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SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME OF VILNIUS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES FOR 2022-2025

CHAPTER I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Programme for Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences for 2022-2025 (hereinafter – the Programme) sets out the purpose, principles, guidelines, implementation and coordination of the Programme in order to contribute to the implementation of the horizontal strategic goal of the Strategy of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences for 2021- 2025. This Programme complements the long-term institutional direction and annual accountability to the society of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences on social responsibility and sustainable development.

2. Definitions used in the Programme:

2.1. Social responsibility is an integral principle of an organisation's activities that adds value to the society, whereby an organisation voluntarily integrates social, environmental, transparency and other principles of public good into its activities in order to be a responsible, proactive, community-based, civic and public-oriented participant in the society.

2.2. Sustainable development is a targeted policy and activity for the development of an organisation that aims to purposefully promote the economic, social and environmental needs of the society in the short and long term, taking into account national, regional and international priorities in the context of sustainable development.

3. The Programme has been prepared in the context of the strategic priorities and needs of the United Nations, the European Union, the Republic of Lithuania and the municipalities of the Vilnius region in the context of social responsibility and sustainable development, with a particular emphasis on the potential for the application of education and applied research, experimental development and artistic activities.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

4. Since 2018, Vilnius University of Applied Sciences has been participating in the *United Nations Global Compact*, becoming a member of the network and committing itself to creating and promoting the well-being of the society based on the principles of social responsibility and sustainable development. Participation in the UN Global Compact encourages responsible behaviour and adherence to ten universal principles in the areas of human rights, employee rights, the environment and anti-corruption. In accordance with the UN Global Compact, Vilnius UAS has committed to publishing annual reports on its social responsibility activities, which provide information on ongoing and planned social and environmental activities, assess the results achieved, and inform the public about practices of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences as a socially responsible institution.

5. Since 2018, Vilnius University of Applied Sciences has been contributing to the implementation of the Lithuanian Progress Strategy 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 by promoting the development of sustainable competences in the community, openness to sustainable development ideas, socially responsible initiatives, creativity, dialogue, cooperation, and innovation.

6. Since 2018, the Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development area has been under the supervision of the Research Department, which monitors and coordinates these activities, analyses data, organises the development of sustainable competences of the community, prepares guidelines for improving activities and prepares the annual report on the Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences, which is an integral part of the Annual Report of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences (Annex) and the official report submitted to the UN Global Compact.

7. In 2020, the Research Department initiated a targeted implementation of social responsibility and sustainable development in all faculties of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences. Working groups on social responsibility and sustainable development have been established at each faculty. The aim of these working groups is to ensure the targeted implementation of social responsibility and sustainable development in the faculties, with a particular focus on the potential of the specialised activities of the faculties in the context of sustainable development.

8. Since 2021, Vilnius UAS has followed the Strategy 2021-2025, which focuses on sustainable change and the strengthening of social responsibility. The document sets out the vision,

mission, strategic goals, objectives and strategic directions of Vilnius UAS. The motto of the strategy is "*We change ourselves and others sustainably*". The Strategy identifies social responsibility as a horizontal strategic priority.

CHAPTER III

PURPOSE, PRINCIPLES AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

9. The aim of the Programme is to strengthen the social responsibility and sustainable development activities of Vilnius UAS as a horizontal priority of the Strategy, with the aim of making Vilnius UAS a catalyst for the region and an engine of change, which, through its study programmes, applied research and experimental development and other targeted activities, makes a purposeful contribution to the sustainable development of the region and the country.

10. Principles of social responsibility and sustainable development include:

10.1. *Community* – the desire to work together, to collaborate, to create and develop joint projects.

10.2 *Initiative and leadership* – the drive and motivation to act and develop new initiatives in line with personal and community value priorities.

10.3 *Equal opportunities* – to ensure that all persons have non-discriminatory working conditions and to promote social inclusion.

10.4 *Environmental responsibility* – the aim to improve the quality of the environment and making responsible environmental choices.

10.5 *Citizenship* – the aim to prioritise the needs of the society, active participation in building the well-being of the state and the community, participation in civic action, respect for the historical memory of the state, the democratic system and statehood.

10.6 *Volunteering* – the aim of making an unpaid personal effort to contribute to public initiatives or to the solution of a public need.

10.7 *Transparency and accountability* – the commitment to carry out its activities in a fair, open and informative manner and to provide information to all interested parties.

11. Guidelines for Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Activities:

11.1. to disseminate social responsibility and sustainable development to the public and the community of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences through openly accessible public lectures and seminars, trainings, public events, scientific conferences, forums, roundtables, and initiatives aimed at disseminating ideas of social responsibility and sustainable development.

11.2. To carry out applied research, experimental development and professional art, commissioned project-based research and applied art activities of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences that enhance sustainable development and social responsibility.

11.3. To develop the themes of social responsibility and sustainable development in study programmes, ensuring that each subject addresses relevant aspects of social responsibility and sustainable development. Systematically update study programmes to reflect innovations and new scientific developments, in particular in relation to sustainable development.

11.4. To promote social partnership with associations, NGOs, business enterprises, public sector organisations, and municipalities in Vilnius region, which are interested in education, applied research, partnership projects, and joint initiative activities in the context of social responsibility and sustainable development. Strengthen social partnerships with organisations interested in volunteering, citizenship and social support.

11.5. To encourage personal social responsibility of every member of the community - student, teacher, employee, social partner - by providing opportunities for self-expression and volunteering.

11.6. To introduce sustainable educational innovations that expand opportunities and access to lifelong learning.

11.7. To develop volunteering initiatives of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences community to increase social inclusion. To raise awareness of the theme and importance of social exclusion and social inclusion among members of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences community, its social partners and the wider society and to provide effective support for learners with special educational needs.

11.8. To strengthen social partnership with Lithuanian schools, education centres, youth organisations and clubs, teachers' associations and societies by developing initiatives of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences community to organise educational visits to schools or visits of students to Vilnius University of Applied Sciences, motivating students to study and obtain higher education qualifications and emphasising the importance of lifelong learning.

11.9. To develop the capacity for applied creativity and creative thinking in the community and the society, to foster a creative environment and sustainable innovation, and encourage openness to sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship.

11.10. To promote the topic of green economy, socially responsible investment, sustainable business and management, sustainable tourism and hospitality, and sustainable fashion, by creating as

many opportunities as possible to educate the Lithuanian public in these areas, by developing applied research and social partnerships with organisations interested in these areas.

11.11. To promote the topic and importance of public wellness and health-promoting nutrition among members of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences community and the general public, by providing opportunities to educate the Lithuanian public and Vilnius UAS community on wellness issues, by developing research and social partnerships with organisations interested in these areas.

11.12. To promote the importance of green environments, sustainable agro-ecosystems and animal welfare by maximising opportunities to educate the Lithuanian public in these areas, by developing research and social partnerships with organisations interested in these topics.

11.13. To strengthen the environmental social responsibility of Vilnius UAS through sustainable innovation and participation in initiatives related to saving natural resources and improving environmental quality. To become a paperless organisation in its document management and to conduct this process exclusively in electronic formats.

11.14. To foster the continuity of Lithuanian statehood and historical memory by joining state events and initiatives, commemorating important dates and personalities of national importance, and participating in initiatives of national significance, such as the Constitution examination, the National dictation contest, and others.

11.15. To promote Lithuanian ethno-culture and national heritage by fostering cooperation with organisations concerned with the promotion of Lithuanian ethno-culture and national heritage, and by strengthening the meaning of heritage in study programmes and artistic expression.

11.16. To involve Lithuanian diaspora organisations and Lithuanian communities abroad in the activities of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences by organising joint events, encouraging Lithuanians living abroad to study at Vilnius University of Applied Sciences, and finding points of contact with the Lithuanian diaspora in joint initiatives.

11.17. To strengthen and promote the Lithuanian Sign Language study programme as meeting specific needs of the country's citizens.

11.18. To promote the topics of digitisation, information literacy, sustainable digital innovation, cyber security, robotics for the benefit of the society, by creating as many opportunities as possible to educate the Lithuanian public in these areas, developing applied research and social partnerships with organisations interested in these topics.

11.19. To maximise opportunities to promote the image of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences as a socially responsible and sustainable development organisation in order to attract prospective students and employees who are oriented towards the values of sustainable development.

CHAPTER IV EVALUATION CRITERIA

12. The achievement of the Programme's objective and activities in the areas of social responsibility and sustainable development will be assessed against the following evaluation criteria:

12.1. a qualitative assessment of societal impacts and analysis of feedback from stakeholders.

12.2. implementation of the indicators of the Programme for Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences for 2022-2025, which are related to the purpose and guidelines of this Programme.

CHAPTER V IMPLEMENTATION

13. The Programme shall be implemented at the discretion of Vilnius University of Applied Sciences and individual faculties, by drawing up annual activity plans and/or setting up working groups to implement specific activities, taking into account the provisions of the Description of the Procedure for Establishing and Accounting for Full-time Workload of Teaching Staff of Vilnius UAS.

14. The Programme can also be implemented through voluntary (unpaid) initiatives of Vilnius UAS community.

15. The Programme shall be implemented at the UAS, Faculty and Department levels.

16. The implementation of the Programme shall be coordinated by the Research Department of Vilnius UAS.

17. The implementation of the Programme shall be discussed at least once a year at the UAS, Faculty and Department levels.

CHAPTER VI FINAL PROVISIONS

18. The implementation of the Programme will lead to a higher level of the social responsibility and sustainable development of Vilnius UAS, as Vilnius University of Applied Sciences aims to become a catalyst and the engine of change in the region, enhancing the sustainable development of

the region and the country through its study programmes, applied scientific research and experimental development and other targeted activities.
