of survey fatigue, and better use of feedback in policy development.
6. The Ministry should ensure clear, accessible, and transparent public information about study programmes at the national level, including multilingual provision, to enhance the visibility and attractiveness of the higher education system.

Recommendations on the evaluation process for Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC)

To further enhance the effectiveness and impact of external evaluations, several improvements to the evaluation process are recommended.

1. SKVC should ensure greater consistency and clarity in evaluation criteria, particularly regarding the assessment of learning outcomes, research integration, and curriculum coherence. This would support more transparent and comparable evaluations across institutions.
2. The evaluation process should place stronger emphasis on evidence-based analysis, including systematic use of data on graduate employability, student progression, and stakeholder feedback.
3. It is recommended to enhance stakeholder involvement, particularly by strengthening the role of employers, alumni, and students in the evaluation process. This would improve the relevance and credibility of evaluations.
4. SKVC could further support institutions by providing clearer follow-up mechanisms, ensuring that evaluation recommendations are effectively implemented and monitored over time.
5. Finally, the evaluation framework should continue to promote flexibility and innovation, allowing institutions to reflect their specific missions (e.g., international, regional, or specialised contexts) while maintaining high quality standards.