Sustainability Report

2024

VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY

MCMXXII

Table of Contents

A Word from VMU Vice-Rector for Strategic Development and Finance

Dear community members, partners, and friends,

The publication of Vytautas Magnus University's first Sustainability Report marks an important step forward. This Report serves as both a foundation for assessing the progress we have already achieved and a guide for shaping the path we will follow in the future.

This Report represents our collective commitment to building a university that actively contributes to climate change mitigation, fosters an open and inclusive academic community, and upholds transparency and accountability in all its actions. We strive to ensure that our infrastructure, study programmes, and research not only advance knowledge but also promote environmental stewardship, human well-being, and social progress. For us, sustainability is more than a goal – it is a daily practice reflected in our choices, activities, and core values.

In 2024, we placed particular emphasis on strengthening the three key dimensions of sustainability: environmental protection, social responsibility, and good governance practices. This year, we focused on the responsible use of resources, conducted research to improve our understanding of environmental challenges, and integrated sustainability topics into our study programmes. Within our community, we strengthened the well-being of students and staff, created a safe and inclusive environment, and promoted international cooperation and new learning opportunities. To ensure transparency, accountability, and data security, we involved not only University students and teachers but also researchers and partners in the decision-making process.

Sustainability means respect for people and the country. This Report is the result of our joint efforts and an invitation to continue growing together and creating a university that is accountable to its community and society. Through collaboration, we are not only creating a more sustainable university but also contributing to a more sustainable world.

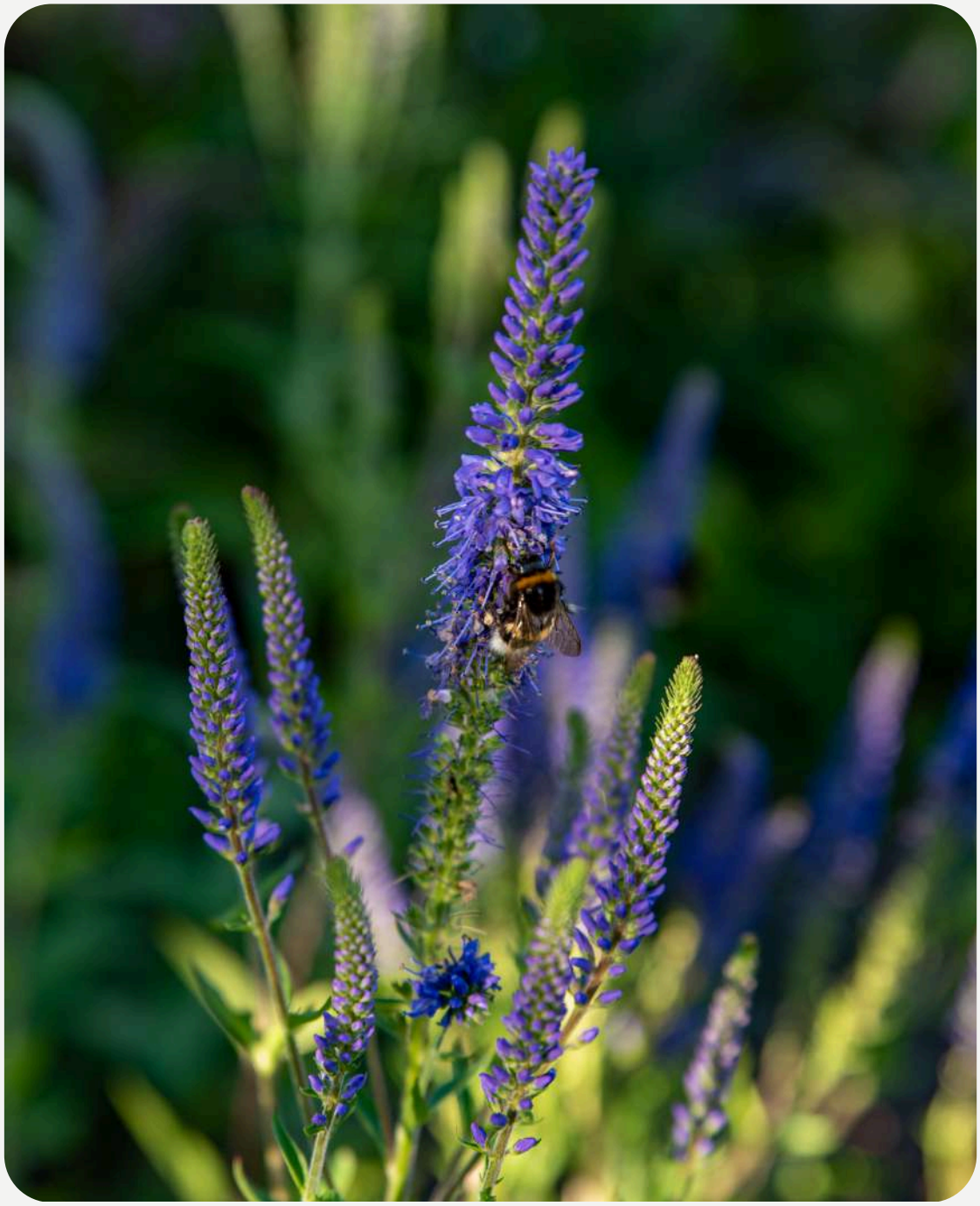
prof. dr. Astrida Miceikienė
Vice-Rector for Strategic Development and Finance of Vytautas Magnus University

About the Report

B1 – Basis for preparation

Vytautas Magnus University (hereinafter referred to as “VMU” or the “University”), located at K. Donelaičio g. 58, LT-44248 Kaunas, is pleased to present its first Sustainability Report. The Report provides information on VMU’s activities in the field of sustainability, covering the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.

The Report was prepared in accordance with the Voluntary Sustainability Reporting Standard for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (VSME) recognised by the European Union. The information presented in the Report includes disclosures from the Basic Module, supplemented by additional indicators relevant to the University. Given the sensitive nature of the information, the indicators for the topic “B9 – Workforce – Health and Safety” have not been included in the Report.



About VMU

Vytautas Magnus University is among the top 3% of universities in the world. It is the only higher education institution in Lithuania offering studies based on the principles of artes liberales (liberal arts education). This study model focuses not only on the profession but also on the comprehensive development of the individual.

VISION

Established as one of the strongest comprehensive universities in the Baltic region and operating according to the principles of artes liberales, the University brings its community together to shape the future of Lithuania and Europe.

MISSION

To be a community-oriented institution of science, arts, and studies, continuing the mission of the University of Lithuania, founded in Kaunas in 1922; to provide liberal education opportunities, develop partnerships, actively participate in the life of Lithuania to advance its future and contribute to its development. In Kaunas, to create liberal conditions for education, establish partnerships, take an active part in the life of Lithuania to shape its future, and contribute to the development of world culture and science.

LIBERAL

VMU community is characterised by warm and sincere communication, inspired and strengthened by the humanistic spirit of artes liberales universities.

SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE

Scholarships, loans, concessions, and excellent study conditions for people with disabilities make VMU accessible to everyone.

INTERNATIONAL

Teachers from the EU, the US, and other countries around the world —many of which you too will have the opportunity to visit thanks to VMU's vast network of student exchanges!

CREATIVE

Hundreds of national and international projects in science, art, and education, dozens of sporting victories, accompanied by thousands of sounds from VMU Music Academy—all these create the vibrant life of the University.

COMMUNITY-MINDED

Through joint events, initiatives, and volunteer opportunities, students, faculty, alumni, and Lithuanians around the world come together to form a close-knit community built on engagement, collaboration, and shared purpose.

Study programmes

The University has nine faculties and three academies, offering 54 Bachelor's, 73 Master's, and integrated Law and professional study programmes in Lithuanian and English. In addition, the University offers doctoral studies in 24 fields of science.

The University's study system enables students to create an individual study plan and select related courses that ensure a broader qualification. Internationalisation is strengthened by an extensive cooperation network of more than 700 foreign universities and research centres, with 30 languages taught.

For more information, please see Study Programmes and the Quality Education section of this Report.

- MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS STUDIES
- LIFE, PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL SCIENCES
- INFORMATION, AND MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES
- ENGINEERING SCIENCES
- AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES
- SOCIAL SCIENCES
- EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
- HUMANITIES
- ARTS
- SPORTS

Possibilities

- LIFE LONG LEARNING
- POSSIBILITY TO CHOOSE AMONG 30 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES
- INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDIES AND TRAINEESHIPS
- SCHOLARSHIPS
- OPEN E-STUDIES
- ACCOMMODATION
- STUDY TRAINEESHIPS AND CAREER
- MINOR STUDIES

Our international recognition and partnerships

UI GreenMetric World University Rankings	**The Global University Sustainability Ranking evaluates higher education institutions based on their environmental, infrastructure, energy, waste, transport, and education sustainability indicators.**
THE World University Rankings	**Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings**
WURI	**World's Universities with Real Impact (WURI) global ranking of innovative universities**
QS World University Rankings	**QS World University Rankings and QS World University Rankings by subject 2024**
U-multirank	**U-Multirank international university ranking**
REITINGAI	**Lithuanian university ranking in the magazine Reitingai**
SKVC	**Evaluation of VMU activities by experts from the European University Association (EUA)**
eua European University Association	**Evaluation of VMU activities by experts from the Study Quality Assessment Centre (SKVC)**

VMU is purposefully strengthening its partnerships at the national and international levels to develop research, studies, and innovation.

Academic and scientific partnerships

VMU actively develops international cooperation by participating in joint and double degree study programmes, international research and study organisations, alliances, and research infrastructures. The University carries out joint research and study projects, organises conferences, and participates in networks and initiatives that strengthen the dissemination of knowledge, innovation, and internationalisation.

Strategic international partnerships. The University is the coordinator of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI) consortium, participates in the **Crowdhelix** open innovation platform, and cooperates with the **Startup Wise Guys** acceleration fund. Such initiatives strengthen VMU's internationalisation and enable it to participate in top-level science and technology projects.

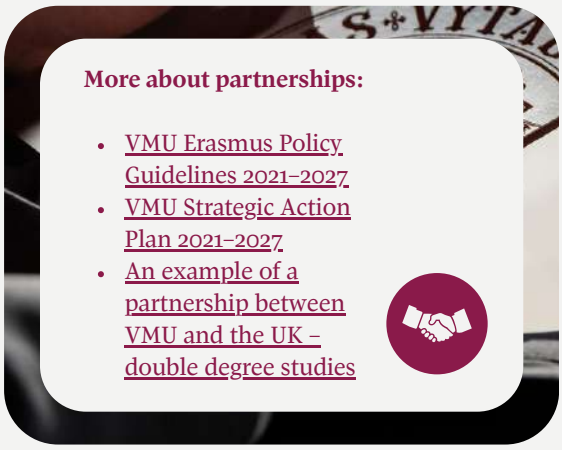
International scientific cooperation. VMU researchers participate in international networks and infrastructures such as **AnaEE-ERIC**, **CLARIN-LT**, and also belong to the university alliance **Transform4Europe** and participate in Higher Education Initiative (**EIT HEI**) projects, which give VMU access to the EIT innovation ecosystem, experts, funding

opportunities, and institutional change tools. This involvement allows the University to carry out interdisciplinary projects and develop innovative solutions in the fields of bioeconomics, technology, social sciences, and others. The University has also joined the **University of Trieste-initiated sustainability initiative**, which encourages European higher education institutions to collaborate in the field of sustainability, share experiences, and implement joint measures in the context of climate change, social responsibility, and sustainable development.

Personal leadership of academics. VMU researchers hold key positions in international organisations, ranging from participation in the European DI laboratories consortium CLAIRE to leadership roles in HERA, AABS, ICA, and other academic and professional associations.

Mobility and the Erasmus+ programme. The University actively implements the Erasmus Policy Guidelines for 2021–2027, ensuring an increase in student and teacher mobility (5–10 percent annually), the development of strategic partnerships, sustainability funding, and quality monitoring.

Business and community partnerships. VMU cooperates with the Lithuanian Responsible Business Association; Kaunas Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts; the Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists, the Infobalt Association, LithuaniaBIO, and other organisations. This brings together a wide range of academic expertise and practical business needs.



More about partnerships:

- VMU Erasmus Policy Guidelines 2021–2027
- VMU Strategic Action Plan 2021–2027
- An example of a partnership between VMU and the UK – double degree studies

Sustainability initiatives and knowledge dissemination

VMU actively organises international and national conferences and initiatives dedicated to the analysis of sustainability issues, scientific progress, and public education.

Conferences

- Sustainable Bioeconomy Development 2024: Theory and Practice—an international conference dedicated to issues of bioeconomic transformation and sustainability. Scientists, policymakers, and business representatives discuss solutions for sustainable resource management, climate change mitigation, and the circular economy.

- AgroEco 2024—an international conference bringing together researchers in agroecology, environmental protection, and sustainable agriculture. It focuses on ecosystem services, improving soil health, preserving biodiversity, and climate change mitigation measures.

- Accounting and Finance: Towards Sustainability—a national conference that discusses how sustainability principles are integrated into accounting, finance, and management processes.

Exhibitions and practical initiatives

Every year, researchers and students from VMU Agriculture Academy present their scientific achievements and innovations at the national exhibitions "Ką pasėsi..." and "Gyvulininkystė", promoting the dissemination of ideas on sustainable agriculture, environmental protection, and the bioeconomy to the public.

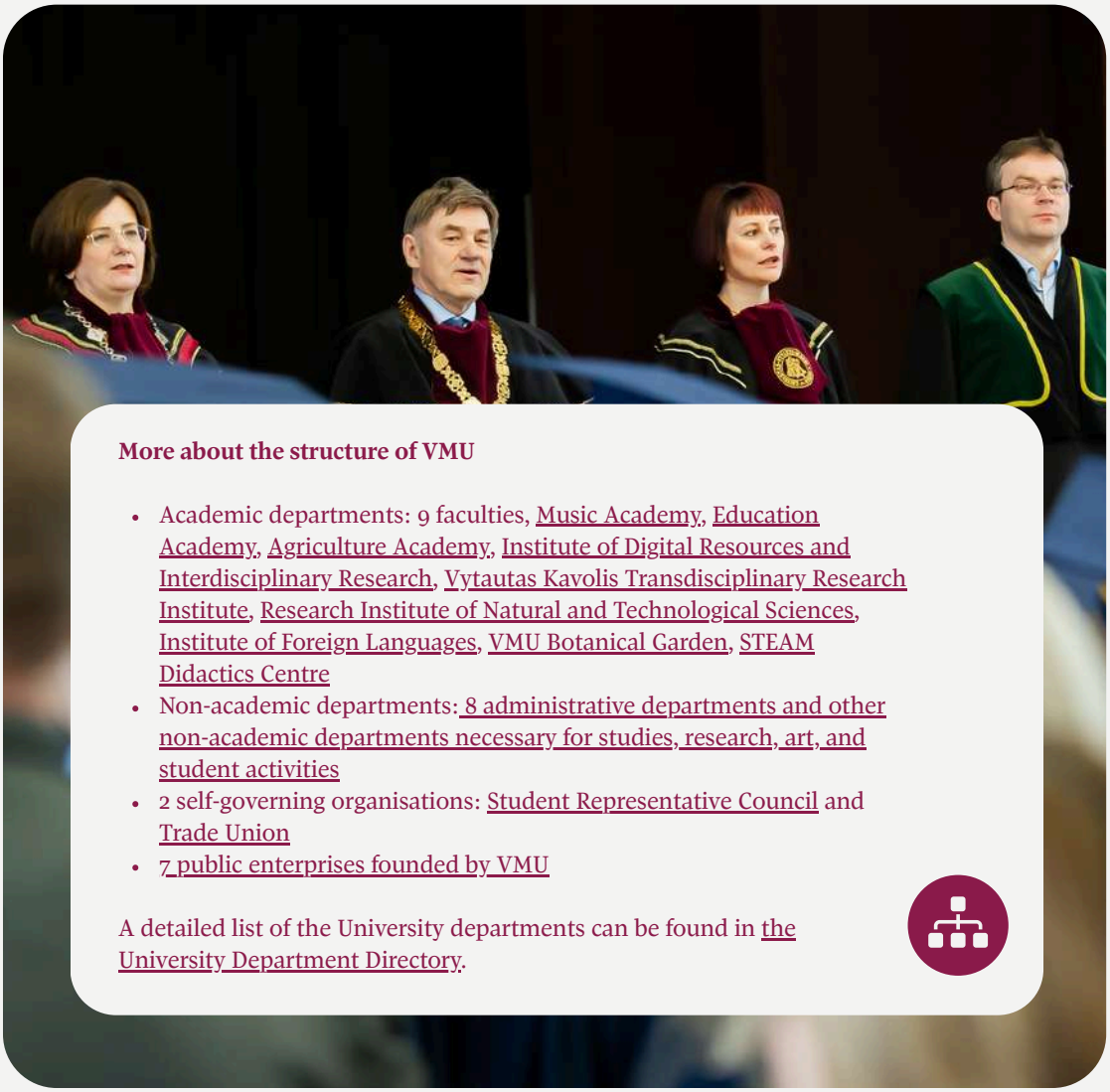
Structure and Management

VMU is governed by collegial bodies—**the University Council** and **the Senate**—and by a single-person governing body—the Rector, who is elected by the Council for a five-year term. The Rector's advisory body is **the Rector's Council**, which includes the vice-rectors, heads of academic departments, the president of the Student Council, and heads of other departments appointed by order of the Rector.

C9 – Gender diversity ratio in the governing body

	Council	Senate	Rector	Total
Number of female members of the board (or other highest management body) at the end of the reporting period	4	4	0	**8**
Number of male members of the board (or other highest management body) at the end of the reporting period	5	3	1	**9**
Gender diversity ratio in the management body				**0.889**

Note: The table shows the composition of the management body in 2024.
The Rector's Council performs an advisory (supervisory) function and is therefore not included in the calculation.



More about the structure of VMU

- Academic departments: 9 faculties, Music Academy, Education Academy, Agriculture Academy, Institute of Digital Resources and Interdisciplinary Research, Vytautas Kavolis Transdisciplinary Research Institute, Research Institute of Natural and Technological Sciences, Institute of Foreign Languages, VMU Botanical Garden, STEAM Didactics Centre
- Non-academic departments: 8 administrative departments and other non-academic departments necessary for studies, research, art, and student activities
- 2 self-governing organisations: Student Representative Council and Trade Union
- 7 public enterprises founded by VMU

A detailed list of the University departments can be found in the University Department Directory.

Sustainability at the University

B2 – Transition to a more sustainable economy: practices, policies and future initiatives

VMU systematically assesses its impact on the environment, society, and the economy in order to strengthen its contribution to sustainable development. During the report writing period, in 2025, a sustainability materiality assessment was carried out to identify the most important sustainability issues and priorities for the University's activities. The assessment process was based on the VSME standard list of sustainability topics, the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings Guidelines, and an analysis of sustainability reporting trends in the higher education sector.

The topics identified as relevant to VMU's activities were linked to the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, thus ensuring the focus of activities and compliance with international sustainability principles.

This analysis ensures that the topics align with international standards, sector trends, and the areas of impact that are most important to the University. The identified topics will be reviewed regularly, and their progress and related actions will be planned and implemented in a targeted manner.

Significant VMU sustainability topics

Topic title	Topic description	Connection with UI GreenMetric	Relevant SDGs
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION			
Climate change and efficient energy consumption	Reduce GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions and energy consumption in operations.	Energy and climate changeTransport	 
Waste reduction and efficient use of materials	Waste reduction and efficient resource management in operations.	Waste	
Biodiversity	Maintenance of local ecosystems (flora and fauna) and strategic contribution to their conservation, assessment of direct and indirect risks to biodiversity.	Environment and infrastructure	

Topic title	Topic description	Connection with UI GreenMetric	Relevant SDGs
SOCIAL AREA			
Health, safety and well-being	Creating a safe and comfortable working environment for employees and students, organising work and processes in a way that promotes their satisfaction and well-being.	Education and research	
Quality education	Accessible, inclusive and continuously improving learning for all.	Education and research	
Equality, diversity and inclusion	Promoting social and economic inclusion and diversity within the organisation.	Environment and infrastructure	 
GOVERNANCE			
Ethics and transparency	Ensuring institutional transparency and promoting an inclusive and ethical culture.	Education and research	
Innovation	Applying innovative solutions, introducing modern technologies into key operational processes.	ICT disclosure	
Cybersecurity and data privacy	Ensuring the protection of personal data of students, employees, and partners, as well as responsible data collection and management.	N/A	 

VMU cooperates with various social groups interested in the University's activities at different levels—from strategic decision-making to everyday initiatives, seeking to reduce the negative impact of its activities on the environment and society, while strengthening its positive influence on the academic community and the general public.

The University utilises various communication channels—surveys, forums, student representatives, and partnerships with institutions and NGOs—to ensure that voices are heard and decisions address real needs.

Key stakeholders

MANAGEMENT BODIES	The Senate, Council, Rector, Chancellors of Academies, Deans of Faculties, and Directors of Institutes are involved in strategy development and approval, implementation of action plans, and decision-making on study programmes, budget, and development.
TEACHERS AND RESEARCHERS	They are involved through academic committees, participate in the development and updating of study programmes, and carry out research and projects with partners.
ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT STAFF	They are involved in day-to-day University management, process improvement, and quality assurance activities.
STUDENTS	They are involved through student representation, surveys, participate in quality assurance processes, have representatives in the Senate, working groups, commissions, and other activities.
STATE INSTITUTIONS	The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, municipalities, and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania are involved in higher education policy, funding, accreditation processes, and the formation of education and research strategies.
ALUMNI	They are involved through alumni associations, mentoring programmes, support for the University, and joint projects.
PARTNERS	They are involved through internships, joint research and innovation initiatives, and advisory councils on updating the content of study programmes.
INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS	Universities, research networks, Erasmus+, etc., are involved through student and staff exchanges, joint study programmes, and international projects.
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITIES	Involved in social projects, joint events, cultural initiatives, and volunteering.

Environmental Protection

Energy and climate change | Transport | Environment and infrastructure

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY | 13 CLIMATE ACTION | 15 LIFE ON LAND

Climate Change and Energy Efficiency

B3 – Energy and greenhouse gas emissions

VMU is purposefully implementing activities aimed at efficient energy consumption, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and preserving biodiversity. This area is closely tied to the University's environmental priorities.

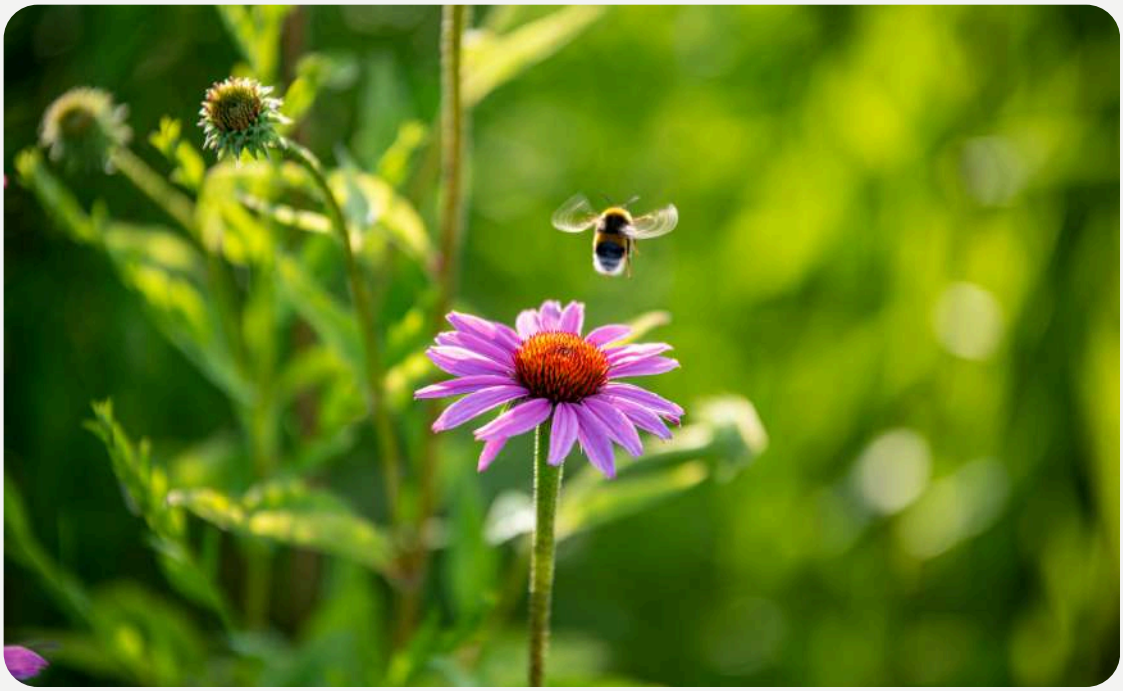
Activities implemented

In 2024, VMU introduced a unified consolidated digital asset management system that allows for the centralised collection of information about buildings, premises, engineering structures, and their maintenance costs. This provides a basis for better planning of energy costs and making management decisions on increasing energy efficiency.

To increase energy efficiency, VMU is implementing energy-saving technologies, including LED lighting, inverter technology air conditioners, Energy Star-certified computers and printers, ventilation systems with heat recovery, and energy-efficient household appliances in dormitories.

Green solutions are applied in the construction or renovation of new buildings: effective building airtightness, thermal insulation, passive solar design principles, green roofs, advanced ventilation systems, and the use of environmentally friendly building materials. Projects are implemented through green procurement.

From 2022, environmental criteria have been applied to the procurement of green cabinet furniture—100% of the wood, wood materials, and products used in the manufacture of furniture must originate from forests certified by the **Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)** or the **Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC)**, or equivalent. This decision contributes to the sustainable use of resources and the formation of a responsible supply chain.



Total energy consumption in 2024 reached 16,433 MWh.

B3 – Energy consumption distribution

	Renewable	Non-renewable	Total
Electricity (MWh)	1,332.00	4,508.00	**5,840.00**
Self-generated electricity (MWh)	0	0	**0**

Note: VMU declared this ratio in the 2024 GreenMetric report, which covers the period between October 2023 and October 2024. All electricity supplied to the organisation by Enefit is considered renewable electricity.

In 2024, the total amount of GHG emissions generated by the University's activities was 5,275.17 tCO2e.

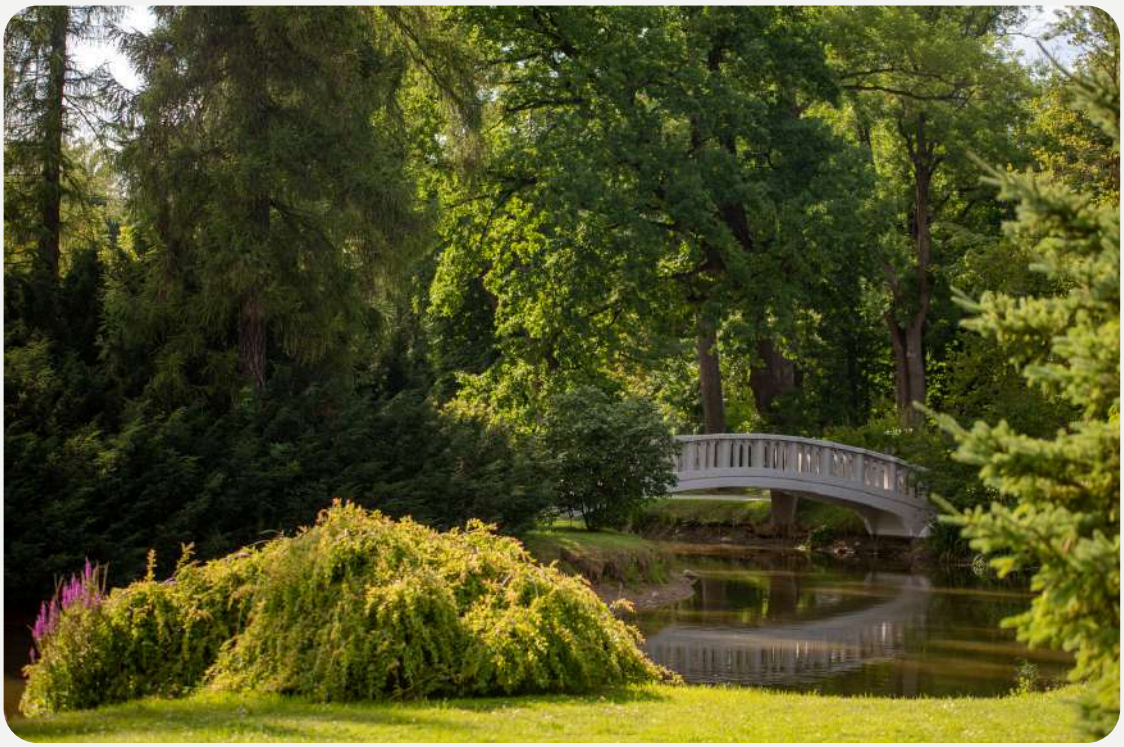
B3 – Greenhouse gas emission intensity

Total GHG emission intensity (based on turnover [tCO_2e / EUR])	**0.0001**
Total GHG emission intensity per total university population* (tCO_2e / person)	**0.4984 tCO_2e / person**

Note: *Population – students (except those studying remotely) and employees.

Future directions

The University plans to continue its energy-saving measures and systematically reduce emissions, while continuing to perform calculations based on the UI GreenMetric methodology. Future initiatives include the implementation of innovative solutions in buildings, the integration of circular economy principles into infrastructure, and the continued use of renewable energy sources.



Waste Reduction and Efficient Use of Resources

B7 – Resource use, circular economy and waste management, B6 – Water consumption

The efficient use of resources and responsible waste management are important areas of sustainability at VMU, covering both administrative and scientific activities. In this area, the University complies with key legislation, such as the Law on Waste Management, the Rules on Waste Management, and the Law on the Control of Toxic Substances, ensuring that waste and hazardous materials are managed safely and responsibly.

Activities implemented

The University uses a variety of measures to achieve its goals of reducing resource consumption and ensuring more efficient resource use processes. Document management has transitioned to the digital space, reducing the need for paper and streamlining administrative processes. Student work is submitted in digital format, and printing practices have been optimised using centralised equipment (network printers), which eliminates the need for excess equipment and saves resources.

In its activities, VMU applies the principles of the circular economy, seeking to reduce waste and increase resource efficiency. One example is the Training Farm of VMU Agriculture Academy, where green waste is used to fertilise the fields: bio-waste generated from lawn mowing and leaves collected in the fall. This ensures that bio-waste is not disposed of but returned to the soil, contributing to the restoration of the nutrient cycle and the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices. Similar solutions are also applied in the Botanical Garden: rainwater collected from the roofs is used to replenish water bodies and to water the collections and exhibitions, thus reducing the consumption of drinking water. In addition, the Botanical Garden has a parking area with a porous surface that allows rainwater to seep into the groundwater.

In addition, VMU has special rooms for safe work with chemicals, ensuring their responsible storage and use. The University regularly submits information about chemical precursors stored in laboratories to the PTAKIS system, ensuring traceability and control.

Water use at the University is constantly monitored and managed to ensure efficient use of resources and responsible management of economic processes. In 2024, total water consumption amounted to 73,228 m³, all of which was discharged in accordance with applicable legislation and established procedures.

B7 – Waste

Type of waste	Sent for recycling/ reuse (t)	Sent for disposal (t)	Hazardous waste (t)	Non-hazardous waste (t)	Total (t)
Organic green waste	600	0	0	600	**600**
Inorganic waste (paper, plastic)	20	0	0	20	**20,00**
Hazardous waste (electronics, chemicals)	0	6	6	0	**6,00**
Total amount	**620**	6	6	**620**	**626,00**

Note. Data source: GPAIS.

Future directions

We plan to continue strengthening the use of electronic documents, reducing paper consumption, developing the reuse of bio-waste and implementing new practices of the circular economy.

Biodiversity

B5 – Biodiversity

VMU's biodiversity activities are based on national and international documents as well as a set of strategic commitments. The Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), implemented under the Convention on Biological Diversity, provides for the conservation of rare and endangered species in botanical garden collections, and these principles are integrated into the 2023–2027 Strategy of the Training Farm of VMU Agriculture Academy and the 2024–2026 Strategic Plan of VMU Botanical Garden, and other planning documents. The direction for the conservation of biological diversity is also reflected in the Annual Activity and Strategic Plan Report of VMU Agriculture Academy, which highlights key scientific projects and initiatives.

Activities implemented

VMU uses various infrastructure and implements initiatives to strengthen biodiversity. The main initiatives are as follows:

- **The Arboretum of VMU Agriculture Academy**—a collection of more than 900 species, including systematic and geographical exhibitions that reflect the diversity of the world's flora. The Arboretum serves as an open centre for research, study, and public education, and is a member of the Association of Botanical Gardens of Lithuanian Universities.

- **The Green Intelligence cluster** brings together the Agroecology Centre, Arboretum, Botanical Garden, Experimental Station, Training Farm, Pomological Garden, and Business and Social Partnership Centre. This platform was created to coordinate scientific, academic, business, and social activities in the field of biodiversity and agroecology.

- **The Hunting Research Laboratory** conducts research and training on more than 10,000 hectares of training hunting grounds, developing knowledge about forest ecosystems, animal populations, and their protection.

- **The Botanical Garden** has accumulated the most extensive collection of plants in Lithuania (>19,000 in collection numbers), including 103 rare and protected plant species in Lithuania and 305 plant collection numbers classified as national genetic resources. The collection of rare and protected plants was established as part of the international project "BOTANICA SUDAVICA", dedicated to the implementation of climate-resistant measures and ex situ conservation. The Garden is an active member of international networks (BGCI, EBGC, BBG, BGBSR) and participates in the GSPC activities.

- **The initiative "A Lawn is not a Desert. Feed the Bees!"** encourages increasing biodiversity by leaving areas of uncut lawn. This creates the opportunity to form a patch of flowering meadow that will become a refuge and food source for insects.

- **Biodiversity challenge "BioBlitz"—researchers** and students of VMU Agriculture Academy participate in the biodiversity challenge "BioBlitz-2025", organised by the European Association of Life Sciences Universities (ICA) (coordinator—Wageningen University). In 2024, the team of VMU Agriculture Academy recorded 1,205 species (1,785 observations), ranking 4th among European universities.

Achievements in 2024

- A total of 22 international R&D projects in the fields of biodiversity, climate change, and agroecosystems were implemented. These include ECO2ADAPT (ecosystem-based adaptation and forest resilience), NENUPHAR (nutrient recycling and pollution reduction), WHEATWATCHER (sustainable wheat farming practices), ENOUGH (GHG reduction in food chains), HoliSoil (soil management in European forests), and NATURALIT (Natura 2000 network management).

- The largest initiatives at the national level included BioTEC—the development of a centre of excellence for bioeconomy research, and MIKIS—the development of an information system for forests and forest roads.

Contribution of VMU Agriculture Academy to sustainability

VMU Agriculture Academy combines science, studies, and practice in the fields of bioeconomy, climate change, agroecosystems, and forest sustainability. The strategy of VMU Agriculture Academy aims to promote climate-neutral development, implement the principles of the circular economy, and expand international cooperation. The Academy participates in European research infrastructures (AnaEE-ERIC, ICOS ERIC, LifeWatch) and international Horizon Europe, LIFE, Erasmus+ and Interreg projects.

An essential part of its activities is the Training Farm, which has been operating for over 30 years and manages 450 hectares of land, 22 hectares of which are organic. Here, crop and livestock farming are developed, and sustainable practices are applied, including organic farming, seven-field crop rotation, and no-till technologies, which help to conserve soil, reduce emissions, and protect biodiversity.

In 2024, the Academy prepared 69 publications on the Green Deal topics and implemented 81 projects in the areas of climate change, biodiversity, renewable energy, and the circular economy. The Academy also organises events dedicated to agribusiness sustainability, innovation, and climate change.

In 2024, a strategy for the modernisation of the Training Farm was launched to respond to the challenges of climate change and the principles of biodiversity conservation. In accordance with the strategic provisions, a farm-laboratory is being designed, where circular bioeconomy principles will be applied, scientific research and experiments will be carried out, and the latest scientific achievements and innovations in the field of sustainability in agriculture will be demonstrated.

Future Sustainable Activity Priorities of the Training Farm of VMU Agriculture Academy

SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK FARMING

- Comprehensively modernise the main area of activity of the farm—livestock farming—by implementing a new CliFarm—a smart, climate-friendly farm-laboratory construction project.

SUSTAINABLE CROP PRODUCTION

- Develop environmentally friendly organic farming and sustainable farming systems, involving the study and research community of VMU Agriculture Academy and all friendly cooperating social partners in the country and abroad.
- Strengthen the soil's GHG accumulation/absorption function.

SUSTAINABLE COOPERATION

- Cooperate and develop the production of organic products (by designing and building a biogas power plant) and renewable energy (by installing solar/wind power plants) together with the scientists, researchers, and social partners of VMU Agriculture Academy.
- Cooperate and create new, high added-value food products from livestock (pasteurised milk for schools and kindergartens, natural yogurt), crop production (grains, feed) from own raw materials together with the scientists, researchers, and social partners of VMU Agriculture Academy.

SUSTAINABLE PUBLICITY

- Promote sustainable farming and organic farming to agricultural entities, scientific and educational institutions, and the public.
- Open up the training farm's opportunities, not only to the community but also to the public, involving all interested national and foreign partner countries in the implementation of the vision for the success of the Farm of the Future.

B5 – VMU sites located in areas of high biodiversity sensitivity

Area (region)	Area (ha)	Areas managed by VMU and their links to sensitive areas and objects of biodiversity
VMU Agriculture Academy, (Kaunas district Akademijos miestelis–Academy Campus, Noreikiškės, Armaniškiai, Karkiškiai, Miriniškiai, Kazliškiai, and Sakalai villages)	681.20	Akademijos miestelis–Academy Campus is located near Kamša Botanical and Zoological Reserve. Pakarklė Forest borders Paštuva Botanical Reserve, and Karklė Ichthyological Reserve is located nearby—these areas are protected under the Natura 2000 programme.
Botanical Garden (Kaunas City, Žilibero g., Vilties g.)	57.81	The Botanical Garden itself is a protected area of biological diversity and an important centre for the preservation of plant genetic resources.
Kėdainiai District, Vilainiai Eldership, Keleriškiai, Mištautai, and Juodkiškiai Villages	180.35	In this area, VMU owns and operates several buildings and plots of land used for university activities. The Vilainiai district also includes the Lančiūnava Forest Botanical Reserve, the Šventybrasčio Landscape Reserve, and the Lančiūnava Forest Biosphere Reserve. The Natura 2000 territories of Lančiūnava (5,222.29 ha) and Labūnava (5,662.7 ha) are located nearby.

B5 – Land use

Land use type	Area, ha
Total nature-oriented area (zone)* in the organisation's territory	833.53
Total nature-oriented area outside the organisation's territory*	0
Total land area used by the organisation	95.14
Total land area used	**928.67**

Note: *A nature-oriented zone is a zone where nature is primarily protected or restored. VMU considers these zones to be areas planted with vegetation.

Future directions

VMU plans to continue investing in research on organic farming, reducing soil degradation, preserving plant diversity, and fostering international networking. Greater attention will be paid to innovations in agroecosystem management, student involvement, and public education on the importance of biodiversity conservation.

Social

Employees

B8 – Workforce – general characteristics

Social responsibility is an integral part of VMU's activities. The University is creating an inclusive and equality-based academic community that focuses on the well-being of employees and students, equal rights, safe working conditions, and opportunities for professional growth. The aim is to provide both employees and students with an environment that encourages personal development, international cooperation, and active involvement in social life.

Employment relationships and the working environment are governed by the laws of the Republic of Lithuania, VMU's internal human resources procedures, and **VMU Quality Manual**, which establish the distribution of responsibilities, transparent decision-making procedures, and employee involvement.

The University aims to ensure fair practices, strengthen gender balance, reduce employee turnover, and promote a culture of community and human resource development. These topics are described in more detail later in the Report.

B8 – Number of employees by contract type

Type of contract	Number of employees
Permanent	1,014
Fixed-term/temporary	1,048
Total number of employees	**2,062**

Note: The calculation uses the headcount equivalent. The data are presented based on the results at the end of the reporting period.

B8 – Employee turnover

Number of employees who left during the reporting period	18
Number of employees at the beginning of the reporting period	2 062
Number of employees at the end of the reporting period	2 044
Employee turnover (%) during the reporting period	0.30

Equality, Diversity, and Integration

VMU is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all members of the community through the implementation of the approved internal documents:

- VMU Equal Opportunities Policy
- VMU Disability Policy "University of Inclusive Opportunities"
- VMU Gender Equality Plan 2021–2025
- VMU Sexual Harassment Prevention Procedure

The principles outlined in these documents aim to reduce discrimination, violence, and harassment, while strengthening gender equality, inclusion, and social diversity. The diversity of the University community is also reflected in the fact that, in 2024, 171 foreign citizens worked at VMU. Additionally, the number of students with disabilities studying at the University has been growing steadily every year: in 2023, there were 133, and by 2024, this number had increased to 147.

The principles of equality, diversity, and integration are implemented through continuous policy reviews, training, discussions, conferences, investigations of cases of unethical behaviour, and educational campaigns.

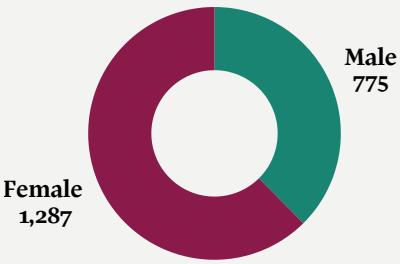
Since 2021, the University has been implementing a formalised disability policy, "VMU: University of Inclusive Opportunities", one of the key elements of which is the position of VMU Disability Coordinator (established in 2020). Practical actions reinforce the policy: an annual conference "Disability Forum: Inclusive Higher Education" is organised, and public education activities and campaigns such as "No Difference" are carried out. The University community regularly participates in national and international training on the topic of disability inclusion.

Activities implemented

In 2024, VMU actively implemented projects and participated in partner initiatives that promote gender equality, diversity, and integration within the academic community and society. These include:

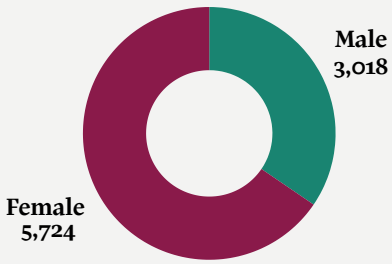
- LUMA—VMU project focused on developing measures to promote gender equality.
- The international project SUCCESS, which strengthens socially innovative centres of Ukraine.
- Projects coordinated by the Education Academy include SheTechTalks, a project aimed at breaking down barriers in the field of ICT, and Baltic Harmony, which focuses on preventing violence in educational institutions.
- Various projects of VMU Faculty of Natural Sciences are related to gender equality in climate policy institutions and biomedical research.
- The Village Verve! project, curated by the Agriculture Academy, which strengthens the role of women in climate change and economic development processes.

B8 – Labour force – Gender



Total number of employees - 2,062

Students – Gender



Total number of students - 8,742

Note. There is no information about employees or students who would classify themselves as “Other” or “Not specified”.

Education and research

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Health, Safety, and Well-being

B9 – Workforce – health and safety

VMU strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for its employees and students, promoting overall well-being and satisfaction with both studies and work. This goal is based on the following internal documents:

- Human Resources Management Policy
- Rules of Procedure
- Health-Promoting University Programme 2022–2026

The University strives **for zero accidents**, while improving psychological environments and community relations, as well as developing physical conditions, healthy lifestyle practices, and health education.

VMU actively cares for the health and well-being of the community. Physical health is addressed through regular training, the provision of personal protective equipment, health checks, and preventive vaccinations. Accidents are monitored and analysed; during the reporting period**, three work-related incidents** were recorded**,** the analysis of which helps to improve safety processes. Fire and civil protection measures also contribute to physical safety.

Activities implemented

VMU Psychology Clinic

VMU Psychology Clinic cares for the mental health of the University community by providing individual consultations, self-help seminars, and training on emotional well-being topics. In 2024, the **Student Well-being Centre** was established to provide assistance in cases of adaptation and psychological challenges. In 2024, the International Cooperation Department, together with other University departments, focused on the integration of foreign students studying or doing internships at VMU, the promotion of voluntary activities, and the development of a sense of community. Since 2024, the International Cooperation Department, together with VMU Psychology Clinic and international partners, has been implementing the project “The Mobile Minds in Motion”, which aims to provide students and staff with the tools and knowledge to prepare for and address mental health challenges associated with the unique experience of studying abroad. The University also promotes community spirit and a healthy lifestyle through sporting events, free exercise classes, and discounts on wellness programmes.

VMU Sports Centre

VMU Sports Centre actively promotes physical activity and a healthy lifestyle. In 2024, it expanded its sports infrastructure by installing a beach volleyball court, a 3x3 basketball court, and a baseball stadium. The community was offered 18 different physical activities, which were attended by more than 1,200 participants. The Sports Centre organised Sports and Health Week, the 100th Anniversary Run of Agriculture Academy, and Zapyškis Community Run, and participated in the National #walk15 Mobility Challenge, in which the University took 4th place. Lectures, exercise classes, and wellness seminars help to strengthen the physical health of the community.

All these initiatives are integrated into the 2022–2026 programme of the **Health Promoting Universities Network, of which VMU is a member.** The latter includes both improving the physical environment and strengthening community relations. In addition, the University is implementing innovative solutions: collaborating with start-ups, introducing digital platforms to improve well-being, and organising first aid, safety, and skills training. In this way, VMU is creating a comprehensive, safe, inclusive, and health-based environment for all members of the community.

Quality Education

VMU consistently implements measures to ensure the high quality of studies and their continuous improvement, based on the following internal documents:

- Study Regulations
- Quality Manual
- Description of Procedure for Professional Development of Academic and Non-academic Staff

Activities implemented

Feedback system. In 2024, surveys of students, graduates, and teachers continued, with the results used to improve the quality of studies. The feedback process is regulated by a special description of the procedure, which ensures systematic data collection, analysis, and application.

Mentoring and student support. The Students for Students mentoring programme continued, helping the first-year students to integrate into the University and ensuring closer ties between students at different levels of studies (for more information, visit the University website).

Career monitoring. Graduate career monitoring surveys are conducted to help the University assess the practical impact of studies and employment opportunities, and to ensure that studies meet the needs of the labour market.

Improvement of staff qualifications. In accordance with the Description of Procedure for Professional Development of Academic and Non-academic Staff, training courses, seminars, and other initiatives aimed at strengthening the competencies of academic and non-academic staff are carried out on an ongoing basis. VMU also participates in international projects, such as the TECCHED Erasmus+ initiative, which aims to create a technology-based climate change education programme and learning platform for teachers. These measures ensure high-quality studies, continuous professional development, and advanced study process management.

VMU has implemented a modern study concept based on the model of Harvard University (USA). VMU stands out among other universities of Lithuania in that it gives students the freedom to choose and design their own studies. Studying at this University means gaining a comprehensive education for the creators of the future: a broader outlook, the ability to critically assess problems from different perspectives, the capacity to adapt to new knowledge, to make independent and competent decisions, and to hone and showcase student's leadership skills.

As many as 94.3% of VMU graduates find employment

Sustainability-oriented programmes at the University

Environmental protection programmes

Programme name	Level of studies	Abstract
Sustainable Biobusiness Management	Bachelor's programme	The study programme trains specialists who can apply the principles of sustainable management and the circular economy in the biological resource production and processing sectors. Students acquire the knowledge of management, economics, and biotechnology necessary for the sustainable development of biobusiness and responsible decision-making in the bioeconomy.
Applied Ecology	Bachelor's programme	The study programme trains specialists who can assess the impact of human activity on the environment, analyse changes in ecosystems, and develop solutions that help preserve biological diversity. The programme covers ecological research methods, environmental management principles, and sustainable natural resource use strategies, providing practical skills in environmental protection.
Ecology and Climate Change	Master's programme	The study programme trains Master's students who are able to analyse the impact of climate change on ecosystems, identify environmental problems, and propose solutions. The programme focuses on the development of nature management and environmental protection strategies, the application of innovative solutions, and the enhancement of ecosystem resilience, ensuring the services they provide.
Sustainable Energy	Master's programme	The study programme trains specialists who can implement and manage renewable energy systems, optimise energy consumption, and reduce environmental pollution. The programme covers the use of solar, wind, water, and biomass energy, as well as the management of technological processes and the development of innovative energy solutions.
Environmental Protection Organisation	Master's programme	The study programme trains specialists who can investigate anthropogenic environmental and climate changes, as well as their impact on ecosystems and human health. The programme focuses on the principles of sustainable development and the EU and Lithuanian legislation, providing students with the skills to analyse the state of the environment and make decisions to solve complex environmental problems.
Wildlife Resources and Management	Master's programme	The study programme trains specialists who can assess and predict trends in wildlife populations and the use and protection of natural resources. Students acquire knowledge of biology and ecology, learn to apply advanced research methods, develop management strategies and programmes, provide consultations and formulate scientifically based conclusions in the field of wildlife protection and use.
Agroecosystems	Master's programme	The study programme trains specialists who can assess and manage agricultural ecosystems, apply sustainable farming technologies, and ensure the protection of soil, water, and biodiversity. The programme focuses on innovative solutions for agricultural sustainability, climate change mitigation, and the development of environmentally friendly production methods.

Social programmes

Programme name	Level of studies	Abstract
Health Psychology	Master's programme	The programme trains specialists who can improve the quality of life for individuals and society by identifying psychological, behavioural, and social factors in health prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation. Students acquire knowledge of psychological theories, their impact, and assessment methods, gain practical experience in healthcare institutions, and complete their studies with a Master's thesis. Graduates are awarded a Master's degree in psychology, specialising in health psychology.
Education Management	Master's programme	The programme trains masters of education who are able to work in formal and informal educational institutions and business organisations, focusing on career planning and training organisation. Students acquire the competence to design and manage educational content at various levels of the education system.
Inclusive Education: Socio-educational Industries	Master's programme	The programme trains highly qualified inclusive education specialists who are able to work in multifunctional support groups, apply special educational measures, and initiate socialisation activities. Students are taught to increase the inclusion of people with special needs in the educational process, strengthen the participation of families and communities, and promote cooperation between the public, private, and academic sectors.

Programmes in the field of governance

Programme name	Level of studies	Abstract
Biotechnology	Bachelor's programme	The programme is designed for students seeking a career in biotechnology, one of the most critical areas of economic growth in Europe in the 21st century. The programme develops the knowledge and skills necessary for biotechnology research, application, and innovation.
Applied Biotechnology	Master's programme	The programme trains highly qualified interdisciplinary specialists capable of creating innovative products and technologies in the fields of plant, medical, aquaculture, and bioelectrical technologies.

VMU encourages students to engage in sustainability issues through both academic and community activities. Every year, scholarships are awarded for the best final projects on sustainability, funded by partners such as VšĮ Ekoagros, the State Forest Service, and others. Students actively participate in the Ecology Week and Earth Day events, symbolically raising the Earth flag as a sign of responsibility for the sustainability of the planet. Sustainability topics are also integrated into higher levels of study—doctoral students in ecology, environmental engineering, agronomy, and forestry prepare dissertations that examine issues of sustainable development.

Future directions

VMU will continue to strengthen the internationalisation of studies by expanding the number of programmes in English and developing partnerships with foreign universities. At the same time, an innovative study environment will be created by integrating digital solutions and constantly updating programmes in line with labour market needs. The University remains committed to ensuring inclusion and accessibility by providing opportunities for students with diverse needs to pursue their studies. Significant attention will also be paid to ensuring career success by maintaining close ties with employers and systematically monitoring the careers of graduates.

Governance

Ethics and Transparency

B11 – Convictions and fines for corruption and bribery

In its activities, VMU is guided by the principles of transparency, integrity, and academic ethics. The University has adopted **the Code of Ethics** that sets standards of conduct for members of the community and their responsibility for compliance. The Code promotes mutual respect, academic integrity, a commitment to society, and professional ethics.

The implementation of ethical principles is supervised by **the Ethics Commission**, whose activities are regulated by the Regulations. The Commission investigates violations of the Code (on average 1–2 cases per month), prepares draft internal documents, consults the community, and organises training on ethical issues. This practice helps to ensure not only clear rules, but also their application in everyday academic activities.

VMU adheres to the principle of transparency—ethical documents, the Regulations of the Ethics Commission, and the Code of Ethics are published on the University's website, allowing every member of the community to familiarise themselves with them.

During the reporting period, no violations of corruption or bribery were recorded at VMU.

Innovation

VMU promotes innovation within both academic activities and the community, striving for a digitalised, accessible, and inclusive study environment, as well as international cooperation. The University relies on strategic projects and partnerships that strengthen the national and global innovation ecosystem.

Activities implemented

The University is consistently expanding the application of innovation in the organisation of studies, communication with the public, and research. VMU community organises discussions, forums, and hackathons dedicated to address current social, technological, and environmental issues. In 2024, events such as SMFHACK'24 (focused on addictions) and EkoHack (addressing fertiliser sustainability issues) took place. **A discussion** was held on the Quality Day, and awards were presented for the most innovative projects. During the reporting year, an artificial intelligence-based project was launched to detect hate speech and create a more inclusive society.

The digitisation of the study process begins with the admission system and ends with the issuance of electronic certificates, thus ensuring more efficient and modern University management. The tools implemented include virtual learning systems (Moodle) and digital collaboration tools (e.g., studentas.vdu.lt) used for both teaching and project implementation.

Strategic projects and tools

- In 2025, work began on the creation of **Vytis** Defence and Innovation Centre, which will become a national hub for the development, testing, and certification of defence technologies.
- VMU was selected as the coordinator of the Lithuanian consortium participating in the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI)** programme, which provides access to MIT resources, joint research, and academic exchange opportunities.
- The **Agro-Innovation Centr**e was established to conduct high-level research in the field of bioeconomics.
- The Centre of Excellence in Forestry was established with the aim of digitising forest environment monitoring and data collection and analysis, and contributing to sustainable forest management. The Centre is implementing the Horizon Europe project "**Forest 4.0**", coordinated by VMU, which strengthens the development of sustainable forestry and the introduction of innovations in this field.
- The **Horizon Europe** project **PRIM-ROCK** focuses on the decarbonisation of industrial processes and innovation in heating and calcining furnace technologies. The project is implemented in Lithuania by the VMU's Agriculture Academy.
- The **EU-REPAIR** project, funded by EUKI 2024, promotes the sustainable renovation of valuable and historic buildings to reduce CO_2 emissions and enhance climate resilience.
- VMU's Agriculture Academy participated in the **Green Ideas Festival** 2024, presenting scientific and green innovations in the bioeconomy, agriculture and food sectors, and contributing to public education and the development of partnerships.

University start-ups

VMU also actively encourages the creation of start-ups by licensing products and technologies developed at the University. These start-ups not only develop innovative solutions but also contribute to the development of a sustainable economy. Their research and experimental development are expected to be applied both in the market and in the University's internal activities. These include:

MB Innobactus

focuses on biotechnology research and experimental development.

UAB Biohifas

develops circular economy solutions by recycling industrial side streams and developing alternative proteins.

UAB Biolinka

founded in early 2025, commercialises new-generation genetic skin research, enabling the creation of personalised products.

UAB Baltic Natural

founded in early 2025, develops innovative food supplements based on organic raw materials and non-perishable technologies.

MB Neurocrop

founded in early 2025, develops solutions for sustainable agriculture, including the InnoPredict device for hydroponics.

Cybersecurity and Data Privacy

VMU pays special attention to community data security and cyber threat prevention. The University utilises multi-factor authentication solutions, access control, and centralised IT security systems, as well as advanced information management tools, including cloud computing and learning management systems. Together these tools ensure secure collaboration, document management, and remote learning.

Training sessions are regularly organised to raise awareness among the community. In 2024, **three GoPhish simulation campaigns** and general cybersecurity training sessions were conducted. The University also cooperates with the **National Cyber Security Centre** by participating in initiatives such as the PhishEx cyber shield.

During the reporting year, **25 minor phishing incidents** were reported, all of which were promptly addressed. Compromised accounts were isolated, responsible officials were notified, and preventive measures were implemented. The incidents did not cause significant damage to the University or data subjects.

A Cyber Security and Data Privacy Policy is currently being developed in accordance with the latest NIS2 requirements and is planned to be approved in 2026 to ensure consistent prevention, incident response, and community security enhancement.

All of these measures ensure the highest security standards and help the University maintain its leadership in digital education.

Appendices

B1 – Basis for preparation

Name, legal form	Public institution
Head	Ineta Dabašinskienė, Rector
Main activity	Higher education institutions, universities.
Date of registration	On 28 April 1989, at the conference of Lithuanian and émigré scientists ""The Concept of a National Higher Education Institution and Kaunas University", the Act of Restoration of Vytautas Magnus University was announced. On 4 July 1989, the Law on the Restoration of Vytautas Magnus University granted the restored Vytautas Magnus University the status of an independent institution of higher education.
Registered office	K. Donelaičio g. 58, LT-44248 Kaunas
Company code	111950396
VAT payer code	LT119503917
Sector classification code(s) according to the classification of economic activities (NACE)	ID - 1563 (8540); Code - 85.40.20; "Higher university education"
Asset value stated in the balance sheet (million EUR)	EUR 128,545,289 (31 December 2024)
Net sales revenue (million euros)	Net sales revenue amounts to EUR 12,897,615 – this includes both the main and other operating income from the income statement.
Expenses (thousand euros)	VMU expenses in 2024 – EUR 86,528.2 thousand, of which EUR 6,763.1 thousand for scholarships in 2024.
Average number of employees	2,062
Website	https://www.vdu.lt/en/