

2024 REPORT OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



IN
HARMONY
with SELF and
OTHERS

TURINYS

1. Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development at Vilniaus kolegija / Higher Education Institution	3	9. Strengthening Lithuanian culture, statehood and the continuity of historical memory	54
2. Sustainable education, science and competences for sustainable development	5	10. Preserving national heritage and promoting Lithuanian ethno-culture	57
3. Social partnership	16	11. Developing sustainable business and sustainable economy	60
4. Strengthening social inclusion	24	12. Volunteering, civic engagement and social support initiatives	65
5. Promoting information literacy and the digital society	30	13. Vilniaus kolegija/HEI's activities of 2024 in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals	71
6. Developing creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship	35	14. Vilniaus kolegija/HEI Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development SWOT	87
7. Enhancing public health	42		
8. Developing environmental initiatives	48		

Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development at Vilniaus kolegija / Higher Education Institution

Social responsibility is the foundation for building sustainable communities and global prosperity. The social responsibility of higher education institutions (HEIs) includes good working conditions and ethical relations, transparent and fair management. Quality studies and respectful relationships are of paramount importance to students. HEIs must work with the local community to promote education for sustainable development, ensuring equality and inclusion, and contributing to wealth creation through partnerships, projects and outreach programmes. HEIs (like all other organisations) consume a wide range of resources (electricity, heat, water, etc.) and have a negative impact on the environment. Thus green initiatives are becoming important for HEIs too: by adopting energy-efficient technologies, waste reduction programmes and sustainable building practices, organisations are becoming more environmentally friendly.

Higher education institutions play an important role in shaping a better future for society and the

planet, and their commitment to being socially responsible, open and accessible to all members of society, and to contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals are essential. HEIs can contribute to sustainable development through three areas:

1. **Study organisation and education** – integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into studies and training.
2. **Research and innovation** – developing sustainable solutions to current challenges.
3. **Cooperation with social partners** – joint projects with communities, municipalities, businesses, etc.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI (VIKO) is a member of the United Nations (UN) Global Compact since 2018, and as [a member](#) it actively contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and enhances the organisation's corporate social responsibility. VIKO's operating principles are based not only on tradition but also on innovation, ensuring environmental and community responsi-



bility. Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, constantly challenging itself, strives to educate independent, active and responsible members of society, to develop the intellectual potential of society, and to ensure that knowledge and science contribute to the harmonious realisation of economic, social and environmental goals.

In 2024, the [HEROES](#) Consortium of European Higher Education Institutions (whose member Vilniaus kolegija/HEI is from 2023, and is the only Lithuanian higher education institution participating in this consortium) was selected by the European Commission to become an official European University Alliance and has received funding from the Erasmus+ programme. The Alliance's activities are directly focused on building societal resilience through smart, human-centred digital innovation. The European University Alliance is scheduled to officially launch in January 2025.

In October 2024, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI hosted a meeting of the Quality Assurance Group of [EURASHE](#), the European Association of Higher Education Institutions, which is the voice of European colleges (HEIs) and universities of applied sciences. Dr Nijolė Zinkevičienė, Vice-Rector for Research and Partnerships at Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, is a [EURASHE Vice President](#) (since 2023).

The international project "Universities for Sustainable Development" (USD) continued in 2024 (starting in autumn 2022) and involved Pablo de Olavide University of Spain (project coordinator), the University of Applied Sciences of Savonia, Finland, and Vilniaus kolegija/HEI (Lithuania). In 2023, the [sustainable development indicators for Vilniaus kolegija/HEI](#) were identified and updated in 2024 (which are also presented in this report: in Chapter 13 of this report, as the project results are oriented towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and in other chapters of this report, if they are in line with the guidelines set out in the VIKO 2021-2025 strategy), and in 2024, the Vilniaus kolegija/HEI research team developed and presented a [methodology for the implementation of sustainability in HEIs](#) (English).

The [VIKO Strategy 2021-2025](#) focuses on creating sustainable change in partnership with the local community, business and government. VIKO's Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable

Development Programme 2022-2025 emphasises community, initiative, equality, environmental responsibility, citizenship, volunteering and transparency. In 2025, the Strategy of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI and other documents will be updated. This change is also due to the fact that following the reorganisation of the two HEIs (VIKO and VTDK) in Vilnius into a single higher education institution by Resolution [No 450](#) of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 5 June 2024, as of 1 July 2024, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI has become one of the largest vocational higher education institutions not only in Lithuania, but also in the Baltic States, meeting the expectations of applicants not only from the Vilnius region, but also from all over Lithuania. Vilniaus kolegija/HEI organises studies under 58 professional bachelor study programmes (programmes are assigned to 12 groups of fields of study) at ten faculties: Agro-technologies (ATF), Design (DIF), Electronics and Informatics (EIF), Economics (EKF), Arts and Creative Technologies (MTF), Pedagogy (PDF), Civil Engineering (STF), Health Care (SPF), Technical (TEF), Business Management (VVF). 1 October 2024, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI had more than 6.6 thousand students and 560 lecturers.

In 2020, working groups promoting social responsibility and sustainable development activities have been established in all VIKO faculties and are renewed annually as needed, which not only carry out and promote various activities and the involvement of community members, but also prepare annual social responsibility and sustainable development reports of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI. These reports inform the establishment's community, social partners and the public about VIKO's socially responsible activities and achievements. Reports are submitted to [the UN Global Compact](#) and published [on the VIKO website](#).

In line with previous good practice, this Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Report of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI for 2024 is presented on the basis of the main guidelines for Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development activities of the VIKO, as outlined in the Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Programme of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI for 2022-2025, whose implementation is described in the following chapters of this report.

Sustainable education, science and competences for sustainable development

The value of soft competences is becoming more and more relevant and important in today's society, which is why Vilniaus kolegija/HEI consistently develops the themes of social responsibility and sustainable development in its study programmes, ensuring that each study subject reflects relevant aspects of social responsibility and sustainable development.

Each year, the content of all study modules and course descriptions are reviewed and updated as necessary. Topics linked to sustainable development are integrated into study courses to promote entrepreneurship and social responsibility. The inclusion of social responsibility and sustainable development issues in the study process responds to the needs of the current and future labour market, as employers are not only interested in qualified

In the photo students from different faculties took part in the [HACK AgriFood'24 Challenge Lab](#) of the EIT Food agri-food sector, which took place at Vilniaus kolegija/HEI on 29 to 30 October.



staff, but also in professionals with a broad horizon and a keen interest in the environment, innovation, the circular economy, etc. in their field. *For more information, see chapter 11 of this report.*

Study programmes in fields other than social sciences (not business or management) also focus on fostering entrepreneurship and developing competences for achieving sustainable development goals and strengthening social responsibility. For example: in order to achieve the strategic objective “To update the content of study programmes in line with the provisions of the Green Deal and the needs of Industry 4.0” and taking into account the comments of the experts of the Centre for Quality Assessment of Studies (CQAS), employers, and technological developments at TEF, the descriptions of some subjects have been updated in the study programmes “Electrical and Automation Engineering”, “Power Engineering”, “Engineering of Renewable Energies”, and the curricula of study programmes have been modified in the study programme “Information Systems Engineering”.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI embeds sustainable educational innovation focused on lifelong learning opportunities and accessibility. Full-time study on a sessional timetable allows the “lifelong learning” initiative to be implemented, giving people of all ages the opportunity to study while combining study and work. Distance learning in MS Teams and Moodle virtual learning environment (VLE) enables people who want to combine education with work, live in the regions of Lithuania, live abroad or have a disability to get an education. *For more information, see chapters 4 and 5 of the report.*

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI formulates assignments (projects and other written work) for study modules and course examinations in such a way that students develop innovative and sustainability-oriented solutions. Many study programmes focus on practical training. One example of this is the science workshop projects organised by TEF and STF. These projects not only help students develop their professional skills but also promote social responsibility and innovation. The workshops bring together students, academics and social partners to develop solutions to pressing societal problems. The main aim of these projects is to ensure that innovation is not only technologically advanced but also socially

relevant. The ideas implemented in the workshops are often related to sustainability, ecology, health improvement, social inclusion and other important areas. For example: Two projects (coordinated by Jolanta Pileckienė) were organised at TEF in 2024. One such project was the development of a waste sorting container, focusing on environmental protection and sustainability. Another project to develop adapted learning tools for people with disabilities showed how innovation can improve the quality of life of groups in society. The uniqueness of these projects lies in their integrated approach: students not only learn technical and creative skills, but also develop empathy, responsibility for their environment, and an understanding of how the solutions they create can have a positive impact on society. The Science Workshop projects are becoming an integral part of TEF’s identity, contributing to the strengthening of social responsibility and innovation in higher education. This is a great example of how academic knowledge can be put into practice to build a better future. STF lecturer Airida Tylienė’s course “Responsible Innovation” applies elements of the Science Workshop, where students, in collaboration with NGOs and various communities, civically enterprising and active individuals, identify and solve societal problems through applied research and propose various solutions to these problems. Student activities and initiatives are free of charge. In the autumn semester of 2024, four student teams worked on projects that addressed noise pollution and air quality problems in different districts of Vilnius (Žirmūnai and Pilaitė), as well as on the issue of modernising the roof of an apartment building in order to select environmentally friendly materials and solutions, to ensure the quality of life of residents of the house, a positive indoor microclimate and the physical and psychological well-being of residents. Environmental and technological issues were also addressed in another student project – the aim was to find a solution not only how to technologically stop the release of emulsion when the facade of the building is wet, but also how to ensure that the released substances do not leak into the environment, do not become a source of pollution or poisoning, etc.

The formulation of students’ independent written assignments or projects often involves collab-

oration with a range of interested organisations, most often the social partners of the faculties or HEI. For more information, see chapter 3 of the report.

We are delighted that the study of sustainable development and social responsibility is both about acquiring theoretical knowledge and about sharing that knowledge with the wider society. For example: During the autumn semester of 2024, students of the course “Sustainable Development” taught by STF lecturer Vaiva Mickevičienė organised various community events. In this way, [students shared their learning](#) and teaching [experiences](#), and increased the involvement of the faculty community in relevant issues of sustainable development and sustainability. In November-December 2024, students carried out a number of sustainable initiatives: they organised an immunity-boosting campaign for the faculty community (distribution of lemons, instructions for morning exercise, etc.), watched a film together about future scenarios of the world, taught each other, held pub quizzes on sustainability and sustainable development, carried out surveys on sustainability and so on.

The arts study programmes (run by the DIF and MTF) also pay considerable attention to social responsibility issues in their study programmes. For example: The practical-concert activities of the students of the Popular Music Study Programme at MTF integrate the development of social responsibility awareness – students are encouraged to present music works to socially and culturally excluded groups of society. The Fashion Design and Image Design projects take the themes of responsible consumption, social exclusion or social sustainability as their creative ideas. DIF works closely with Lrytas, DALI Academy, etc. The portal Lrytas together with the Lithuanian Architects’ Union organised the tenth edition of the interior architecture competition-exhibition “My space 2024” for all those interested in the latest works of architects and designers. There is a strong emphasis on sustainable, environmentally friendly materials and innovation. Lithuanian interiors have been appreciated by renowned architects from abroad. The students of DN22D-1 group of the Design Department of the DIF actively participated in this competition (their works were supervised by lecturers Asta Kazlausk-

ienė, Vilija Daugėlaitė, Jaroslav Daveiko and Rasa Mazūrienė). The project “Vintage Blues” by Karina Petkevič, a third-year student of the Interior Design programme, has been voted the readers’ favourite.

In June 2024, the walls of the DALI Academy were creatively decorated by DIF Design Department students Evelina Gedrimaitė, Ugnė Zajulytė and Viktorija Narkevičiūtė (DD22D-1). The project was very engaging and charming, and students chose an illustration with surrealistic motifs – owls and fish in space. This theme was in line with the spirit of the DALI Academy and the studio environment. A total of five walls were painted, covering a total area of about 70 square metres. Each wall has a unique storyline and is united by a surrealist style. Aneta Jaurienė, Director of the DALI Academy, is grateful for this painting. She says that these young artists have created an invaluable environment.

The artists themselves shared their experiences, saying: “This project was a great opportunity to apply our creative skills and bring a unique and joyful feel to the DALI Academy spaces. We worked as a team, learning how to plan our work and coordinate our time. We are very happy with the result and proud of the team’s achievements. This project has shown the importance of collaboration, sharing ideas and creating something unique that delights and inspires others”.

When looking for professional (substantive, final, etc.) internship opportunities in organisations, students are advised to choose organisations that are oriented towards sustainable development and are socially responsible. This is why career days are organised in the faculties of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, inviting the participation of its social partners, who can offer students professional (and often career) opportunities that match their study programmes. For instance, on 26 September 2024, **the VVF hosted a remote Career Day at the faculty and remotely**; the SPF hosted a Career Day “[Regions Calling – 2024](#)” with the aim of enabling regional healthcare institutions to introduce students to internship opportunities and to attract new recruits to work in the healthcare facilities of small towns and districts. Representatives of 30 institutions from different regions of Lithuania took part.

In summary, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI is systematically updating its study programmes to reflect innova-

tions and new scientific developments, especially in relation to sustainable development.

Students can test the knowledge they have acquired during their studies and informally at various national and international events, such as Blended Intensive Weeks (BIP), hackathons and other events. In 2024, students were particularly active in representing VIKO:

March 3-8, VVF students took part in an intensive exchange week in Denmark at the Zealand Academy of Technologies and Business, where they tackled the problems of the city of Naestved, proposing solutions for activities and places that would attract people to the historic city centre.

April 22-26, VVF students took part in the [HED-COM PROJECT 2024](#) Short Blended Programme (BIP) organised by AVANS University of Applied Sciences.

September 23-27, SPF students took part in the Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) "[Introduction in Military Medicine](#)" at the Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia; on 25 October, SPF students represented Vilniaus kolegija/HEI in the international competition "[International Higher and Vocational Schools First Aid Competition 2024](#)", and the experience gained during the competition

is important not only for further studies, future professional activities, but also for everyday life – in providing assistance in cases of various emergencies.

Many students from different faculties took part in the [HACK AgriFood'24 Challenge Lab](#) of the EIT Food agri-food sector, which took place at Vilniaus kolegija/HEI on 29 to 30 October.

And this is just a small part of the events that Vilniaus kolegija/HEI's students attended.

Equally important for improving the quality of studies is the involvement of business representatives and experts in the study process. Guest lectures in 2024: on 15 March, Alina Bažanovienė, lecturer at the SPF Department of Nursing, organised a meeting on the Teams platform for the students of the General Practice Nursing study programme with the social counsellor of the Crisis Pregnancy Centre, who shared her experience and advised the students on academic and social support issues, presented the Centre's activities, gave a brief description of the problems facing pregnant women and the support that the Centre, the society and the health care services can offer them – with a focus on how to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls; on 15 to 19 April,

In the photo SPF students participating in the Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) "Introduction in Military Medicine" at the Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia.



a vocal masterclass by visiting guest Prof. Derek Barnes (United Kingdom) at the Department of Performing Arts; on 4 to 8 November, the lecturer Dr Audronė Urmanavičienė from Tallinn University held a [social entrepreneurship training course for students](#), during which the lecturer fostered the competences of social entrepreneurship, focusing on the principles of social responsibility and the application of innovation in the study process.

The VIKO faculties commemorate and celebrate various days related to their study programmes and relevant to sustainable community education:

On 8 September 2024, the SPF celebrated World Physiotherapy Day to highlight the importance of physiotherapy in healthcare and to promote public awareness of the profession's role in health maintenance, disease prevention and rehabilitation. It is also an opportunity to recognise the contribution physiotherapists make to people's well-being and to promote healthy lifestyles. Every year, the day brings together physiotherapy professionals, students and enthusiasts for joint activities, discussions and knowledge sharing.

On 30 September 2024, [World Tourism Day](#), the faculty of the Department of Tourism and the students of the Tourism Management Programme (TV23) invited the VIKO community to participate in the orientation competition "Let's discover the VVF environment in an inventive way".

In October 2024, the EIF celebrated International Cyber Security Month, during which students had the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of cyber security and learn about the latest threats and how to manage them. Various lectures by representatives of partners (e.g. UAB Accenture Lithuania, UAB Baltnetos komunikacijos, UAB Blue Bridge MSP, Association ISACA Lithuania, UAB Reiz Tech, UAB Nod Baltic) were organised, attended by students from different study programmes.

From 24 to 31 October 2024, [Media and Information Literacy Week](#) was celebrated, which is an initiative that promotes critical thinking and the development of skills to become discerning and responsible consumers of information.

On 27 October 2024, the SPF celebrated [World Occupational Therapy Day](#) with the active participation of future occupational therapists from all three courses, inviting them to try out the differ-

ent competences of the profession: to experience how a person with Parkinson's feels and be able to adapt special tools to their daily activities, to see the world through the eyes of a glaucoma patient, and to experience the specifics of wheelchair use. Separate booths introduced visitors to the human sensory systems and the integration of people with sensory modulation disorders and methods, invited them to test their fine motor skills, develop their cognitive functions, finger muscle strength and hand-eye coordination through creative activities. The guests of the celebration – the President of the Canithery Association Veslava Cytovič-Rul with her Cavalier King Charles spaniel Zea – introduced the participants to the basic principles of canithery activities.

On 5 November 2024, the SPF celebrates the [European Day of Laboratory Medicine](#). A [video](#) was created to highlight the importance of biomedical technologists in disease diagnostics and the demand for the profession, and it was shared with VIKO and the laboratory medicine community.

On 8 November 2024, SPF celebrated the World Radiology Day. The motto of the day is for a sustainable approach to the patient and the planet through radiological diagnosis and treatment!

On 18 to 22 November 2024, the [World Entrepreneurship Week](#) celebrated by the WEF is a global celebration of tens of thousands of events, activities and competitions that inspire millions of people to collaborate, engage and engage in entrepreneurship every November.

On 4 December 2024, the TEF organised a preventive lecture for first-year students, "AIDS – A Preventive Lecture", to mark the World AIDS Day. The lecture was given by TEF lecturer Roma Aleknienė.

Students are always excited to attend the guest lectures and learn more about the specifics of their study programmes.

On 15 October, ATF Food Technology students visited the organic farm [Farmers Circle](#). They learnt about organic livestock and plant breeding principles and saw how organic, health-friendly food is produced.

On 31 October, ATF Agribusiness students and lecturers visited [the family farm "Geltoni botai"](#), where they learnt how a farmer can adapt to the

natural environment and create a sustainable farm.

On 6 November, PDF organised a [field trip](#) to promote knowledge on innovative teaching methods and to contribute to the relevance of study programmes.

On 10 December, the students from the TEF Renewable Energy Engineering and Electrical and Automation Engineering study programmes participated in an educational activity at the Vilnius Museum of Technology and Energy to learn about sustainable modern energy and industrial solutions and opportunities.

Often, the students organise field trips for the public themselves. For instance, on 23 February 2024, SPF organised a field trip for students of the General Practice Nursing programme to conduct an educational lesson-game "[Hand Hygiene. Protect yourself and others](#)" to Vilnius Santariškės Pre-School and Vilnius City Pre-School "Švelniukas". The students were trained by lecturers of the Department of Nursing Natalija Juškina and Snježana Budrikienė.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI has a tradition of organising annual student scientific conferences:

- On 17 April 2024, the EKF International Student Scientific-Practical Conference "[Economics. Business. Management 2024](#)" was held where Audrius Rutkauskas, Head of Sustainability in Lithuania and member of the Baltic Sustainability Office at SEB Bank, presented "Moving towards *net zero*: how will the EU sustainability targets affect corporate finance?", students presented on a variety of topics related to innovation and sustainability, balancing of work and study, the impact of teleworking on personal life, working four days a week, gender pay inequality, etc.
- On 13 May 2024, the third conference "[Science and Art Synergy](#)'2024", organised by the MTF Students' Science and Art Society, took place, where the Chairman of the Culture Committee of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Prof. Vytautas Juozapaitis, delivered a plenary lecture on the topic "Cultural Activities: visions and reality". The presentations presented by the students are

focused on the values of sustainable development, and the scientific research conducted by the students on the topics of creativity, sustainable organisation, social exclusion and social inclusion, and sustainable fashion promote the image of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI as a socially responsible and sustainable organisation.

- On 27 November 2024, the International Students' Society for Science and Art organised "[EKOFORUM'2024](#)", which follows the idea of the European Waste Reduction Week, celebrated every year in the last week of November, when all European countries are encouraged to pay attention to responsible consumption at the same time, and during the event, the Faculty organises exhibitions and displays, workshops and excursions. Students delivered 16 presentations on various sustainable fashion and environmental topics. The enterprising students demonstrated a responsible attitude and presented original ideas for a more sustainable future.
- On 28 November 2024, the TEF hosted a student scientific-practical conference "[Exact Sciences – the basis for a qualified engineer in 2024](#)", which aimed to promote students' involvement in scientific research and experimental development activities. The conference covered a wide range of topics such as the integration of science and engineering, the application of innovative technologies and project development. Participants presented their technical ideas and projects in the hope of implementing them in the future: "ESP32 family microcontrollers in home automation systems", "WAGO programmable logic controllers", "Artificial Intelligence as a student assistant: the learning revolution", "Physical properties and capabilities of vibration control in CNC machine tools: Improving efficiency and accuracy", "Project for the production of smart animal doors", "Project for the production of an automated fish feeding system", "Project for the installation of a car seat belt alarm", "Project for the installation of a smart car belt buckle",

“Perfect numbers and their applications in technology”, “Application of the properties of the second-order curves in automotive headlight reflectors”. The conference also featured presentations of workshop projects such as “Safe journey: improving pedestrian crossing lighting in Vilnius”. “Erasmus+” exchange students from France studying at the VIKO Faculty of Engineering had the opportunity to present their presentations in English: “Architecture of covered parking lots for hydrogen vehicles” and “Sustainable and Low-Carbon Construction Materials”.

- On 6 December 2024, the 13th International Student Scientific and Practical Conference “[Youth in a Changing Society](#)” took place at the VVF, where students shared their insights and research results.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI’s students participate in conferences in other Lithuanian and foreign higher education institutions.

The promotion of VIKO studies is not only done through open lectures (e.g. ATF [open lectures for schoolchildren](#) were offered in 2024, and an [open](#)

[dance lesson](#) was held at MTF on 30 May 2024, which was watched by students who are interested in dance, students’ relatives, and lecturers. Students of the dance pedagogy study programme SM23 presented the basics of contemporary dance technique and their own solo dance compositions, and SM22 presented a lesson on the basics of contemporary dance technique, which consisted of student-created dance combinations; on 9 February 2024, the event “Student for a Day”, lesson “Voice and its Control”, was organised by lecturers Eglė Juozapaitienė and Justinas Lapatin-skas and student Toma Pauraitė (MZ23); on 8 June 2024, lecturer of the Performing Arts Department Elžbieta Oleškevič-Ščiglo, together with All Stars Vocal Studio, organised a seminar “Students to Pupils”. The event “Professional Opportunities Day” held on 20 November 2024 introduced students to Vilniaus kolegija/HEI’s study opportunities, including sustainable development aspects), **workshops** (e.g. the TEF hosted a workshop for students called “[Engineer’s Workshop](#)” on 27 November 2024. The workshop was attended by students from Vilnius “Laisvės” Gymnasium, who had the opportunity to get acquainted with the

Photo shows a snapshot of the SPF-organised World Physiotherapy Day (08/09/2024).



study opportunities at the Faculty of Technology, engineering sciences and the equipment used in the Faculty's laboratories. Pupils were interested in the experimental development work being carried out and were introduced to various study programmes. During the event, the pupils also attended an educational lecture on road safety given by Oleg Bogačionok, lecturer at the Department of Transport Engineering. This workshop was one of the initiatives of the "Exact Science Week 2024", which aims to encourage young people to take an interest in the fields of science and technology and to choose engineering and technology as their future field of study), **career days at the faculties** (e.g. on 26 September 2024, SPF held a career day "[Regions Calling – 2024](#)", on 22 November 2024, PDF), **by visiting schools to give lectures, taking part in study fairs and organising contests** (e.g. on 15 March 2024, the faculty organised the 2nd Republican Jazz and Contemporary Music Competition for Young Performers "[Jazz for Children and Youth](#)", organised by the Department of Rhythmic Music and the music studio "Garsų spalvos". The competition is organised to encourage children and young people, educators and the public to take an interest in jazz and contemporary music, to foster and develop children's and young people's musical performance skills, their artistic and personal competences, and to create conditions for pupils' self-expression; on 1 March 2024, the traditional event "[Career Day 2024](#)" took place at the Vilkaiviškis "Aušros" Gymnasium), **presenting creative projects** (e.g. during the annual nationwide event "Design Week'24", students of the Fashion Design Studies Programme presented creative projects – the exhibition "[Processes, glances, horizons](#)" at the Marija and Jurgis Šlapeliai Museum. Lecturers mentors Morta Nakaitė and Jolita Raupelienė; during the event of National Creative and Cultural Industries Association at the National Culture Forum (Lukiškių Prison, Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas, 28 November), Greta Seliukaitė, a student of the Image Design programme, presented creative works on ecological/social themes "[Pain under water](#)" (supervised by Silvija Grušnienė), and Ulrika Zabarskaitė, a graduate of the Fashion Design study programme, presented her original creative collection "Monologue" (supervised by Jolanta

Raupelienė).

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI implements experimental development projects, where teachers and students work together to implement innovative ideas and develop creativity. Through experimental development activities, students have the opportunity to develop and implement their unique ideas. Involving students from different disciplines in the projects promotes an interdisciplinary approach, allowing them to analyse possible solutions to problems from different perspectives. These projects provide students with hands-on learning that helps them apply their theoretical knowledge in real life. Academic interaction and collaboration are promoted when lecturers and students work together. This work not only enhances students' academic development but also prepares them to succeed in a wide range of professional fields.

The number of international and national projects is an important indicator in developing partnerships with international strategic partners, other Lithuanian HEIs and research institutes in international and national projects. In 2024, VIKO participated in 47 international and national projects (Annex 10 of the VIKO annual report), of which 38 were international projects, 3 were EU Structural Funds projects, 2 were funded by the ŠMSM/VSF, and 2 were funded by the Research Council of Lithuania. 21 projects were led by VIKO and in 26 projects VIKO participated as a partner.

Projects launched in 2024:

- The EU-funded project "[Improving the Competences of Sign Language Professionals](#)" (project No [10-055-P-0004](#)) has been launched by PDF to improve the competences of sign language professionals, contributing to the development of applied research and the promotion of social responsibility.
- PDF launched the project "Social Change through Sustainable Communication in Schools and Society through Lifelong Learning" [at TASC](#) (project No 101104036), which aims to equip future and current teachers with the necessary skills to become reflexive and driven European teachers, capable of preventing violence, discrimination, societal polarisation, exclusion and bullying. These

skills are collectively referred to in the project as sustainable communication skills. Introducing sustainable communication skills in schools can be the start of the social change we want.

- TEF launched the Erasmus+ project “eCOLAB 4.0: Innovative, collaborative and interoperable tools to improve higher education curricula for sustainable Industry 4.0 production” (Project No 2024-1-ES01-KA220-HED-000247818), which aims to improve the quality and efficiency of STEAM-related training in the field of sustainable digital manufacturing through: the development and maintenance of a virtual STEAM student collaboration platform; the integration of university FabLabs into a network of interactions promoting collaboration at different levels; and the development of a common pilot BIP in sustainable digital manufacturing, using a multi-disciplinary approach.

The project “[Increasing the Efficiency of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI: synergy between engineering studies and science and art](#)” (until the end of 2025 under the Economic Recovery and Resilience Facility – EGADP, project No 10-019-P-0003) was also launched in 2024, with the aim to ensure efficient delivery of studies in line with the market needs. The project will optimise the infrastructure of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, consolidate study programmes, and optimise and integrate key administrative, research and study support functions and processes. The project will lead to the establishment of **ArtSpace** and **TechSpace**.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI carries out applied research, experimental development and professional art, commissioned project activities in science and applied art, which enhance sustainable development and social responsibility. For example:

SPF Hygienic and Decorative Cosmetology students together with the lecturers of the Department of Beauty Therapy carried out 4 studies on the topic of social responsibility: one scientific study – “The effect of classical massage on the face and neck skin of middle-aged women”, and 3 com-

missioned studies – “The effect of classic massage with Helichrysum serum on mature skin”, “The effect of a soothing mask on sensitive skin”, and “The effect of ultrasound-implanted herbal extracts on dehydrated skin”.

TEF carried out 15 research studies. All the studies carried out have raised funds. Research related to alternative fuels, vehicle dynamics, vehicle body geometry, hydraulic systems and more. The commissioners of the studies are natural or legal persons. Research studies have a socio-economic impact.

The MTF Department of Fashion Design carried out two commissioned projects in the field of design science. For the second year in a row, Head of the Department Gražina Skripkienė and lecturers Jolita Raupelienė, Ana Černiavskaja and assistant Rasa Laurinavičienė, in cooperation with the Vievis Culture Centre, carried out a project under the contract for commissioned applied art activities (TVM-39 2023-10-26), during which they created costumes and stage images for the project “[The project “Birutė on my stage” by Mikas Petrauskas](#)” for the participants of the opera, provided consultations on the creation of historical stage costumes. The project opera premiered at the Vievis Cultural Centre on 9 December 2023 and at Trakai Castle. At the Vievis Cultural Centre, on 16/17 December 2023, at Trakai Castle. The other project was “[From paper to needle](#)” under the contract for commissioned artistic development 2023-11-13 No TVM-40. Commissioned by Monika Polunina. The project resulted in the design and implementation of a child-friendly industrial collection for girls aged 7-10 in linen fabrics. Lecturers of the Department of Cultural Activity Management participated in the project “Digital Transformation of Education (EdTech)”, the following was updated and digitised: Cultural Project Management, Cultural Tourism Management (Regina Venckienė), Sustainable Management (Inga Kepalienė). Particular attention has been paid to universal design to improve the quality of learning outcomes through educational technology and digital innovation. On 22 September 2024, the Department of Performing Arts was carrying out commissioned project activities in the field of research and applied arts. A contract was signed with the Rokiškis Culture Centre to perform

the concert programme “Under the Church Vaults. I Witness to Faith” at the XXIV International Organ Music Festival dedicated to Czech musician, teacher and organist Rudolf Lyman. It is an artistic project combining music and noble thought. On a spiritual level, this event affects people much more than they expect. It is not just about working with professionals; it is about being very actively involved in the world. Music helps us to look inwards and to become more aware of life’s problems and how they can be solved. The concert in Rokiškis was also dedicated to the support of the victims of the Ukrainian war and thanks to the sincere performance of our students, the people who attended the concert donated very kindly and a lot of money was raised. The organisers are very grateful to Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, which is responsibly involved in this project and understands the enormous importance of young people’s participation.

TEF carried out outsourced studies under contracts signed with Lithuanian economic operators. For example, “SHELL Eco-marathon Formula Project” (designed the electrical system for the Eco-marathon Formula); “Robot Intelligence: Line-following Robot” (designed, built and tested line-following robots that meet the standards of international competitions); “Infrared proximity sensor using IR LED” (designed, built and tested an infrared proximity sensor using IR LED, which is used for practical and laboratory work in the studies).

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, merged with the former Vilnius College of Technology and Design, continues the publication of scientific articles in the scientific journal “[TECHNOLOGY AND ART. RESEARCH AND CURRENT AFFAIRS](#)” (ISSN 2783-8064).

In 2024, the VIKO community published 65 scientific articles on a wide range of topics, of which 24 were published in the Web of Science DB and 2 in Scopus DB.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI organises scientific and practical conferences:

On 7 November 2024, the PDF organised the international scientific-practical conference “[Changing Educational Horizons](#)”, dedicated to the dialogue between theory and practice and the development of innovative pedagogical solutions. The conference focused on education policy, technological innovation and the challenges of teacher

training, with an emphasis on intercultural and inclusive education.

On 7 November 2024, the MTF hosted a forum “[The Musical in the World and Lithuania: Challenges and Prospects II](#)”. The forum featured presentations and discussions that allowed the audience to engage in a polemic about the future of musical theatre in Lithuania and the world.

On 3 December 2024, at the conference “Ageing and Health in 2024” organised by VIKO SPF and MČTAU, lecturers of the Department of Rehabilitation Ramunė Komžienė, Kristina Žukienė and Asta Markauskienė, students of KI22 Ilona Šernaitė and Erika Mackevičiūtė gave a presentation on the “Assessment of Physical Capacity of Elderly and Older Persons”, which included the presentation of the results of the study of the body composition, the capacity of the skeletal muscular system, the capacity of the motor system, and the capacity of cardiovascular system. The data for the results were collected on 5 November 2024 at the forum “Let’s learn not to fall down”.

On 6 December 2024, the third International Scientific and Practical Conference “[Challenges of Culture and Education in the 21st Century](#)” was held at MTF. 41 speakers from various Lithuanian cultural and educational institutions delivered their presentations. Speakers from the USA, Italy and Latvia shared their international experience.

VIKO lecturers also actively participate in conferences in Lithuania and abroad.

Lecturers share their knowledge and deliver various training sessions (e.g. ATF and SPF also organise specialised training. For example: in 2024, non-formal education programmes for the professional development of healthcare professionals developed by the lecturers of SPF Nursing Faculty and delivered by distance learning: “Principles of Medical Ethics”, “Palliative Care”, “Management of Modern Infections”; in 2024, specialisation training for nurses was organised at the SPF in two non-formal education (specialisation) programmes – “Anaesthesia and Intensive Care” and “Operating Theatre Nursing” – with the participation of 42 nurses), and **participation in radio and television programmes** (e.g. TEF lecturers Tadas Vipartas and dr. Aurelijus Pitrenas shared their insights on the fact that although the demand for drones is grow-

ing, the number of operators is low [on the LRT radio](#) on 13 November).

Developing competences is equally important: Lecturers continuously improve their specific and general competences, attend courses, undertake internships and collaborate with each other to achieve more inclusive, higher quality studies. Lecturers participate in in-house training and in the LieDm Association's series of events to develop their digital competences in AI, working in distance learning environments, legal issues in AI, quality assurance in distance learning, AI tools, digitisation, etc. For example: on 13 December, TEF lecturers took part in an educational activity on Renewable Energy Engineering Infrastructure Development at the Ukmergė District Wind Farm and Hydroelectric Power Plant.

From November 2024, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI VIKO PDF, together with three other higher education

institutions, gained [Teacher Training Centre](#) status granted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. The Centre will address the shortage of teachers, develop educational methodologies and create an innovative ecosystem of educational technologies. Dr Žymantė Jankauskienė, Director of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, emphasised the importance of the Centre in creating a community that promotes pedagogical leadership, research and educational innovation.

In summary, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI aims to disseminate social responsibility and sustainable development to the public and the VIKO community through openly accessible public lectures and seminars, trainings, public events, scientific conferences, forums, roundtables, and initiatives aimed at disseminating the ideas of social responsibility and sustainable development.

Photo: [World Entrepreneurship Week](#) celebrated by the WEF on 18 to 22 November 2024.



Social partnership

The social partnership of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI includes a wide-ranging cooperation and social dialogue with various organisations: associations, NGOs, business enterprises, state institutions, municipalities of Vilnius and other regions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other public entities interested in education, applied research, partnership projects, volunteering and joint initiative activities in the context of social responsibility and sustainable development.

Cooperation with the social partners to ensure high quality of studies, the development of students' practical skills and adequate preparation for professional careers involves a wide range of social partner activities:

- **Participation in study programme and course committees.** The social partners make recommendations for the development of study programmes in line with the needs of the labour market: they articulate the competences needed by today's and tomorrow's professionals, and particular teaching methods are chosen to develop the necessary competences.
- **Participation in the study process:**
 - **The social partners host field trips and study tours in their organisations.** In 2024, students visited [UAB Vilniaus viešasis transportas](#), [UAB Vilniaus vandenys](#), [UAB Staticus](#), [AB LTG Infra](#), [UAB Litcargus](#), [AB](#)



[Vilnius Reinforced Concrete Structures Factory](#), [UAB CargoGo Logistics](#), [UAB Teltonika](#), [Customs museum](#), [Litcargus and Go Vilnius](#), [UAB Baltic Clipper](#), UAB Kvapų namai, UAB Neaustima, UAB LTP, Center for Physical Sciences and Technology, UAB Garlita, [Lithuanian Social Innovation Cluster \(LSIK\)](#), [National Art Gallery](#), Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theatre ([23/09/2024](#), [31/10/2024](#)), National [M. K. Čiurlionis Art School](#), UAB Neringos restoranas, leisure centre 7 meno mūzos, dance studio BE GOOD, [Lithuanian new and central archives](#), etc.

- **Social partners come to VIKO to share their expertise and as guest speakers they give lectures** on innovations, technological or social developments, market trends, etc. for the academic community of VIKO, or the general public. In 2024, public lectures were given by guests from [UAB Rhenus Logistics](#), [Lithuanian National Freight Forwarders and Logistics Association LINEKA](#), [UAB Staticus](#), [UAB DPD Lietuva](#), [UAB BMI Lietuva](#), [UAB Transfera](#), [UABGrinda](#), [UABHesora ir Ko](#), [Playrix](#), Association of Lithuanian Growers of Plants and Ornamental Plants,

UAB Floralita dizainas, Association BIODI-NAMIKA LT, UAB Accenture Lithuania, UAB Baltnetos komunikacijos, UAB Blue Bridge MSP, Association ISACA Lithuania, UAB Reiz Tech, UAB Nod Baltic, and many others.

- **Practitioners teach VIKO students**, e.g.: from the National Paying Agency, the State Tax Inspectorate under the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania, the Customs Department under the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania, the State Tourism Department under the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania, the Vilnius Regional Court, the Lithuanian Forensic Centre, the Bank of Lithuania, the European Social Fund Agency, the Sign Language Interpreting Centre, the Lithuanian Centre for Education of the Deaf and Hard Of Hearing, the Strėvininkai Social Welfare Home, and the Public Institution VUH Santaros klinikos, Vilnius City Mental Health Centre, State Pathology Centre, National Cancer Institute, UAB SK Impeks Medical Diagnostic Centre, UAB Termo Fisher Scientific Baltics, UAB Malsena Plius, Ignitis Lietuva, AB Lietuvos draudimas, UAB Getweb, Toyota Baltic AS, UAB Girteka, UAB

Photo shows lectures by guest lecturers.



Finansų labirintas, UAB Architektas, content agency SuperYou, Public Enterprise Solidi apsauga, UAB DIFAT and many others.

- **Provision of practical tasks for course projects** such as: UAB Stebulė, Lithuanian Social Innovation Cluster and many others.
- **Students undertake internships in social partner organisations** (it should be also emphasised that internships in organisations are not only open to students but also to the staff (academic and non-academic staff, e.g. [Vilnius City Municipal Administration Services Department](#), UAB Floralita dizainas, UAB Agrokoncernas, etc.). It is often the case that students are recruited before their final internship is over.
- **The social partners are an important part of the process of preparing and defending final theses (BD):** BD supervisors, consultants, reviewers and members of BD defence panels, etc. Some of the final theses produced by students are commissioned by companies/institutions/organisations (260 commissioned final theses produced in 2024, tailored to the needs of the client, the development of the region or the country as a whole).

Table. Commissioned final theses

Faculties	Number of BD
ATF	22
DIF	10
EIF	43
EKF	6
MTF	6
PDF	1
SPF	11
STF	35
TEF	29
VVF	97
TOTAL	260

- Participation in roundtables, faculty career days and other VIKO events.
- **Provision of financial support:**
 - **For the most advanced students, financial scholarships are offered for excellent**

academic performance, for instance, UAB Teltonika, UABThermo Fisher Scientific Baltics (since 2010), AB Ignitis grupė, AB Grigeo Group (UAB Grigeo Tissue, UAB Grigeo Packaging and UAB Grigeo Baltwood), or the German company Junior – Talents, which hosts about 15 TEF students for international internships every academic year, and provides each student with a stipendiums and pays the students' accommodation and travel costs.

- **Supports events organised by VIKO, such as:** UAB Dielektrik, UAB Lemona, UAB Esemda, MB Elektronikos arsenalas, global company Cencora, etc.
- **Project outsourcing contracts are in place**, e.g. 2024 contracts signed with UAB Lašų duona, UAB KEMEK Engineering, etc.
- **Contracts for applied art activities** such as: in 2024, art projects were implemented according to the needs of the Vievis Culture Centre, the Vilnius Nursery-Nursery "Paparitis", the Lithuanian Armed Forces Infantry Brigade, the Stained Glass Competition "Optics World", the Lithuanian Logistics Association Lineka, and others.
- **Material support for the installation of classrooms or the purchase of equipment is also provided.**
- The social partners, representatives of various organisations, are [Members of the VIKO Council](#).

Cooperation with the social partners also promotes research and scientific activities that respond to practical challenges and are generally oriented towards to contribute to positive change. In 2024, 64 cooperation agreements were concluded by VIKO. Please note that by Order V-354 of Director of 16 December 2021, the Vilniaus kolegija/HEI Strategic Partnership Programme 2021-2025 and the Action Plan 2021-2025 were approved, which provides for the purpose, directions, implementation and coordination of the strategic partnership in order to improve the quality of the services provided and the impact on the region. Based on the recommendations for strategic partnerships

and the strategic partnerships identified by the departments, the faculties identify national and international strategic partners on an annual basis.

A number of meetings with existing or potential social partners were held in 2024, for instance: on 25 September 2024, the representatives of the SPF visited the Republican Vilnius University Hospital (RVUL) at the invitation of the hospital administration. During the visit, the possibilities of [cooperation between RVUL and VIKO SPF](#) were discussed, and the Radiology, Outpatient Rehabilitation, Urology and Stroke Departments were visited.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI is a member of various international networks or associations, e.g.: [EURASHE](#), the European Association of Higher Education Institutions, [HEROES](#), the European Consortium of European Higher Education Institutions, [ULIXES](#), the European Economic Interest Grouping of legal entities aiming to jointly develop international projects (joint training, research and other activities), [VETNNET](#), the network of European Higher Education Institutions training veterinary nurses, [NETFAS](#), the European network of HEIs involved in textile research, [ENPHE](#), the European Network of European Schools of Physiotherapy, [EFAD](#), the European Federation of Dietetic Associations, [EFRS](#), the European Federation of Radiography Societies, [Comenius](#), the European Association of Higher Education for Teachers and Social Education, [PEN Worldwide](#), the global association of simulation centres, and of course, the United Nations [Global Compact](#).

VIKO is also a member of a number of national organisations, such as the Association of Personnel Management Professionals ([PVPA](#)), the Association of Lithuanian Clothing and Textile Companies ([LATIA](#)), the Lithuanian Economics Lecturers Association ([LEDA](#)), the Association of Transport Engineering Lecturers, and many others.

VIKO lecturers and staff are members of various associations and professional networks, such as European Association of Animal Production ([EAAP](#)), the European Association of Music Teachers ([EAS](#)), the International Association of Music Educators ([ISME](#)), the European Restructuring and Insolvency Professionals Association ([INSOL Europe](#)), the European Co-operative Society for Science and Technology ([COST](#)) and its various groups, the International

Union of Immunological Societies ([IUIS](#)), the Information Systems Audit and Control Association ([ISACA](#)), the European Alliance of the Social Sciences and Humanities ([EASSH](#)), among others (for more information, see the Annual Report).

Each faculty of VIKO establishes social partnerships with various national and international businesses. Social partnership allows VIKO to contribute to the development and well-being of the local community (through social and philanthropic initiatives), as HEIs can act as an effective catalyst for community projects and programmes, contributing to education, health and social welfare. VIKO not only **contributes to various social initiatives** (which are described in more detail in chapter twelve of this report), but also **organises public lectures by guest lecturers for the VIKO community**: e.g.: on 21 May 2024, during the International Scientific and Practical Conference on Fashion Identity and Innovation FIAI2024, held at the MTF, the Director General of LATIA gave a presentation on “Textile Industry Today”. On 24 October, the lecture for the students of the KV24 group of the Cultural Activity Management study programme “Introduction to Studies” was enriched by the guest lecturer, [Deima Jokubaitytė, project coordinator of the PE “Skirtingos spalvos”](#), who told the future Cultural Activity Managers about the social initiative that changes the attitude towards people with disabilities and provides them with support so that there is no “us” and “them” in the society, but only “us”. We learnt about the different lives of people with illnesses, the spectrum of colours they have, and the power of people to achieve their goals despite their illness. Field trips for students strengthen links with social partners and employers. On 20 November, [Ugnė Sasnauskaitė, head of the Lithuanian Dance Movement Therapy Association \(LŠJTA\)](#), [led a dance-movement therapy seminar for VK SPF lecturers](#). This event was not only an opportunity to learn about dance-movement therapy, it was also a practical-creative experience. The lecturers had the opportunity to creatively try out various dance-movement techniques that help improve physical and emotional well-being, reduce stress, promote relaxation and improve body awareness.

On 28 November, [Lauras Lučiūnas, a music producer and manager of Lithuanian artists](#), gave a lec-

[ture for future Managers of Cultural Activity](#). On 6 December, Martynas Tyla presented a guide to safe events at the conference “Challenges of Culture and Education in the 21st Century”.

A close, long-standing and meaningful cooperation in the context of corporate social responsibility and sustainable development, applied research links VIKO SPF and Medards Čobot University of the Third Age (MČTAU). On 29 February 2024, Rasa Lakytė, a student of the SPF study programme “Kinesitherapy”, gave a presentation to MČTAU students on [“Nutritious movement or why exercise is not enough”](#). Regular physical activity in older people is vital for healthy, youthful ageing. “The Law of Moses, thank God, does not forbid old women from climbing trees” (Astrid Lindgren), – this way Rasa invited the audience to “move in a nutritious way” by referring to the wisdom and life story of the famous writer. On 7 March 2024, MČTAU students were given a presentation on [“Psychology of pain”](#) by Marija Gražienė, a student of the study programme “Kinesitherapy”. The speaker introduced the participants to the definition of pain and its types, ways of assessing pain, examined the experience of pain through a phenomenological prism, suggested to change the way we look at pain, to listen to what it is trying to say to us, and invited the audience to perform the visual pain relief-breathing exercise 4-4-8 together. On 19 March 2024, during MČTAU Seniors’ Physical Health Assessment Forum lecturer Ramunė Komžienė gave a presentation on “Health benefits of physical activity”. On 19 March 2024, the health promotion event “My health is my right”, organised by MČTAU to celebrate the World Health Day, was attended; KI22 group students conducted physical activity classes to train and strengthen body balance and coordination, organised a Nordic walking tournament (lecturer mentors Ramunė Komžienė and Asta Markauskienė). On 5 November 2024, the Physical Health Assessment Forum “Let’s learn not to fall down” organised by VIKO SPF, MČTAU, and the Centre for Lifestyle Medicine Sanus was attended. KI22 students performed physical fitness testing and assessment, advised on body balance, coordination, flexibility training (lecturer mentors Kristina Žukienė, Ramunė Komžienė and Asta Markauskienė). Ramunė Komžienė, the lecturer at the Department of Rehabilitation, gave

a presentation on “Cognitive functions, body balance and coordination, and muscle strength: inter-relationships and training in older age”. On 3 December 2024, VIKO SPF and MČTAU organised the now traditional conference [“AGEING AND HEALTH 2024”](#), where lecturers and students from all SPF Departments delivered their presentations on topics relevant to ageing health.

In 2024 was launched PDF project [“Improving the competences of sign language professionals”](#), which aims to improve the educational conditions of people experiencing social exclusion or at risk of social exclusion by strengthening social partnerships with various educational institutions.

MTF students and teachers participate in social partner events by performing or co-organising artistic events (see chapter 9 of this report for more details).

Joint projects are implemented with the social partners, e.g. the Chamber of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania and VIKO ATF implemented two European Innovation Partnership (EIP) projects focusing on advancing the *veterinary* sector: “Measures to reduce mastitis and somatic cell counts in milk while reducing the use of antibiotics for mastitis treatment on farms” and “Improving the productivity and competitiveness of dairy farms through a collaborative model”. These projects also actively involve veterinary students, providing them with opportunities to engage in research, presenting their results in seminars and promoting the practical application of results.

The VVF runs a joint study programme on Creativity and Business Innovation with the Porto Polytechnic Institute (Portugal) and the Estonian University of Applied Sciences for Entrepreneurship (Estonia), faculty-student exchanges are carried out, students participate in conferences, etc.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI strengthens its social partnership with Lithuanian schools, education centres, youth organisations and clubs, teachers’ associations and societies by developing initiatives of the VIKO community to organise educational visits to schools or visits of students to VIKO, motivating students to study and obtain higher education qualifications and emphasising the importance of lifelong learning.

The lecturers organise open lectures that are open to pupils. Lectures for schoolchildren are also organised in schools – not only in Vilnius, but also in other cities. For example:

On 28 February 2024, Dalia Babilaitė-Abarė and Nijolė Baranauskaitė-Matukonienė, lecturers at the Performing Arts Department of the MTF, gave a lecture and a [masterclass “Singing Character” at the seminar “Methodologies of Singing in the Classical and Modern Style” at the Vilnius Karoliniškės Music School](#).

On 22 October 2024, the [Career Activities Day](#) at the “Saulės” Gymnasium in Utena was attended by lecturers of the STF Department of Business and Public Management, STF Department of Civil Engineering, lecturer dr. Eugenijus Gudonis, lecturer Indrė Sprogytė - Bredelienė.

On 20 November 2024, lecturers OF STF Depart-

ment of Business and Public Management Aurelijus Vaškys and Aušra Špuraitė took part in the traditional [“Researcher’s Day” event](#) at the Lizdeika Gymnasium in Radviliškis, aimed at developing students’ cognitive and communicative competences and promoting integrated and experiential learning.

On 6 December 2024, STF lecturer Natalija Augūnienė and Assoc. Prof. Dr Marija Vaičienė took part in the [event “Career and Volunteering”](#) at Vilnius Vytautas Magnus Gymnasium.

Pupils sometimes visit the VIKO faculties too.

For example: The MTF hosted the traditional “Student for a Day” events with more than 120 students from various learning institutions across the country ([9 February](#), [9 May](#), [12 May](#) and [15 May](#)).

SPF hosted a “Week at College” in March, where students have the opportunity to attend a week of theoretical lectures and practical sessions with stu-

In the photo: Moments of the Dance Movement Therapy Seminar (20/11/2024) for VK SPF lecturers conducted by the head of the Lithuanian Dance-Movement Therapy Association (LŠJTA), Ugnė Sasnauskaitė



dents. On 18 October, the [members of the Young Doctors Academy](#) and their leader Algimantas Andrijauskas visited the SPF.

On 27 November 2024, TEF hosted an “Engineer’s Workshop” for pupils, where pupils were engaged in the experimental development work. The workshop was one of the initiatives of the Exact Science Week 2024, which aims to encourage young people to take an interest in the fields of science and technology and to choose engineering and technology as their future field of study.

On 12 December, the STF hosted the I grade students from the [Vytautas Magnus Gymnasium](#).

The EKF has a [Young Economist’s Club](#), which brings together Lithuanian senior high school (grades 10-12) students interested in economics and business trends, as well as students from VIKO and other higher education institutions.

ATF offers a range of [educational activities](#) for Lithuanian schoolchildren in their schools or ATF laboratories. The Faculty also runs a non-formal education programme called “Beginning Farming”.

The VVF offers [lectures and workshops for pupils](#).

To promote cooperation with schools, educational activities are supplemented with events and competitions for schoolchildren, such as: on 27 April 2024, the International Dance Day celebrations (a campaign in support of Ukraine) took place. As part of the strengthening of social partnerships with educational institutions, an invitation to join the campaign was sent out. The idea of the event was supported and well attended by students, lecturers, [pupils from the Ukrainian schools “Gravitas schola” and “Gravitacija”, as well as by pupils from the Fabijoniškės Gymnasium in Vilnius](#). The campaign was prepared by SM21 students as a final project for the course Social Responsibility and Sustainable Management (Dr Inga Kepalienė).

During the year under review, the EIF (as it does every year) organised interactive workshops, trainings and competitions, such as EIF, which give students and pupils the opportunity to try out technological solutions in practice and develop their creativity.

Students actively participate in student scientific conferences organised by VIKO: EKF International Student Scientific-Practical Conference [“Economics. Business. Management – 2024”](#),

MTF SMMD Conference [“Synergy of Science and Art’2024”](#), TEF Student Conference [“Exact Sciences – the Basis of Qualified Engineer’s Studies 2024”](#), VVF SMD 13th International Student Scientific-Practical Conference [“Youth in a Changing Society”](#), etc. It is encouraging that the conferences organised by VIKO are attracting more and more interest from pupils every year.

VIKO lecturers organise training not only for students, but also for teachers and professionals (employees or members of social partners):

On 14 March 2024, Dalia Babilaitė-Abarė and Nijolė Baranauskaitė-Matukonienė, lecturers at the Performing Arts Department of the MTF, gave a masterclass to teachers, students and guests of the Vilnius Algirdas School of Music at the workshop [“The Influence of Innovative Methods of Voice Training on the Performance of Different Genres of Music”](#).

On 27 April 2024, Asta Markauskienė, lecturer at the Rehabilitation Department of SPF, conducted a seminar on “Functional Examination of the Patient” for massage therapists and physiotherapists, organised by the Lithuanian Doctor Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired (LASMEDA).

On 6 December 2024, the Conference of the EIT education programme: “Teacher as Food Educator: experiences and perspectives” was held, which brought together teachers, education professionals, food industry representatives and policy makers to discuss the importance of food education and the role of teachers in shaping future generations’ attitudes towards sustainability, healthy eating and food systems. ATF, SPF and TEF lecturers took part in this initiative.

VIKO aims to carry out applied research, experimental development and professional arts, commissioned project activities in science and the applied arts that enhance sustainable development and social responsibility.

International projects are also implemented, for instance:

The VVF research team of lecturers Dalia Karlaitė, Muhammad Sohail and Greta Gruodė (Project Manager Sophio Tabatadze) continued the Erasmus+ project [“USD – Universities for Sustainable Development”](#). The project is led by Pablo De Olavide University (Spain), with partners Savonia

University of Applied Sciences (Finland), OpenODS (Spain) and VIKO (Lithuania). The overall aim of the project is to accelerate compliance with the 2030 Agenda by strengthening the key role of the member institutions of the European Higher Education Area, while the specific objectives are to promote and facilitate the integration of the SDGs into all areas of the activities of HEIs, to develop the digital transformation of HEIs in order to achieve the sustainability goals and to harness the knowledge generated by HEIs for sustainable development.

The Erasmus+ project “Empowering Women: the Future Leader” ([FEMPOWER](#)) was finalised (starting in 2022), with the main objective “Empowering Women: the Future Leader”, which aims to develop and strengthen women’s leadership skills and to empower young women with entrepreneurial skills in the innovative learning environment of a simulation company (SC). The secondary objective is to include elements to highlight the impact of gender stereotypes and raise awareness of gender discrimination in the labour market. The Consortium has developed a Women’s Leadership and Empowerment mini-course where young women, especially SC trainees, will find ways to understand the realities of the labour market and to become leaders and better adapt to the new trends in the recruitment process.

The STF continues its cooperation with the Erasmus+ project “Discover the Know-How of Construction Professionals” (launched in December 2023), which is being implemented by 7 project partners: Eskişehir Technical University (Turkey), Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University (Turkey), Vilniaus kolegija/HEI (Lithuania), Warsaw University of Technology (Poland), Polish Association of Construction Managers (Poland), the company Insaat Malzemeleri Sanayi ve Ticaret Ltd. Sti. (Turkey) and TAV Tepe Akfen Investment Construction and Operations Co. (Turkey), which includes many sustainability aspects e.g. organising meetings close to the accommodation, focusing on sustainable solutions in the development of the material, etc.) (STF lecturers Airida Tylienė and Assoc. Prof. Dr Andrius Gulbinas). The project will run until the end of 2025.

In summary, social partnerships are a win-win situation for higher education institutions and collaborating organisations, and the VIKO community plans to continue expanding partnerships with a wide range of organisations in the future, to foster innovation and to actively involve students in real-world problem solving through hands-on projects. It also plans to focus more on tackling regional social problems through strategic partnerships.

Photo: visit of the Vytautas Magnus Gymnasium I grade students to STF (12/12/2024).



Strengthening social inclusion

Strengthening social inclusion is an essential aspect of building a fair, equal and sustainable society. In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania and other legal acts, VIKO actively promotes equality and aims to ensure that no one faces social exclusion. Discrimination based on a person's gender, race, nationality or other characteristics is not tolerated at VIKO. Vilniaus kolegija/HEI actively seeks to strengthen social inclusion to ensure that every member of the community feels like a fully-fledged participant in academic and social life. These activities include a range of initiatives that contribute to the inclusion of members of society, reduce social exclusion and promote community.

An adapted environment and accessibility are the goals of VIKO. The accessibility of buildings, in line with universal design guidelines, for people with different disabilities is of paramount importance to ensure that members of the college community have the opportunity to be with other members of the community and not feel unwelcome. VIKO invests in adapting its facilities for people with disabilities, ensuring that all spaces are accessible and comfortable.

The main accesses to the buildings of all VIKO faculties (as well as faculties located in other premises, such as the ATF Department of Veterinary Medicine (Dvaro g. 1)) are barrier-free, with sloping walkways, ramps (the latter used by the typical persons¹) or lifts, wide doorways etc. The

¹ Typical persons – people without individual (special) needs caused by a disability, impairment, etc.



VIKO faculties' premises (with the exception of the TEF, where wheelchair users can only enter the building and move freely on the ground floor, and access to the other floors requires the assistance of staff to transport them upstairs with a special ladder, as the lift has been dismantled) have lifts and/or elevators, to help wheelchair users to reach any floor (the lifts are equipped with raised buttons and additional braille, and for sustainability reasons, it is recommended that the lifts are not abused by typical persons and only used by those who need it, and a new lift for disabled persons is planned to be installed in TEF in the near future). In many faculties, staircases (the first and last or all of them), marked with bright (yellow and black) stripes, make it easier to navigate not only for the visually impaired, but also for the typical persons. At the EKF and MTF, prominent numbers corresponding to the number of the classroom are placed near the entrances to the lecture halls for the visually impaired (as early as 2022, VIKO signed a cooperation agreement with the Lithuanian Library for the Blind to improve accessibility of studies for people with visual, reading or other impairments). Access to classrooms shall be free of thresholds, with sufficient door widths and possible placement of furniture in the classrooms to allow easy and barrier-free movement for wheelchair users. Workplaces have also been adapted to accommodate community members with mobility or other disabilities. All faculty buildings have at least one WC for persons with disabilities (VVF (Didlaukio g. 49) on the ground floor, TEF (Antakalnio g. 54) on the first floor and EKF (Studentų g. 39A) on the 5th floor of the building with a toilet for people with reduced mobility, but this toilet is also available to ATF and PDF students and staff with reduced mobility), but we are pleased to note that some VIKO buildings have a toilet on every floor of the building (e.g. SPF (Didlaukio g. 45) and TEF and DIF (Olandų g. 16)). If a person with any disability is involved in the study process, this is always taken into account in the timetables (e.g. if a person with a mobility impairment is a student, the lectures are organised on the same floor so as not to make navigation difficult). Virtual learning environment MOODLE and other digital tools ensure that information is accessible to all,

without exception or barrier. The reading rooms of the libraries are equipped with computer access for students with special mobility needs. For students with special visual needs, the library's reading rooms have visual magnification tools to make reading books and documents more convenient, and a screen reader, Jaws for Windows, with a voice synthesiser that converts text into sound. The STF also has equipment and tools for students with disabilities (visual impairment compensation equipment – portable video magnifier eMag 70HD, Schweizer 4 pcs.; visual impairment compensation equipment – software for versions Dolphin EasyConverter 2 pcs.; mobility impairment compensation equipment – adjustable-height desks ergoM1R-1000/680E 2 pcs.; mobility impairment compensation equipment – adjustable chairs 2 pcs.). [DIF](#), [STF](#) and [TEF](#) websites have been equipped with an option to enlarge the text, making it easier for visually impaired people to read the information.

Thus, people with mobility or other disabilities can choose to study many study programmes not only at a distance, but also in contact mode, as most faculties have facilities that are accessible to people with disabilities.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI offers inclusive study programmes and educational initiatives. VIKO continuously develops its study programmes to meet the needs of its diverse student population. The Sign Language programme is a significant step towards enabling people with hearing impairments to not only get an education, but also to successfully integrate into the labour market. In addition, VIKO organises educational activities on diversity and social responsibility to raise awareness and promote inclusion.

Extended and full-time studies, organised on a sessional timetable, allow the "lifelong learning" initiative to be implemented, giving people of all ages the opportunity to study, as it makes it easier to combine study and work. Distance learning on the MS Teams and VLE Moodle platforms enables people who want to combine their studies with work, live in the regions of Lithuania or abroad, or have a disability to get an education.

The approved [Procedure for the Organisation of Individualised Study Processes Based on Students'](#)

[Individual Needs](#) helps to **adequately address the individual special needs of students**: lecturers apply individualised teaching and assessment methods to help these students achieve the expected learning outcomes. Students from socially disadvantaged groups and students with special needs can receive advice on accessibility issues at the VIKO Study Office and/or the Study Departments of the Faculties. Flexible forms of study and performance assessment are used to assess the achievements of students with special needs, adapting to their abilities (e.g. distance learning, blended learning methods, extended time for exams).

In 2024, 54 persons with disabilities enrolled at VIKO; they applied for support and met the requirements of the Agency for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ANTA):

- a) have a participation rate of 45% or less (on presenting a disability certificate);
- b) enrolling in higher education for the first time after being diagnosed with a disability, i.e. not having completed the relevant cycle of studies.

The good practices for 2024 are worth mentioning:

The EKF **student who is blind** was given the assignments in Word, as the computer programme reads the information aloud, and the visual material, graphs and charts were commented on orally, additional individual guidance was also provided. In 2024, the student successfully completed and defended his thesis in June. There were various challenges in the study process, which the student overcame, but the biggest challenge was the formatting of the final thesis according to the methodological requirements. With the help of his family and his thesis supervisor Daiva Malakaitė, the student managed to overcome this challenge. During the defence, the student presented his work to the jury by switching between slides using a computer reading programme that read the slide titles into an earpiece. The defence went smoothly.

A **deaf student** in the SPF Dietetics programme successfully defended her thesis in 2024. During her studies, the student was able to attend lectures with a sign language interpreter, and the lec-

tures were taught at an appropriate pace to allow her to engage with the lecture and its activities. The student was provided with additional written study material. More time was allocated for the defence of her thesis with a sign language interpreter.

On 20 November 2024, the representatives of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI presented various study and career opportunities at the “Professional Opportunities Day” event held at the Lithuanian Centre for the Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The Dean of PDF Vaiva Juškienė and the Head of the Department of Social Welfare, Dr Dalia Kačinaitytė-Vrubliauskienė, together with students and graduates, shared their insights into the [Lithuanian Sign Language Interpreting, Primary Education Pedagogy and Social Work study programmes, encouraging students to find their own professional path](#).

In 2024, the **VIKO community meetings, VIKO's and other events, as well as PDF Council meetings**, Social Welfare Department meetings, commencement and graduation ceremonies and other PDF events were **translated into sign language** due to the real need of the hearing impaired in the community, and also to meet the guideline of social responsibility and sustainable development activities “to strengthen and promote the Lithuanian Sign Language study programme to meet the specific needs of the country's citizens”. Sign language interpreting was used to translate the PDF lectures for the GK24, PU24AS, PU23AS groups for deaf students in 2024, as well as lectures of the Lithuanian Sign Language Interpreting and Social Work degree programmes given by deaf lecturers: Introduction to the Deaf Community, Basic Lithuanian Sign Language, Lithuanian Sign Language, Deaf Community, Social Work with the Hearing Impaired.

After a long break (following the pandemic), the Christmas afternoon for children of VIKO staff in December 2024, which was attended by children of hearing-impaired staff, was also translated into sign language.

Projects to increase social inclusion not only raise the competences of project participants, but also contribute to significant social change:

ERASMUS+ project “[Promoting people with dis-](#)

[abilities employment by enhancing their digital skills and competences to support a remote working scheme disabilities \(DigitAbility\)](#)” was completed in 2024 and it aims to promote the employment and attractiveness of people with disabilities by enhancing their digital skills and supporting vocational training providers to create more accessible education services for people with disabilities. The [results of the project](#) were presented in November 2024.

During the reporting period, the EKF implemented the ERASMUS+ project [“Educational Empowerment and Social Inclusion of Students with Disabilities through Digital Solutions and Assistive Technologies \(EESI-DIGI\)”](#), which aims to develop digital competences for successful graduation and integration into the labour market. The project activities developed and delivered learning modules for students with disabilities. Participants come from five countries: Greece (University of Patras (project coordinators)), Hungary (Elte University), Lithuania (Vilniaus kolegija/HEI), Italy (organisation I.E.R.F.O.P.) and Spain (organisation COCEMFE). The speakers were chosen for their competences – looking for people who regularly use IT tools in their lives, have a disability themselves or work with people with disabilities.

ERDF launches ERASMUS+ entrepreneurship project [“Youth, believe in yourself and become entrepreneur” YOU-CAN-BE !!](#), aimed at young entrepreneurs with their own social business ideas. During the project, teams of students developed business ideas. The young entrepreneurs visited the social business enterprise “Business or Art” (“Taško istorija”), which publishes books for blind children, and carried out educational activities: blindfolded participants tried to find pictures in objects, and in the “dark room” they touched and analysed pictures created by the blind. Participants had lunch in social restaurants: “Mano Guru” which employs ex-prisoners and people with addictions; “Pirmas blynas” which employs people with various disabilities such as Down’s Syndrome, cerebral palsy and others. Vismantas Satkauskas, Director of UAB Sėkmės sprendimai, gave a lecture on “Business opportunities and social entrepreneurship, innovation, environmental issues, socially vulnerable people, EU funding”.

The EIF is also running a project called *“Design-2Freedom - promoting Person-centred design applied to disability in higher education”*, which aims to create a culture of inclusive (person-centred) design in education, leading to a more inclusive society.

In 2024, the Erasmus+ project “INTELLIGENT: Innovative Teaching and Learning for Generations Z and Alpha in Higher Education” was launched at the VVF with the aim of achieving more effective and technologically advanced entrepreneurial teaching and learning practices for Generation Z and Alpha students in the project partner organisations, through the application of an innovative methodology that combines a mix of theoretical and practical methods and educational material (virtual reality, business simulations, artificial intelligence) as a result of synergies between higher education institutions, vocational training organisations and businesses in Europe.

In October 2024, PDF Sign Language Centre launched the project [“Improving the competences of sign language professionals”](#) which is funded by the European Union funds (project value is EUR 300,000.00) and will run by September 2026. The aim of the project is to improve the educational conditions of people experiencing exclusion or social risks that put them at risk of social exclusion.

On 1 December 2024, TEF launched the international Erasmus+ project “Innovative, Collaborative and Interoperable Tools to Enhance Higher Education Curricula for Sustainable Industry 4.0 Production”, which focuses on the development of the STEAM approach in Higher Education and the promotion of women’s participation in these disciplines.

On 12 December 2024, [PDF students, future primary school teachers, organised activities for primary school pupils at Vilnius Tuskulėnai Gymnasium to raise awareness of human rights and education](#). During the sessions, students took part in discussions, watched videos, analysed situations and carried out tasks that promoted cooperation, understanding and respect for others. The event highlighted human rights as the basis for a prosperous society.

Various activities are implemented in the study process to raise students’ awareness of social in-

clusion. For example: On 16 April 2024, EKF students and staff bearing good emotions and gifts [visited Vilnius City Integrated Service Centre “Šeimos slėnis”](#). During the visit, the students became acquainted with the centre’s comprehensive personalised services for children and families with children with disabilities, as well as with the latest modern methodologies applied in the centre for children with disabilities.

Cultural diversity and internationalisation is also one of the goals of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI. VIKO creates a multicultural environment by promoting international student and faculty exchanges. Vilniaus kolegija/HEI offers [studies in English](#) and [welcomes](#) international students into its community, enhancing the experience of cultural diversity and promoting international cooperation. More than 500 foreigners studied in 2024. Intercultural events and activities help community members understand different cultures and promote tolerance.

The project [“Foreign Talents for Lithuania: the Search for an Innovative Model of Cooperation between Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions and Organisations”](#), funded by the State Study Foundation, was implemented by the VVF (project duration: from 04/06/2024 to 01/12/2024, project partners: Vilniaus kolegija/HEI Students’ Representation, Šiauliai State College, Lithuanian Business College, Utena College, Lithuanian Language Teachers Association). Activities implemented: students carried out 5 research studies, prepared a research report in English; organised student visits to organisations in Vilnius and Lithuanian regions (Lithuanian Social Innovation Cluster (LSIC) and MB Pirmas blynas, etc.), organised Lithuanian language and culture workshops, cooking workshops, Cake Day, lectures for foreign citizens who have successfully settled in Lithuania, etc.

VIKO actively cooperates with partners in Lithuania and abroad to implement projects that reduce social exclusion. Projects such as the Strategic Partnerships on Regional Social Issues involve both research and practical activities. These initiatives focus on social responsibility and sustainable development (as explained in more detail in Chapter [3](#) of this report).

As a partner, the VVF has successfully imple-

mented the Nordplus project “School-Business Cooperation Platform”, which aims to facilitate daily communication between Nordic and Baltic higher education institutions and business organisations by developing the services of the electronic platform [www.koolituskrediit.ee](#) developed by Mainor AS. The platform enables employees of Estonian Ülemiste City companies to participate in training courses offered by various Estonian higher education institutions. During the project, project partners in the Nordic and Baltic countries carried out quantitative and qualitative surveys of higher education institutions and business, analysed the content of different learning platforms, developed and launched new services on the online platform, thus promoting cooperation between business and higher education institutions. The project is coordinated by the Estonian University of Applied Sciences for Entrepreneurship (EUAS).

As part of the VIKO’s objective to reduce exclusion of vulnerable groups, particular attention is paid to gender equality, the integration of young people into the labour market and the education of the older generation (lifelong learning), through training and programmes that enable members of these groups to better integrate into society and acquire the necessary skills.

The project “Enhancement of Students’ Professional Identity Expression in the Colleges of the Eastern Lithuania Region”, financed by the State Study Foundation, was implemented in cooperation with Utena College (project duration: 01/05/2024 to 30/11/2024, project partners: Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, Panevėžys College). The following activities were implemented which actively involved the students of the Faculty: students participated in the motivational seminar “Growing My Professional Identity” in Utena; students visited the UAB Teltonika branch in Molėtai and drafted project proposals to solve the challenge presented by the company. A competition for student teams called “Tasting Professional Identity” took place on 29/10/2024.

Volunteering and social responsibility are equally important manifestations. VIKO’s focus on volunteering activities is important for strengthening social inclusion (for more information, see Chapter 12). Faculties actively organise projects

and events to help vulnerable people. Volunteering initiatives, such as helping children, seniors or disadvantaged people, contribute to strengthening the community and promote empathy between students and staff.

Social responsibility projects. VIKO community participates in international and regional projects focusing on social responsibility and inclusion. One key area is education and lifelong learning opportunities, which enable the inclusion of a wider section of the population, promoting their autonomy and ability to contribute to society's well-being (discussed further in Chapter [2](#)).

In summary, the activities of Vilniaus kolegija/ HEI are focused on strengthening social inclusion and are in line with Lithuania's strategic goals for sustainable development. These initiatives not only reduce exclusion, but also create a sustainable society that values diversity and whose members are free to realise their potential. VIKO consistently strives to develop harmonious relationships by working with different stakeholder groups and organising its activities.



Promoting information literacy and the digital society

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI actively contributes to the promotion of information literacy and the digital society through various activities aimed at the development of digitisation, sustainable digital innovation, cyber security and robotics for the benefit of society. These areas are closely linked to Lithuania's sustainable development orientations and reflect both national and international priorities.

At Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, funds are continuously allocated for upgrading information technology (IT) hardware and software. Desktop computers with monitors and laptops are procured. The faculties' classrooms are equipped with projectors or interactive screens and sound equipment. WiFi is available in all areas. All faculties have modern computer classrooms.

College staff, lecturers and students actively use the cloud-based Office 365 service with all the lat-



est Office applications. Students can install the latest Microsoft Office applications on their computer for free, as well as install or upgrade their existing Microsoft Windows operating system.

For full-time students on a session-based schedule, for non-contact lectures, Microsoft Teams is used for lectures – a wide-ranging tool for group and individual chatting. Thanks to this tool, students can watch lectures, take part in project defences and other activities live without having to go to the college premises.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI aims to promote the themes of digitisation, information literacy, sustainable digital innovation, cyber security and robotics for the well-being of society by creating as many opportunities as possible to educate the Lithuanian society in these areas, developing applied research and social partnerships with organisations interested in these topics. Sharing information with the public also requires the adoption of innovative information and digital technologies in our own operations. VIKO's documents are managed using the electronic document management system (DMS) "Kontora". The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) MOODLE has long been used in the study process, and training is provided for beginning teachers.

Innovative information and digital technologies are actively implemented at Vilniaus kolegija/HEI. The electronic document management system (DMS) "Kontora" and the virtual learning environment MOODLE have long been integrated into the study process. Information literacy is an important part of Lithuania's sustainable development. These activities promote the public's ability to use new technologies, foster critical thinking and prepare for constant technological change. It is also part of lifelong learning, which enhances social inclusion and encourages active participation in civil society. The Faculty of Electronics and Informatics (EIF) organises activities to promote information literacy, including studies and non-formal education. This develops the ability of members of the public to identify, access, evaluate, select and use relevant information from a wide range of sources in an ethical and responsible manner.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI's library has 57 computerised workstations in its reading rooms. Subscription databases can be accessed from home. The

library organises annual introductory lectures on the library's information resources and services for first-year students, and consultations and training for second-year students and lecturers. Introductory lectures for first-year students are very important in integrating them into the study process, introducing them to information resources and library services.

Cybersecurity knowledge is critical for a secure information society. Lithuania is a leader in cyber security in the European Union, and the development of cyber security is therefore a priority. The EIF has a Cyber Security Lab, which provides applied research and practices. The Faculty trains highly qualified professionals, organises cyber security exercises and disseminates best practices to the teacher and pupil communities. EIF partners are actively involved in educating students, giving lectures and presenting practical examples to deepen their understanding of the field. In addition, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI organises Cybersecurity Month events on safe behaviour in the digital space for students and the public, involving industry experts. Thus, the activities initiated by the Faculty raise public awareness of cyber threats and develop the ability to resist them.

The development of robotics is an important part of sustainable development, addressing the shortage of manual labour and contributing to society. The EIF Robotics Workshop develops the "Robot-humanoid EIFURE" project, which focuses on assisting people with reduced mobility. Robotics technology is developed with ethical principles, ensuring the transparency, reliability and integrity of AI. Faculty lecturers and students are actively involved in research and develop innovative robotics solutions for healthcare, education and other societal needs. Interactive workshops and hands-on lessons are arranged for pupils to stimulate their interest in technology and encourage them to pursue a career in the field.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI contributes to the development of e-innovation by digitising information and developing solutions that make the use of resources more efficient. Students and lecturers in the Software Department develop websites, mobile apps and information systems to help move towards electronic documents and reduce paper

consumption. Prototypes are also being developed for smart home and health monitoring devices that can be used in everyday activities. The EIF also carries out projects focusing on the environment and sustainability. For example, robotics and smart technology solutions are being developed in line with sustainable development goals to reduce energy consumption and environmental pollution.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI participates in international projects such as DigitUni and DISTINCT, which foster innovation and improve the competences of lecturers and students. It also includes research on the application of information technology in medicine and other fields. VIKO works with international organisations to strengthen global knowledge transfer and the achievement of sustainable development goals.

Also, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI organised “Studies 2044: AI Hackathon”, which aims to apply AI solutions to the future of education (see Chapter 6 for more information on this event).

Artificial Intelligence was a hot topic during the events of Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) in 2024, both organised by VIKO and by foreign universities, for instance:

On 6 to 10 May 2024, the BIP event “Applying AI in Social Media and Communication” was organised by the VVF <https://www.viko.lt/renginiai/renginys/applying-ai-in-social-media-and-communication-misri-intensyvi-programa-bip/> and it brought together students from HEIs Thomas More (Belgium), Opole University of Technology (Poland) and Ostbayerische Technische Hochschule Amberg-Weiden (Germany).

On 9 to 13 September 2024, SPF lecturer Alina Bažanovienė and third-year students Dija Belaglovė, Iveta Gylytė, Rusnė Vasiliauskaitė, Kotryna Kašėtaitė of the Faculty of Health Care Studies programme “General Practice Nursing” took part in the BIP “Modern and Effective AI-Powered Learning and Concentration Techniques – Theory and Practice” <https://spf.viko.lt/siuolaikines-ir-veiksmingos-dirbtiniu-intelektu-pagristos-mokymosi-ir-koncentracijos-technikos-teorija-ir-praktika-misrioji-intensyvioji-programa-angl-bip-modern-and-ef/> which was organised by the ANSiM University in Poland (Akademia Nauk Społecznych i Medycznych w Lublinie – Akademia Nauk Stosowanych). During

the visit, participants heard lectures on the use of artificial intelligence and virtual environments in healthcare, and took part in hands-on training. Lecturers shared their knowledge on the use of virtual environments in the learning process and their application in rehabilitation.

Other events organised by VIKO:

On 22 November 2024, VIKO PDF held its annual Career Days, highlighting the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in career guidance. [Associate Professor Dr Renata Kondratavičienė led a workshop presenting AI solutions](#) such as ChatGPT, Canva, Europass, Powtoon, and Gamma.app, which allow the creation of personalised career recommendations, skills analysis, and the generation of interactive training videos. Participants tried out AI tools in practice, discussed their applicability and ethics, with an emphasis on data privacy.

On 2 to 6 December 2024, TEF organised Exact Science Week 2024. During this week, on 3 December, the annual student competition “Website on the Fast Track” took place with the participation of TEF and STF students. The event required students to create websites within a given timeframe and present them to a jury. On 5 December 2024, Engineering Graphics Student Knowledge Contest with 34 of the most active and curious students from EA24, TE24A, TE24B and TI24 was held.

Projects carried out in 2024:

Erasmus+ Collaborative Partnership “[Hybrid Teaching: Empowering Educators for the Future](#)” (No 2023-1-LT01-KA220-HED-000156733) was continued and it aims to provide academic staff with the flexibility to teach hybrid subjects and institutionalise knowledge through a micro-certification system.

The Erasmus+ Higher Education Strategic Partnerships project “*Promoting people with disabilities’ employment by enhancing their digital skills and competences to support a remote working scheme*” ([DigitAbility](#)) was implemented by the EKF. The project aims to promote the employment of people with disabilities by improving their digital skills and competences, and to develop a digitally resilient distance working and learning scheme for training providers and learners. Project duration: 01/12/2022 to 30/11/2024. The results of the [study](#) were presented to the VIKO community.

The STF is implementing the Erasmus+ project “[*Hybrid Teaching: Empowering Educators for the Future*](#)”), which aims to provide academic staff with the flexibility and quality of blended learning and the recognition of acquired competences through the introduction of a micro-certification system. The aim is to improve teaching and learning in hybrid classrooms and to provide continuous professional development opportunities. The results of the project will have an impact on the competence of academic staff in the field of hybrid/blended teaching, improving didactic activities in the online environment, which will improve student engagement and motivation, learning experience and learning outcomes. STF lecturers (researchers) Aurelijus Vaškys, Jurgita Ginavičienė, Inga Piščikienė, Andrejus Račkovskis developed modules for hybrid learning in LMS moodle platform: *Delivering hybrid learning and reflective teaching* and *Assessing performance in hybrid environments*. The modules will be piloted by 10 selected lecturers between March and April 2025.

In 2024, the Erasmus+ Higher Education Strategic Partnerships project “Development of a virtual learning space as a tool for developing students’ critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity skills in the context of COVID19” (VILE-SA) was implemented by the EKF. The aim of the project is to introduce students to new innovative learning spaces and to address the challenges of applying modern teaching and learning methods in the social sciences by digitising the content of studies. The project duration is from 1 December 2021 to 31 May 2024.

In 2024, the TEF carried out international projects in line with the promotion of Information Literacy and the Digital Society:

- The project “Multilingual ePhoto Dictionary of Car Mechanics” has created a national Multilingual ePhoto Dictionary platform in six European languages: French, German, Spanish, Lithuanian, Slovenian and Estonian.
- The project “D-PBL: Bringing project-based learning into the digital era” provided teacher training based on the interaction between digital and pedagogical competences.
- Project [*SIMOnS*](#): Improving and Monitoring Students’ Online Skills builds the digital literacy of higher education students by providing an attractive and innovative mobile tool for learning and assessment.
- The international project “Innovation Labs for Climate Action” (ILCA) aimed to foster the development of sustainable and innovative solutions to the challenges of climate change. The project included workshops, seminars and discussions where students worked on concrete innovative solutions focused on sustainability and environmental protection. Hands-on projects were developed to stimulate students’ creativity and innovation, and to foster environmental responsibility by engaging students in solving real climate problems.

The R&D activities of the MTF Fashion Technology and Business study programme are related to research in the field of materials engineering (digitisation and 3D virtualisation of fashion product design and production processes, smart textile materials in fashion product design and production (smart, protective and specialised clothing, etc.), which are carried out by faculty professor Dr E. Strazdienė together with students of the Technology and Business programme and lecturers of the department.

Publications on information literacy and promoting the digital society:

- Ambrusevič, Nikolaj; Gomienė, Živilė. Applying artificial intelligence in the logistics sector of Lithuania: prospects and opportunities // Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Issues : Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Center. eISSN 2345-0282. 2024, vol. 11, no. 3, p. 176-188. DOI: 10.9770/jesi.2023.11.2(12).
- Fedosova, Kateryna; Katunian, Alina. The use of artificial intelligence in the restaurant business // Turystyka i rozwój regionalny = Journal of Tourism and Regional Development. Warszawa : Szkoła Główna Gospodarstwa Wiejskiego w Warszawie. ISSN 2353-9178. eISSN 2543-8859. 2024, no. 22, p. 43-54. DOI: 10.22630/TIRR.2024.22.16.
- Lapinskienė, Giedrė; Mačerauskas, Eugenijus.

- jus; Achranovič, Genė; Danilevičienė, Irena. Dirbtinio intelekto naudojimo ir poveikio apskaitai galimybių tyrimas = The use of artificial intelligence and its impact on accounting // Mokslo taikomieji tyrimai Lietuvos kolegijose. Kaunas : Kaunas College. ISSN 1822-1068. eISSN 2335-8904. 2024, Vol. 2, No. 20, pp. 55-62.
- Pleskach, Valentyna; Tumasonis, Roman; Shyshchuk, Oleksandr. Image analysis software system based on artificial intelligence = Vaizdo analizės programinė sistema, pagrįsta dirbtiniu intelektu // Technologijos ir menas : tyrimai ir aktualijos = Technology and art : research and topicalities : Vilniaus kolegija. ISSN 2783-8064. 2024, p. 83-90.
 - Šileikienė, Irma; Usovaitė, Ana. Kibernetinio saugumo situacijos Lietuvoje grėsmių analizė Europos sąjungos kontekste = Analysis of cyber security threats in Lithuania in the context of the European Union // Technologijos ir menas: tyrimai ir aktualijos = Technology and art: research and topicalities. Vilnius : Vilniaus kolegija. ISSN 2783-8064. 2024, No. 15, pp. 14-19.
 - Toropovienė, Svetlana. The use of AI tools in teaching ESP = Dirbtinio intelekto naudojimas ESP kurso metu // Technologijos ir menas : tyrimai ir aktualijos = Technology and art : research and topicalities. Vilnius : Vilniaus kolegija. ISSN 2783-8064. 2024, [No.] 15, pp. 55-59.
 - Tumasonis, Romanas; Tumasonienė, Inga. Kompiuterinių saugos incidentų aptikimo bei valdymo technologijos = Technologies for detecting and managing computer security incidents // Technologijos ir menas: tyrimai ir aktualijos = Technology and art: research and topicalities. Vilnius : Vilniaus kolegija of Technology and Design. ISSN 2783-8064. 2024, [No.] 15, pp. 75-82.
 - Usovaitė, Ana; Šileikienė, Irma. Žaidybinimo koncepcijos taikymas dėstant informacijos sistemų ir jų saugos dalyką = Applying gamification concepts to the teaching of information systems and their security // Technologijos ir menas: tyrimai ir aktualijos = Technology and art: research and topicalities : Vilniaus kolegija. ISSN 2783-8064. 2024, No. 15, pp. 20-24.
 - Strazdienė, Eugenija; Laiškonytė, Aistė. The application of process simulation Software flexsim in textile study program // Vide. Technology. Resursi : 15 starptautiskās zinātniski praktiskās konferences rakstu krājums, 2024. gada 27.-28. jūnijs = Environment. Technology. Resources : proceedings of the 15th international scientific and practical conference, June 27-28, 2024. Rezekne : Rēzeknes Augstskola. ISSN 1691-5402. eISSN 2256-070X. 2024, vol. 2, p. 499-502.
 - Joneliūnaitė, Gabija; Asanavičiūtė, Kamilė; Paliulytė, Aistė; Strazdienė, Eugenija. Case study of FlexSim application in the efficiency analysis of garment manufacturing processes // Industrial engineering 2024 - from zero to hero: 11th international young researchers' conference: conference proceedings / R. Rimašauskienė (chairman), G. Laureckienė, L. Gegeckienė, I. Venytė (eds.). Kaunas : Kaunas University of Technology. ISSN 2783-6363. 2024, p. 140-144.
 - Pileckienė, Jolanta; Šustickienė, Brigita; Višnevskienė, Kristina. Skaitmeninių gebėjimų plėtra švietime pagal DIGCOMP 2.2 MODEL: tyrimų apžvalga = Developing digital competences in education within the DIGCOMP 2.2 MODEL: a review of research // [Technologijos ir menas : tyrimai ir aktualijos = Technology and art : research and topicalities](#). Vilnius : Vilniaus kolegija. ISSN 2783-8064. 2024, [No.] 15, pp. 9-13.

To sum up, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI lecturers and staff are continuously upgrading their qualifications, and in 2024, one of the training areas will be training on artificial intelligence, safe online behaviour, risks of digitisation, etc.

Developing creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI fosters applied creativity and creative thinking skills in the community and society, develops a creative environment and sustainable innovation, and promotes openness to sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship.

Students' creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship are actively promoted not only in the study process (through course assignments, projects and final theses; e.g.: In October 2024, in the second year of the MTF's Management of Cultural Activities course, students studying Entrepreneurship Education (lecturer Rima Bačiulytė), engaged in experiential learning activities: the students worked creatively together to develop a

social enterprise project, deepened their understanding of the principles and practices of inclusive innovation, and acquired knowledge and skills to design, establish, and improve social enterprises and increase their sustainable impact on society. This modern shift is a response to imminent global challenges such as inequality, poverty and environmental sustainability, requiring innovative solutions that not only boost economic growth but also social well-being. At the end of the course, the idea presentation event was held, which added meaningful change to the creation of a more sustainable world), **but also through various events and competitions**, such as Misconceptions or cre-

Photo: The snapshot of BIP "ACTION 1.0" held at the SPF from 13 to 17 May 2024.



ative hackathons, where students develop innovative solutions to real-world problems. This develops students' creative potential and strengthens their ability to work in interdisciplinary teams.

In September-November 2024, VIKO hosted "[Studies 2044: AI Hackathon](#)" and organised three remote workshops, fostered creativity and innovation among students by inviting them to develop artificial intelligence (AI) solutions that can transform education and learning processes, providing ideas on what studying could look like in 20 years. In addition to learning about the possibilities of artificial intelligence, the event also helped the audience to develop important competences. The Students' Union initiated a competition to share the most beautiful, fun, interesting desk layout. The students took a creative approach to the task, decorating the tables, placing VIKO merchandise on the tables, and finding the right angle to photograph the desk. The event was supported not only by the State Fund for Studies (the winning project), but also by Cencora, which set up a fund of 5,000 for the winners of the hackathon and commissioned the project's visual identity services. Cunnumo, Krunchas, Inmedica, Gym Plus, Elmenhorster also contributed to the winner awards. Over 100 student teams from Vilniaus kolegija/HEI and the project's partner higher education institutions took part in workshops and working groups to develop their ideas over the year, and the 10 teams that presented the best ideas made it to the final round.

On 14 November 2024, "Studies 2044: AI Hackathon" winners were announced during the final event (live):

- **1st prize** (EUR 2,500) was won by the MTF team "[CraftED](#)", who came up with the idea of a "Designer's Diary", which is not only unique and useful, but could also help current and future professionals in the field to overcome creative challenges and solve technical issues that optimise the design process.
- **2nd prize** (EUR 1,500) went to the PDF team "[Stars of Light](#)" for their innovative artificial intelligence solution – a pen system with error-checking function for literacy education in primary school. This tool integrates

AI technologies and not only helps children learn to spell, but also allows them to convert handwritten text into digital format. The team idea demonstrates how AI can contribute to improving the quality of education and innovation in the educational process.

- The **third prize** (EUR 1,000) was won by the EKF team "**Extreme Poverty**", which was represented by only one team member – third-year student Jorilė Petrauskaitė (FI22SN), whose idea is a smart home with sensors and artificial intelligence to monitor human health and environment, especially useful for lonely and elderly people. The system would collect data on eating habits, body temperature, vital signs, air quality and movement. It would analyse this data to make recommendations, detect dangerous situations (e.g. immobility or sudden drops in temperature) and automatically call for help if needed.

The acquired competences (creativity skills in generating innovative ideas; critical thinking and analytical skills in analysing the opportunities and risks of applying AI technologies; technological knowledge in applying AI tools in study processes and practical tasks) have directly contributed to the students' preparedness for the future job market. Their participation in this project has not only broadened their technological horizons, but also provided them with practical experience in working in teams, solving complex problems and developing innovative models of study processes.

On 29 to 30 October 2024, [HACK AgriFood Challenge Lab'24](#) was organised for the fourth time at Vilniaus kolegija/HEI in collaboration with the EIT FOOD Centre Lithuania, the partner of digital innovation EIT FOOD Centre AgriFood Lithuania DIH. The Challenge Lab concept promotes interdisciplinary collaboration, offering innovative and multifaceted solutions to important problems in the agri-food sector. The Challenge Lab's grand prize of EUR 2,000 was won by the team "[Ant Farm](#)", whose members Linas Narmontas, Justė Ivanavičiūtė, Irena Fiterson, Maksimiljanas Matvejev and Lukas Reutas chose to tackle the challenge of promoting alternative proteins and came up with a sustaina-

ble idea: an alternative protein made from powdered oyster mushroom.

The Erasmus+ project “Integrating Inclusive Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship in Higher Education (INNOSOCIAL)” (project No 2022-1-PL01-KA220-HED-000089820, duration: 01/11/2022 to 30/04/2025) is ongoing and aims to facilitate the integration of inclusive innovation and social entrepreneurship education and training into university curricula, thus promoting a broader integration of the social dimension in knowledge and competency-based practices in higher education.

Students’ creativity and competences in innovative solution building are stimulated by the Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programmes (BIP). 9 Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) events were organised at Vilniaus kolegija/HEI in 2024. A few examples:

From 13 March to 17 May 2024, the SPF hosted the Blended Intensive Programme (BIP) event “Lifestyle Matters” [https://spf.viko.lt/gyvenese-](https://spf.viko.lt/gyvenese-na-svarbu-misrioji-intensyvioji-programa-angl-bip-blended-intensive-programme/)

[na-svarbu-misrioji-intensyvioji-programa-angl-bip-blended-intensive-programme/](https://spf.viko.lt/gyvenese-na-svarbu-misrioji-intensyvioji-programa-angl-bip-blended-intensive-programme/) which aimed to equip students with lifestyle knowledge and skills, and provide practical, evidence-based resources to help them develop long-term positive lifestyles and improve physical and mental health. During the week, students were learning how to apply various measures to improve healthy lifestyles: ensuring physical and psychological comfort; promoting an active lifestyle; managing patients’ diet, habits and routines; and communicating and coordinating care effectively. Through debates, teamwork and lectures, students worked on project projects that helped them to deepen their theoretical knowledge and practical skills. 28 students from nursing, midwifery, rehabilitation and cosmetology programmes from Vilniaus kolegija/HEI and partner institutions abroad took part in this programme. The 21 students came from EU higher education institutions: from Belgium, Latvia, Estonia, Poland and Portugal.

Photo: STF students who won the Lithuanian College Entrepreneurship Competition “Profadienis” and lecturer Vaiva Mickevičienė visit the European Parliament.



From 13 to 17 May 2024, the SPF Department of Rehabilitation hosted the BIP "ACTION 1.0" <https://spf.viko.lt/veikiam-1-0action-1-0-misrioji-intensyvioji-programa-angl-bip-blended-intensive-programme/> which is a contact week aiming to raise students' awareness of the importance of movement and being fully active in the health promotion process. The dynamic, flexible and evolving blended intensive programme activated the students to be creative, persistent, inspiring and optimistic in the various stages of the health promotion process: using movement elements, they created roles in shadow theatre, thought creatively by simulating various illnesses or age changes, participated in educational activities on Lithuanian history, became acquainted with the peculiarities of forest therapy, learnt the movements of the chiromassage technique, and, through teamwork, created and presented original activities that can be designed and implemented for people with various health changes. The students themselves, evaluating their experience in the programme, said that the activities had broadened their professional competences, encouraged empathy, and they were happy to take away the warmest memories of the programme, Vilnius ko-

legija/HEI and Lithuania. 24 students from Belgium, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Lithuania, Spain, Lithuania and Estonia participated in the programme.

VIKO students have actively participated in various events that showcase creativity, generate innovative ideas and promote entrepreneurship. Only a small number of such events are listed:

On 3 to 9 June 2024, during the annual nationwide event "Design Week'24", students of the Fashion Design Studies Programme at the Marija and Jurgis Šlapeliai (supervised by Mortos Nakaitė and Jolita Raupelienė) Museum presented their creative projects-exhibition "[Processes, Glances, Horizons](#)".

In October 2024, two teams of STF students (10 students mentored by lecturer Vaiva Mickevičienė) took part in the Lithuanian College Entrepreneurship Competition "Profadienis". Students from the Faculty have already won the competition twice and travelled to the European Parliament. This shows that engineering students also have good entrepreneurial skills and are able to compete with the representatives of social sciences.

On 21 November 2024, PDF Student Scientific Society organised the "[Motivational Message to Yourself](#)" initiative on International Students' Day,

Photos: Result of the BIP "Land Art" organised by DIF in the territory of Panemunė Castle.



inviting students to share motivational messages. 67 students took part in the initiative, anonymously expressing their thoughts on self-confidence, achieving goals, optimism and responsibility. These activities promoted self-motivation, community unity and mutual support, emphasising that everyone can overcome challenges and achieve their dreams.

On 28 November 2024, during the event “[National Culture Forum](#)” (Lukiškės Prison, Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas) held by the National Creative and Cultural Industries Association (NKIKIA), Greta Seliukaitė, a student of the Image Design programme, presented creative works on ecological/social themes entitled “Pain Under Water” (supervised by Silvija Grušnienė), while Ulrika Zbarskaitė, a graduate of the Fashion Design programme, presented her original creative collection “Monologue” (supervised by Jolita Raupelienė).

On 2 December 2024, the TEF hosted the Exact Science Week 2024, which included the Physics Knowledge Contest. The competition brought together first-year students from Energy Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Transport Engineering. The event is designed to encourage students’ scientific and critical thinking, based on a solid knowledge of science, and to foster their creativity and independence. The contestants tackled tasks related to the mechanics of sliding and rotational motion, which required not only theoretical knowledge of physics but also the ability to apply it in practical situations.

On 10 December 2024, the members of the SPF community took part in a practical training session on “Creativity in the Study Process” with coaching specialist Aurimas Vietrinis.

TEF students are encouraged to take part in extra-curricular activities related to their future careers, such as the VIKO Racing club, which brings together students and lecturers interested in cars and motorsport.

Members of the VIKO community not only build collections (e.g. 4 lecturers of the MTF Design studies are actively involved in artistic activities, organising solo exhibitions, presenting collections, designing costumes for performances, etc.), but also **sharing knowledge** (e.g. on 30 April 2024, Saulė Mažeikaitė-Teiberė, a lecturer at the

MTF, shared her insights on [how to start investing in works of art](#) on LNK’s programme “Laba diena, Lietuva”).

VIKO performs artistic activities for international events, e.g. on 13 to 14 November, a special international project organised by the DIF took place on the grounds of Panemunė Castle, with the participation of 42 students and lecturers from Lithuania, Poland, Italy and Latvia. The goal of this land art project “[Land Art](#)” is to recreate the drawings of Renaissance gardens using autumn leaves, drawing on historical sources and artistic ideas. This is a project that combines heritage conservation, art and international cooperation, highlighting the beauty of nature and encouraging involvement in the preservation of historic landscapes. 10 unique leaf drawings were created on the castle grounds, which attracted the attention of visitors and became a new highlight in the spaces of Panemunė Castle.

Artistic activities are also carried out as part of commissioned research, e.g. the MTF Department of Fashion Design has carried out two commissioned projects in the field of design science. For the second year in a row, Head of the Department Gražina Skripkienė and the lecturers have successfully cooperated with the Vievis Cultural Centre: Jolita Raupelienė, Ana Černiavskaja and assistant Rasa Laurinavičienė under the contract for commissioned applied art activities (TVM-39 2023-10-26) carried out a project to create costumes, stage images for the project “[Mikas Petrauskas’ “Birutė” on my stage](#)” for the participants of the opera, conducted consultations on the creation of historical stage costumes. The project opera premiered at the Vievis Cultural Centre on 9 December 2023 and at Trakai Castle. At the Vievis Cultural Centre, on 16/17 December 2023, at Trakai Castle. Another MTF project was “[From Paper to Needle](#)” under the Outsourced Artistic Development Contract 13/11/2023 No TVM-40. Commissioned by: Monika Polunina. Project outcome – design and implementation of a child-friendly industrial collection for girls aged 7-10 in linen fabrics).

Faculty spaces also encourage creativity:

- In autumn 2024, new spaces for student recreation and communication were created in the STF Faculty (Antakalnio g. 54), and

the former student areas were renovated. A space for communion was established. Students can spend their free time together by socialising, having snacks, relaxing, playing board games, studying together, etc. In the autumn semester 2024, the work and rest areas for the STF faculty's lecturers were also redesigned. The departments are now located on the same floor, which ensures more convenient, faster communication and quality cooperation. Lecturers in the Department of Civil Engineering work and rest on the 3rd floor, while those in the Department of Business and Public Management work and rest on the 5th floor. These floors are equipped with communal spaces for students from these departments, as well as rooms for relaxation, communication and study. This configuration of spaces not only facilitates day-to-day communication between the departmental communities, but

also contributes to a smoother working relationship with students, encouraging a more effective sharing of ideas and insights.

- In response to the need expressed by students and staff at EKF (Studentų g. 39A) to create a comfortable environment for work and recreation, the corridors on the 4th and 5th floors have been equipped with comfortable student leisure and work areas. The Faculty has a workstation with a computer and printer for student use, next to the student lounge area. In their free time, the academic community has access to foosball tables and painting exhibitions (in the corridors on the 4th and 5th floors). In response to the demand for a "silence room" expressed in student surveys, 3 acoustic booths are installed in the lobby of the 4th floor. The latter are for group or individual work and recreation. The 5th-floor lobby has 6 comfortable workstations for computer work. There is also

Photo: DXC.technology installed space in the VVF.



a relaxation and concentration area with 4 acoustic armchairs in the 5th-floor lobby.

- The SPF provides opportunities for a wide range of self-expression activities. Students have comfortable spaces in the Faculty's lobbies: there are areas for academic activities, with tables and chairs, as well as leisure areas with comfortable seating. In December 2024, students from all departments, together with their lecturers, inspired by the festive feeling of togetherness, decorated the Faculty's spaces and took part in a [competition to find the most sustainable, original, impressive and Christmassy Faculty space](#).
- The VVF has leisure areas on each floor. Most of them offer seating, comfortable leisure, discussion and group activities, as well

as a computer workstation provided by DXC technology and a chalkboard wall on which students like to draw with chalk (2nd floor). The ground floor (room 108) is equipped with a co-working space. The Faculty has a keyless system (classrooms are not locked), which allows students of the Faculty to work on individual and group assignments in these classrooms using the computer equipment in the classrooms.

Taken together, these initiatives not only broaden students' technological horizons, but also provide them with the practical experience they need for the future job market. Vilniaus kolegija/HEI creates a creative environment, encourages openness to innovation and contributes to a sustainable society.



Enhancing public health

Physical Education and Sports Centre of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI promotes physical activity and sport among the community members, thus creating conditions for self-expression, physical activity, and creative self-fulfilment of students and staff.

In the reporting year, VIKO's students actively participated in various sports activities: basketball, football and volleyball training (in the DIF, SPF, STF and VVF gyms and in the public spaces of Vilnius city), employees and students did sports on their own in the modernly equipped gymnasiums in 49 Didlaukio g., Studentų g. 39A and Olandų g. 16.

In 2024, student sports teams took part in the Lithuanian College Sports Games Championship.

Key activities:

- One young men team took part in the National Student Volleyball League (NSTL) Beach Championship.

- XXIV Lithuanian College Student Games – first places in the young men and women groups in the complex standings. Places in individual sports:
 - young men basketball – II place,
 - young women basketball – III place,
 - young men volleyball – IV place,
 - young women volleyball – II place.
- Track and field young women and men teams took 1st place.
- Table tennis young women – 1st place, men – 2nd place.
- Track and field cross-country young men – II place, women – III place.
- Futsal – 1st place.
- Weightlifting – 1st place.
- The young men' basketball team participated in the regular season of the Capital Basketball



League (SKL) Group A, the SKL Autumn Cup and the SKL Spring-24 Tournament.

- The young men football team took part in the Vilnius FUTSAL championship.
- The young women volleyball team participated in the Vilnius Amateur Women's Volleyball League, the Student Championship, the Žalgiris Cup tournament, and the MRU Didlaukis Community Tournament.
- The young men volleyball team took part in the Vilnius Volleyball Elite Volleyball League, the student championship, the Žalgiris Cup tournament, and the MRU Didlaukis Community Tournament.
- On 17 to 19 May 2024, SELL Games in Kaunas. Participants included young men volleyball and basketball teams, table tennis team and a long jumper.
- On 15 May 2024, the Lithuanian College Employees Sports Festival in Šventoji.
- On 8 September 2024, 13 students took part in the Vilnius Marathon "Run with Erasmus+" 5 km race.
- On 18 October 2024, 3 students took part in the VGTU table tennis tournament, 1st place.
- On 14 November 2024, two teams from Didlaukis Higher Education Community Volleyball Tournament (MRU) won 1st and 2nd places.
- On 17 December 2024, "MRU Winter Cup" table tennis tournament, two athletes took part, 1st and 3rd places.

VIKO community self-expression events. In 2024, the VIKO Faculty Basketball Competition was held, with 6 faculties competing, and the Faculty Volleyball Competition, with 5 teams.

Since 2023, a new form of leisure time activity has been offered to the students of VIKO – yoga training and [body training sessions](#) for the VIKO community at the MTF (Didlaukis g. 82). The VIKO community could also take part in hikes organised by the Sports Centre or the VVF Tourism Department (e.g. it has become a tradition to hike around Vilnius on the occasion of the annual World Tourism Day held in September).

In the autumn semester of 2024, the Vilnius kolegija/HEI community actively participated in the WALK15 national higher education institutions mobility challenge. 842 members of the Vilnius kolegija/HEI community took part in the Challenge. In total, 209,897,525 steps were walked between 16 September and 16 November. 10 community leaders of Vilnius kolegija/HEI received VIKO backpacks!

Vilnius kolegija/HEI is the national centre for the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT Food) educational programme "FoodEducators", responsible for the implementation and dissemination of the programme in Lithuanian schools. "FoodEducators" is a science-based educational programme (teaching materials) developed by European experts that offers primary and secondary school teachers and pupils fun, creative and engaging activities on food and health, food and sustainability, to help them become better informed and conscious consumers and to develop an interest in science, jobs and careers in the agri-food sector. On 4 September, the programme was presented at [the Lithuanian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport's Department of Education](#), during which the representatives of the Department welcomed the news that the EIT Food educational programme "FoodEducators" had come to Lithuania and unanimously agreed on a plan to introduce it in Lithuanian schools. The Ministry welcomed the expansion of the programme and pledged to ensure that "FoodEducators" tools and methods reach as many schools and teachers as possible throughout Lithuania.

The programme "FoodEducators" was a great success in 2024:

- On 12 September, the first "FoodEducators" [training for teachers in Šalčininkai District](#) took place. The programme "FoodEducators" was presented in detail during the training by discussing its possibilities and benefits. Teachers were introduced to the structure of the programme and received guidance on how to adapt and integrate the programme into their own subjects in order to improve students' understanding of healthy eating and to develop a more conscious approach to food choices.

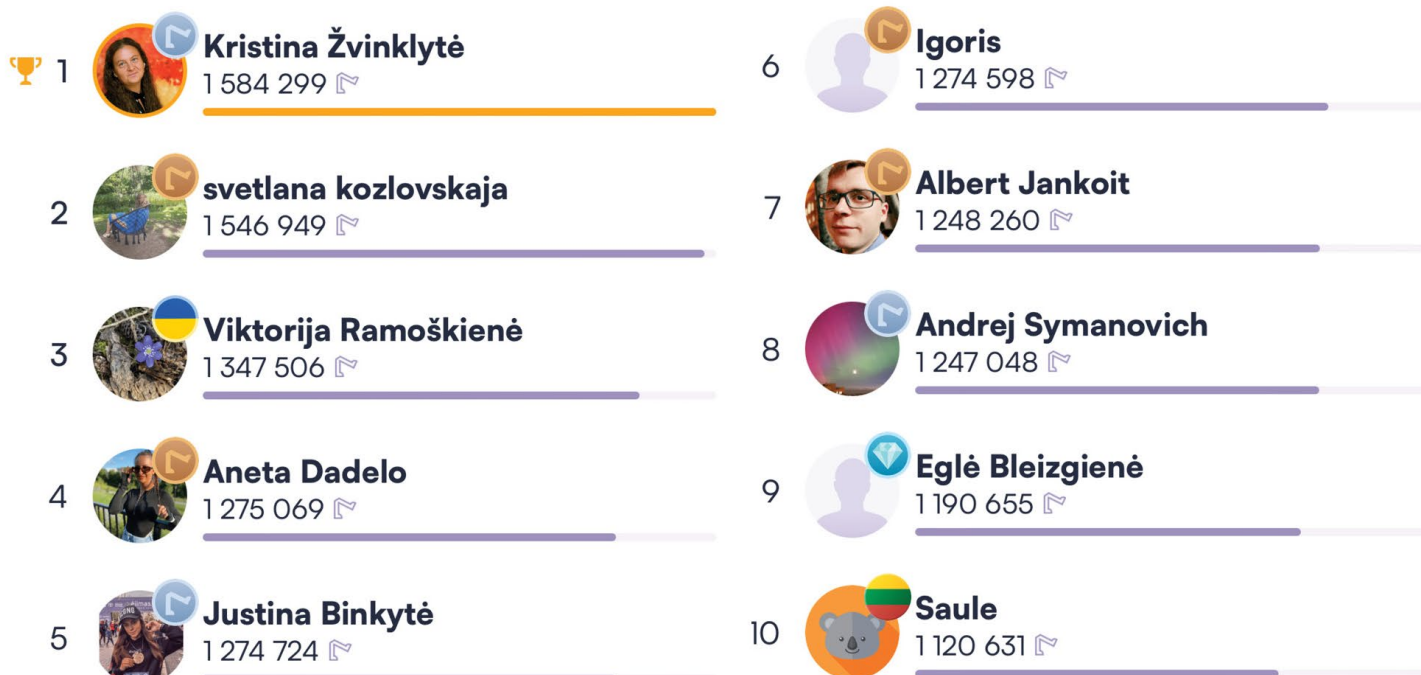
- On 11 October, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI together with UAB Agrokoncernas organised a career day “[A Modern Approach to Food](#)” of the EIT Food educational programme “FoodEducators” at the premises of the company in Babtai, Kaunas district. Nearly 200 pupils and 20 teachers from 11 general education schools heard useful presentations on healthy eating and food trends in Lithuania and worldwide, learned about sustainable and innovative agricultural practices, found out about the EIT Food educational programme “FoodEducators”, and had the opportunity to make valuable contacts with agri-food professionals and gain useful

knowledge on healthy living and food sustainability.

- On 6 December, the conference “[Teacher - Food Educator: experiences and perspectives](#)” of the EIT Food Education Programme “FoodEducators” took place at Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, where topical issues of sustainable nutrition, healthy lifestyle and environmental education were discussed. The conference brought together teachers, education specialists and experts in various fields. During the event, the main achievements of the programme were presented and 10 teachers from 8 Lithuanian schools were awarded for their involvement and contribution to

Photo: members of the VIKO community with the most steps in the Mobility Challenge
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=872083471758934&set=a.490988969868388>

Judumo iššūkyje 10 daugiausiai žingsnių surinkusių VIKO bendruomenės narių



sustainable food education. These teachers not only spread knowledge about the environment and food culture, but also inspire students to take a responsible approach to food consumption and the preservation of natural resources.

Faculties organise events to promote public health, either independently or in collaboration with partners. Members of the VIKO community also participate in conferences, seminars and other events to share their knowledge about the benefits of wellness:

On 15 March 2024, VIKO SPF together with the Society of Dietetics organised a national conference “[Nutrition and Lifestyle Aspects of the Elderly](#)”, where the presentations were given by SPF lecturers Dr Ingrida Pumputienė and Rasa Barčytė and DT22 students Laura Maksimova and Skaistė Rimeikaitė. The collection of theses is published in the journal [Slauga. Mokslas ir praktika, T5 No 2-3 \(326\). p. 107-108, ISSN 1648-0570 / ISSN 2669-1760](#).

On 9 April 2024, Rasa Jonušienė, a lecturer at the Department of Medical Technology and Dietetics of SPF, and Skaistė Rimeikaitė, a student of Dietetics DT22, gave a lecture-discussion “Healthy nutrition” to the seniors of MČTAU.

On 16 April 2024, ATF hosted the conference “[Quality Food – Lithuania’s Prospects](#)”. It covered a number of issues such as biosecurity, sustainability in poultry farming, feed quality and risk assessment, poultry meat certification and health food.

On 17 April 2024, SPF General Practice Nursing student Gabrielė Blaževičiūtė and Nursing Department lecturer Viktorija Kielė presented a paper “Lithuanian and French nurses’ assessment of their profession” and General Practice Nursing student Sabina Bartušytė and Nursing Department lecturer Viktorija Kielė presented a paper “Ensuring the Vital Activity of Communication, in case of a language barrier between the nurse and the patient” at the International Scientific and Practical Conference “Evidence-Based Practice: From Health to Social Well-being” held at Utena College Faculty of Medicine.

On 25 April 2024, SPF General Practice Nursing students Ieva Širvytė, Irena Molis and Dr Simona

Paulikienė, Associate Professor at the Department of Nursing, presented a paper on “Secondary prevention of cardiovascular diseases: awareness of dietary supplements”; DT23 students of the Dietetics Study Programme gave presentations: Gabrielė Ričkutė and Darja Safonova “Prevalence of eating disorders among students”, Ieva Rupšienė and Ieva Lukoševičienė “Trends in the consumption of gluten-containing food products” (lecturer Julija Bogdanovičienė) at the International Conference of Students’ Research Papers “Roots of Science 2024” in Panevėžys College.

On 7 November 2024, the PDF hosted the methodological event “[Physical activity must become a Routine](#)” to promote the integration of physical activity into everyday life in order to improve public health.

On 8 November 2024, an educational event took place at the Pagiriai structural branch of the Central Library of Vilnius District Municipality, during which third-year ER 22 students of the study programme “Occupational Therapy” Agnė Kuldoša and Rusnė Grinkevičiūtė presented the profession of occupational therapy and its significance in everyday life. During this practical session, participants not only learned about the different aids, but also gained new skills and experience to share with their friends and family.

On 20 November 2024, lecturers Ramūnė Motiejūnaitė and Aušra Kriškovicienė from Vilniaus kolegija/HEI presented sports for people with disabilities and shared tips on how to promote physical activity and overcome the challenges of inclusive education during the seminar “[Adapting Inclusive Education in Physical Education Classes](#)” in Alytus, organised by the Lithuanian Paralympic Committee and the City of Alytus Municipality. Over 150 teachers and assistants participated in the event, gaining theoretical and practical knowledge on how to include children with disabilities in physical education activities.

On 4 December 2024, the seminar “[Teachers’ Activities in Inclusive Physical Education](#)” for physical education specialists and teachers took place at Vilniaus kolegija/HEI Sports Hall (Studentų g. 39A). During the seminar, participants gained theoretical knowledge about inclusive physical education, took part in discussions and practical sessions. Lec-

turers, including trainer Žilvinas Barakauskas and lecturer Ramūnė Motiejūnaitė, shared their practical advice and experience working with children with special educational needs. Various disability sports games such as golf, goalball and inclusive volleyball were presented to promote inclusion in physical education lessons.

The study process also included lectures on health topics by guest speakers, e.g. on 16 December 2024, a public lecture by a guest speaker took place at the STF. The meeting with Eglė Kislovski, board member of the Lithuanian Health Association, organiser and manager of camps for young people, founder of GRL PWR, public figure, lecturer, focused on the conscious choice to start each morning in a healthier way, while respecting one's own physical, emotional and mental health, and on the importance of cultivating one's own willpower in the face of so many temptations around us.

Field trips were organised, e.g. on 15 October 2024, ATF Food Technology students visited the [organic farm Farmers Circle](#). They learnt about organic livestock and plant breeding principles and saw how organic, health-friendly food is produced.

The knowledge of VIKO community members is also published through the media. For example: On 26 January 2024, an article-interview and an appeal to seniors by Ramune Komžienė, a lecturer-practitioner at the SPF Department of Rehabilitation, entitled "[Do you or do you not love yourself – a question seniors who do not dare to do sport must ask themselves](#)" was published.

Outsourced projects were carried out, for instance: In 2024, ATF Food Technology study programme lecturers Elena Grinė and Jurgita Lazdauskienė took part in a joint project with UAB Lašu duona, during which health-friendly buckwheat product recipes and technologies were developed. The recipes developed are used in the production of UAB "Lašu duona".

VIKO community members are trained on health and health promotion issues, e. g. on 23 April 2024, VIKO staff and students participated in the conference "[Taste what's real](#)" organised by Eko Žemaitija at ATF. During the event, Sandra Čapkauskienė, PhD in biomedical sciences, associate professor at LSU, presented a topical and interest-

ing presentation "Health on my plate", which gave a detailed account of how food affects our health. Neda Jakubauskienė, advisor to the Crop Production and Green Technologies Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, spoke about organic production and labelling of organic products. Loreta Mačytė, Chief Specialist of the Food Industry and Cooperation Division of the Department of Sustainable Agricultural Production and Food Industry of the Ministry of Agriculture, introduced the support for farmers. The presentation by veterinarian Gražvydas Puška on "Health care of large livestock from certified organic farms. What should you know?" received a lot of attention from the audience. He discussed the conditions and treatment of farm animals and the differences between organic and non-organic farms. Mindaugas Žutautas, the head of the cooperative Eko Žemaitija, spoke about the organic products produced in his company, emphasising that today's society is becoming more and more conscious about the consumption of organic products, and that organic farms are working hard to maintain a cleaner environment.

VIKO also celebrates health-related holidays:

On 17 October 2024, Aurelija Kūgytė and Rima Burneikaitė, lecturers at the SPF Department of Beauty Therapy, organised a remote event to celebrate [World Mental Health Day](#). Faculty students, lecturers, administrative staff and Roberta Jocienė, the head of the Women's Helpline programme in Vilnius, were invited to the remote event. The event presented the 20-year-old psychological support programme, its activities, the nature of its work, the contribution of its volunteers, and discussed the most significant issue – psychological support in case of hardship or spiritual pain.

On 18 October 2024, Dr. Simona Paulikienė, Dr. Zyta Kuzborska, Associate Lecturers at the SPF Department of Nursing, Dr. Kristina Žukienė, Lecturer at the Department of Rehabilitation, and Dr. Edita Jarmalienė, Lecturer at the Department of Medical Technology and Dietetics, invited the students of the second-year study programme "General Nursing" and the faculty's community to celebrate [World Osteoporosis Day](#).

On 15 November 2024, Dr Zyta Kuzborska, Dr Simona Paulikienė and Dr Alina Bažanovienė, associate professors of the Department of Nursing at

the Faculty of Health Care, invited the second year students of the study programme “General Nursing” to celebrate [World Diabetes Day](#). The aim of the day is to raise awareness of the disease, of people with diabetes, their families and the challenges that millions of people around the world face every day.

The Vilnius kolegija/HEI community is delighted that on 19 November 2024, Justina Sakalauskienė, a graduate of VIKO PDF, [was awarded for her bachelor's thesis “Peculiarities of the application of play activities in the development of movement abilities of pre-school children” at the 35th Anniversary Session of the Lithuanian Olympic Academy \(LOA\) at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences](#). The prepa-

ration of the thesis was supervised by lecturer Vilija Gerasimovičienė. In addition, the PDF has been actively involved in promoting Olympic values by publishing articles in the journal “Sporto mokslas” on the topics of physical activity and education.

In summary, Vilnius kolegija/HEI aims to promote this topic and importance of public health and healthy eating among the members of the Vilnius kolegija/HEI community and the general public by providing opportunities to educate the Lithuanian public and VIKO's community on the topic of health, by developing research and social partnerships with organisations interested in these areas.

Photo: a snapshot of 16/12/2024 after a lecture by Eglė Kislovski, a member of the Board of the Lithuanian Union of Health Professionals, organiser and leader of camps for young people, founder of GRL PWR, and a public figure, to the students of STF.



Developing environmental initiatives

Environmental initiatives in HEIs are important because HEIs can act as role models for other institutions and the general public by showing how environmental issues can be effectively addressed. HEIs carry out research on environmental issues, integrate environmental themes into their studies and organise environmental initiatives to prepare conscious and responsible future leaders, etc. HEIs' commitment to sustainability can inspire other sectors and individuals to take action.

The solar panels installed on the roofs of the DIF and STF (Olandų g. 16), the SPF (Didlaukio g. 45) and the VVF (Didlaukio g. 49) generate renewable electricity, thus contributing to sustainable resource use.

In order to become a paperless organisation, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI is increasingly using the electronic document management system (DMS) "Konтора" to manage more and more documents in electronic formats. However, it should be acknowl-

In the photos: SPF experiential lecture with occupational therapist, forest therapist Vaiva Žostautė on 21/10/2024.



edged that some documents (e.g. trilateral practice agreements) are still printed and stored in paper format, which then have to be disposed of properly.

VIKO also aims to strengthen the environmental social responsibility of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI by introducing sustainable innovations and participating in initiatives related to saving natural resources and improving environmental quality.

The use of paper in the study process is actively reduced every year. Lecture assignments, midterm assignments and exam assignments are increasingly being made available to students and reported on the Moodle platform, and the printing of final theses has been eliminated by checking the authenticity of students' work with the plagiarism detection system integrated into the Moodle environment.

Lectures are organised remotely in the MS Teams environment. Some faculties (e.g. EKF, VVF) have distance learning for part-time and full-time students who study according to the session-based schedule, while others (e.g. STF, TEF) have distance learning lectures in the first week of the session, but due to the specificity of the studies and practical classes, the studies are conducted in a contact mode. At other faculties (e.g. ATF, MTF), studies are organised by contact and/or distance learning, depending on the specifics of the subject.

The faculties regularly and actively collect paper for recycling, and reuse paper as much as possible – for drafts, creative layouts, etc. The student areas and libraries of DIF, STF and TEF already offer an alternative of picking up used stationery and paper sleeves.

The year 2024 was full of environmental initiatives, company visits, various events and projects:

On 19 March 2024, the VIKO community celebrated World Earth Day. [The Faculty of Agro-technology \(ATF\) hosted a seminar on World Earth Day](#) to raise awareness of the intensive use of natural resources, the causes of biodiversity loss, and the consequences of economic activities. [Presentations were given by](#) representatives of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, the Public Institution "Wetlands Restoration and Protection Fund", 5th grade students of VGTU Engineering Lyceum and ATF students. The seminar featured

a presentation of the exhibition "EUKI. Wetland products: mitigating climate change through sustainable farming" and "Wetlands for the climate. Peat substitutes for gardeners", and the film "Wetland Farming. Farming on wet peat soils".

On 21 March 2024, VVF staff and students organised a [spring initiative for raising nesting boxes](#). The faculty community was encouraged to bring nest boxes, which were placed in trees in the VVF garden, thus creating a safe haven for birds.

On 29 April 2024, the students of the ATF Agribusiness Technology and Food Technology study programmes, together with lecturer Edita Kristina Kaurynienė, visited the [Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant](#) (IAE). The students were introduced to the history of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant, the principle of operation, the main decommissioning works, financing and radiation protection requirements. The tour took place in the IAE's protected area – the reactors, turbine halls and the unit control panel. The students actively discussed how to preserve the accumulated knowledge and history of nuclear energy and raise public awareness of nuclear energy issues.

On 13 to 17 May 2024, the students from the ATF Landscape Design programme, together with students from [VIVES Roeselare](#) (Belgium) and [Universitatea de Științele Vieții "Regele Mihai I" din Timișoara](#) (Romania), participated in [the Blended Intensive Programme „Sustainable Landscaping Solutions for Urban Areas“](#). The aim of the programme is to build skills and apply sustainability-oriented solutions in landscaping to connect people with nature.

On 20 to 24 May 2024, under the Erasmus+ Teaching Exchange Programme, ATF Prof. Dr. Marina Valentukevičienė gave a [lecture](#) on Green Infrastructure at the University of Life Sciences in Warsaw concerning the application of solutions for green roofs, urban gardens or water harvesting systems. This contributes to people's physical health, mental well-being, climate regulation, social inclusion and biodiversity. These solutions improve quality of life at both individual and community level.

On 5 June 2024, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI participated for the first time in the [Green Ideas Festival](#) dedicated to the pupils at the Presidential Palace. Vilniaus kolegija/HEI demonstrated the potential

of vertical plant cultivation (ATF), the recycling of batteries from electrical appliances (EIF) and sustainable fashion and zero waste clothing and items (MTF). Pupils from different Lithuanian cities curiously examined the samples of clothes and dreamt about how to bring back to life the clothes they own. The braver ones were eager to try on the clothes designed by MTF students. The students were keen to analyse the life of batteries and their recycling potential. Festival visitors shared their experiences of vertical gardening and planned how they would apply vertical gardening ideas on their balconies or terraces.

On 14 June 2024, ATF Department of Chemistry and Food Technology lecturers and students visited UAB [Kurana](#), a unique plant which was the first in the European Union to combine the technological processes of bioethanol for biofuels and the production of electricity and heat from renewable energy sources into a single uninterrupted technological chain. This technological chain leaves no production waste and instead produces biomass, which is increasingly used in agriculture. All products manufactured are organic. UAB Kurana pro-

duces bioethanol, biogas, electricity, thermal energy and biomass, and buys grain from Lithuanian farmers.

On 15 September 2024, the PDF community implemented the project “Green Faculty”, which introduced environmental measures and discussions on ecology.

On 16 to 22 September 2024, during the European Mobility Week, [the VVF joined the Urban Sustainable Mobility Campaign](#), encouraging the faculty community to arrive at the faculty by sustainable means of transport: scooters, bicycles or public transport.

On 21 October 2024, SPF ER22 students had a meeting and an experiential lecture with occupational therapist and forest therapist Vaiva Žostautė. The aim of the meeting was to reveal the deep connection between people and plants, the positive effects of green spaces on people’s emotional and physical health. In the practical part, the students learnt about the possibilities and meaningfulness of using natural materials in occupational therapy and employment activities. Curator – lecturer-practitioner Juventa Mudėnienė.

Photo shows STF students tackling climate challenges.



At the invitation of the Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, Climate Week events took place at Vilniaus kolegija/HEI on from 23 to 27 October. On 22 October, the health promotion conference “[Threats of Climate Change](#)” took place at Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, it was organised in cooperation with the Medards Čobot University of the Third Age, the Department of Hydrology and Climatology of Vilnius University and the Institute of Hygiene. Whereas on 24 October 2024, as every year, members of the VIKO community (students, faculty and staff) actively participated in [the Environmental Exam](#) organised by the Green Policy Institute. For example: At STF, the exam was taken by as many as 47 students of the Transport Logistics, Construction and Structural Engineering Systems study programmes, together with lecturer of Sustainable Development Vaiva Mickevičienė. In the Sustainable Development course, STF students tackle topical climate issues using a variety of in-

novative methods such as the Climate Mural and Climate Scales.

On 25 October 2024, to celebrate the [World Occupational Therapy Day](#), SPF students used recycled materials to make occupational therapy and sensory tools for treatment procedures.

Every year Europe celebrates European Week for Waste Reduction (EWR) in the last week of November. This is not the first time that the faculties of VIKO have participated in this project in response to the initiative of the Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania. The 2024 Waste Reduction Week took place on 20-24 November. [EKF lecturer Žana Prokopovičienė and first year students regularly participate in the “Culture of Waste” exam](#). In 2024, members of the EKF community achieved excellent results: out of 65 first-year students, 61 received diplomas (4 expert, 49 connoisseur, 8 advanced), and lecturer Žana Prokopovičienė was recognised as the best-per-

Photos: Occupational therapy, sensory tools for treatments made from recycled materials by SPF students at the World Occupational Therapy Day on 25/10/2024.



forming participant in Vilnius region and awarded a prize of an electric scooter by the shopping valley "NØRDIKA". [This is the fifth time that the Department of Fashion Design of MTF has participated in this initiative](#): not only the VIKO community, but also the residents of the capital city took part in various events to learn about conscious consumption, sustainable fashion, sorting and recycling of recyclable materials. MMF hosted 8 creative exhibitions of students' works, 4 creative workshops, SMMD Ecoforum'23, where students and guest lecturers gave presentations on environmental issues. Milda Paukštė, the founder of Denim Diaries studio, presented sustainable lifestyle ideas, while floristry teacher Giedrė Jasiukaitė from the VPVP-MC explained how sustainable solutions are born in the creation of bouquets. Dr. Eugenija Strazdienė gave a lecture "Sustainable and Innovative Textiles. News from international exhibitions". An exhibition

of books and publications on environmental issues was organised in the Faculty library.

On 15 December 2024, Beatričė Mockutė, a third year student of the MTF's Management of Cultural Activities study programme, organised [lantern workshop Glitter](#), a lantern workshop, an orienteering walk and a concert all in one. The aim of the event is to encourage people to make sustainable lanterns, spend more time with their loved ones and spend time in nature.

MTF is also actively contributing to the implementation of the EU Green Deal policy, with Faculty's professor Dr Eugenija Strazdienė, together with the lecturers of the Department of Fashion and the students of the Fashion Technology and Business Programme, carrying out the following activities (2022-2024): EU Horizon project "[Circular Economy Innova Initiative in Textiles for an Entrepreneurial Europe CITE](#)".

Photo shows the STF's item drop-off shop.



EIF students develop solutions to harness renewable energy. Examples include linear solar tracking and heat pump retrofits. Study programmes integrate energy efficiency and sustainability principles.

Thanks to STF lecturer Vaiva Mickevičienė, there is a thrift shop that aims to promote sustainable reuse and reduce waste. Instead of throwing items away, members of the STF community are invited to bring their unwanted items to the drop-off point, where they can be picked up free of charge by students and other members of the faculty community. This initiative reflects the principles of social responsibility to ensure responsible consumption and contribute to sustainable development by reducing consumerism and promoting sharing. This is an important initiative of the Faculty, which contributes to the promotion of sustainable lifestyles and community spirit. The idea of a drop-off shop not only improves the living conditions of students by giving them the opportunity to pick up the things they need for free, but also fosters sustainable values of consumption and sharing.

This initiative is a good example for other faculties to organise drop-off shops in their faculties to promote responsible consumption and waste reduction, thus contributing to the sustainable development goals.

As a partner in 2024, the VVF implemented the Nordplus project “No leftovers: Nordic/Baltic Culinary Arts: a digital course with teaching materials and tools for adult educators”, which aims to improve the teaching methods of food production for adult educators, focusing on Nordic and Baltic traditional and contemporary cuisine, applying the principles of “no waste” in the various processes involved in food production (ingredient and portion planning, cooking, serving, selling, marketing, recycling, use of leftovers). The project deepened knowledge of traditional and modern Nordic and Baltic cuisines and developed teaching materials. The project coordinator is HOTEL SCHOOL College

of Hotel Management (Latvia). The VVF organised the final conference of the project [on 6 June](#).

It should also be welcomed that students not only organise events, not only actively participate as participants in various events, but are also happy to volunteer in various sustainability events. E.g. on 13 March 2024, the Vilnius City Hall hosted the bioeconomy forum “Green Horizons: Fostering bio-innovation in the regions through youth, start-ups and shaping the bio-economy context”, organised by AgriFood Lithuania DIH (a digital innovation centre and cluster bringing together key Lithuanian business, science and public sector stakeholders to implement the digital transformation of the agriculture, food and related sectors), the Research Council of Lithuania and the Lithuanian National Contact Points NCP which in the European Union and associated countries provide qualified and free support to researchers and business and public sector organisations in their countries to participate in the EU’s Joint Research and Innovation Programme “European Horizon” 2021-2027. [During the forum, a large number of students from SPF Hygienic and Decorative Cosmetology, Dietetics and General Practice Nursing study programmes volunteered together with Mindaugas Dulinskas, the head of the SPF Student Volunteer Group.](#)

On 3 January 2024, [Dalia Karlaite](#), a lecturer at VIKO VVF and coordinator of the sustainable development and social responsibility activities, became an [EU Climate Pact Ambassador](#). Her motto is [“I care about the planet future generations will live on, because there is no Planet B”](#).

In summary, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI aims to promote the importance of green environment, sustainable agro-ecosystems and animal welfare by creating as many opportunities as possible to educate the Lithuanian public in these areas, through research and social partnerships with organisations interested in these topics.

Strengthening Lithuanian culture, statehood and the continuity of historical memory

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI actively promotes the continuity of Lithuanian statehood and historical memory by joining state events and initiatives, celebrating important dates and personalities significant to Lithuania, and by engaging and encouraging the whole community and society in initiatives of national importance, such as the Constitution Examination, the National Dictation, and other important initiatives.

To mark important dates for the country, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI and its faculties congratulate the community, students and social partners on their official websites and social media accounts:

- 13 January is commemorated as the Day of the Defenders of Freedom.

- [16 February](#) is celebrated as the day of the restoration of the Lithuanian State. On the eve, 15 February, the Lithuanian State Restoration Day [was commemorated by a festive concert held at the MTF Open Hall](#). The faculty was full of beautiful songs, poetry and patriotic words. The celebration was crowned by the performances of the students of the Rhythmic Music Department Ksenija Petrukovič (vocals), Kamilė Biliūtė (vocals), Justas Petrikauskas (guitar), Simonas Vitkauskas (guitar), Rokas Pypkinas (percussion) and Karolis Eimontas (bass guitar). Whereas on February 16, 2024, students of the MTF Musical Theatre study programme Kamilė Smaidžiūnaitė, Vaiva Vilpišauskaitė, Lukrecija Vasiliauskaitė



and graduate Deimantė Varmauskaitė, at a solemn commemoration ceremony in the House of Signatories, greeted the large number of citizens and guests through the open windows by singing the special hymn for every Lithuanian, “[Lietuva Brangi](#)” (lyrics by Maironis, music by J. Naujalis). [A recording of the ceremony is available at the LRT media centre.](#)

- 11 March – the day of the restoration of Lithuania’s independence – was commemorated. On 12 March 2024, the students of the MTF Musical Theatre programme took part in the [commemoration held at the March 11 Act Hall of the Seimas](#). Lukrecija Vasiliauskaite read a letter “To the Signatories of March 11th” and sang the National Anthem together with the whole of Lithuania. Some of the signatories of the Freedom Act did not live to see this day. The song “Elegija” was sung in their memory and honour. Kamilė Smaidžiūnaitė’s sensitive performance moved everyone – both the guests in the hall and the viewers behind the TV screens.

Other important dates for Lithuania are also commemorated: Day of Mourning and Hope (14 June), State Day, Day of National Anthem and Coronation of King Mindaugas (6 July), Black Ribbon Day and Baltic Way Day (23 August).

The students of the Faculty of Arts and Technology also participate in other events aimed at strengthening Lithuanian culture, statehood and the continuity of historical memory:

- on 8 March 2024, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI hosted a gala concert “The [Wind of Freedom](#)”. VIKO community was invited to come together on this beautiful occasion to be together and listen to vocal works by well-known and perhaps lesser-known Lithuanian composers, as well as foreign composers, interpreted in their own way. The performers, students of the Musical Theatre study programme, assisted by the teachers of the Performing Arts Department: pianist Nijolė Baranauskaitė-Matukonienė and singing teacher Justinas Lapatinas performed this concert with enthusiasm,

dedication and energy. The singers were trained by Associate Professor Eglė Juozapaitienė, Associate Professor Dalia Babilaitė-Abarė, lecturers Elžbieta Ščiglo-Oleškevič, Nijolė Baranauskaitė-Matukonienė and Povilas Butkus.

- On 9 March 2024, [students and teachers of the Rhythmic Music Department gave a concert at Vilnius Town Hall](#) to commemorate the Lithuanian Independence Restoration Day. The programme, specially composed for the occasion, featured melodies composed by Lithuanian composers as well as compositions popularised by well-known foreign groups, performed by Artūras Novikas’ vocal ensemble a-cappella and with piano accompaniment. The concert featured new songs by classic rock bands The Beatles and Fleetwood Mac, as well as some of the best-known compositions by popular artists Sade and Enya. The audience was entertained by jazz pianist, composer Richardas Banys and jazz singer, student of the Rhythmic Music Department, Kotryna Juodzevičiūtė.
- On 27 April 2024, [the 30th anniversary of the The Duchess Birutė Association of Women from Officers’ Families was celebrated at the Vilnius Town Hall](#). Students of the Musical Theatre programme performed together with the Lithuanian Armed Forces Orchestra: Lukrecija Vasiliauskaite, Kamilė Smaidžiūnaitė, Vaiva Vilpišauskaitė, Toma Pauraitė and Salomėja Pakerytė. The concert programme and the students were trained by Dalia Babilaitė – Abarė, associate professor at the Performing Arts Department.
- On 14 June 2024, at the event of the Day of Mourning and Hope, dedicated to the memory of the Soviet deportations and honouring their victims, a sensitive musical piece was performed by [Toma Pauraitė, Salomėja Pakerytė and Patricija Bagdonavičiūtė, students of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI Music Theatre](#), at the Seimas March 11th Act Hall for the gathering of dignitaries and the [audience of the LRT, who were watching a live broadcast of the event](#). Associate professor Dalia Babilaitė –

Abarė, together with associate professor Eglė Juozapaitienė, worked with the students and trained them.

The strengthening of Lithuanian culture, the continuity of statehood and historical memory is also fostered in the study process. For example: On 6 November 2024, the students of the Cultural Activity Management study programme KV22, studying Event Directing and Scriptwriting, together with their lecturer Assoc. Prof. Inesa Kurklietė had the opportunity to take part in the Šumskas Manor [Early Music Festival](#). The event featured the sound of medieval (15th century) instruments accompanied by Lithuanian poetry of the time. After the concert, the artists invited guests to join them for a joint lesson on Baroque dance. Students took part in educational activities, enjoyed the cosy atmosphere of the event, and admired the manor's art. On 5 December 2024, PDF PU23 students together with lecturer Inga Bertašienė took part in an educational trip "[How to become an active citizen of the state?](#)", during which they visited the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and the Centre for Civil

Education. Students explored the principles of state governance, citizens' participation in the legislative process and the functioning of state institutions, and discussed symbols of statehood and democratic values.

VIKO community members are also encouraged to get involved in civic actions such as:

- [National economics exam](#) which took place on 18 April [at VVF](#).
- [The European Exam](#) which was held on 9 May 2024 to mark Europe Day.
- [National Dictation](#) (literacy promotion competition) which was held on 11 May 2024.
- [The Citizenship Exam](#), held for the first time on 14 May 2024, tests knowledge on citizenship, national defence, mobilisation and other important topics.
- [The Constitution Exam](#) held on 25 October 2024 tests knowledge of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania.

Thus, all these activities not only strengthen the citizenship of the community, but also contribute to the preservation of Lithuanian culture and history.



Preserving national heritage and promoting Lithuanian ethno-culture

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI actively promotes Lithuanian ethno-culture and national heritage, encourages cooperation with organisations interested in the promotion of Lithuanian ethno-culture and national heritage, and strengthens the meaning of heritage in study programmes and artistic expression.

VIKO has [artistic groups](#): dance and song ensemble “Voruta” and young women’ choir “Vaidilutės”, which participate in various cultural projects, festivals, competitions, celebrations, concert tours.

Activities carried out by members of the VIKO community in 2024:

On 8 to 10 March, Laimutė Fedosejeva, a VVF lecturer, held educational workshops at the Kaziukas Fair. On 28 March, ATF hosted the popular Lithuanian

an [macramé creative workshop](#). Macramé is an ancient technique of hand-tying decorative knots. The workshop was led by Evelina Verbickaitė, a student of the Landscape Design programme. She taught how to use what seems unnecessary and make something unique and natural. Macramé pieces are made using the most natural materials possible, which can be found just by walking in the woods, as well as old necklaces and pendants, thus giving them a new lease of life.

- On 30 April to 3 May, Eglė Juozapaitienė, Head of the Performing Arts Department conducted interactive lessons “Singing while playing, playing while singing” for students and teachers at the Chicago Lithuanian School at the Youth Center in Market Park and the



Maironis Lithuanian School at the Lithuanian World Center in Lemont.

- On 23 to 26 May, during the international festival “Skamba skamba kankliai 2024”, participants could see the artworks of VVF lecturer Laimutė Fedosejeva and take part in a paper cutting craft education organised by her.
- On 21 to 23 June, at the 20th European Lithuanian Schools’ Rally “Friendship Bridge” in Luxembourg, which brought together teachers, pupils and their parents from 11 countries, VVF teacher Laimutė Fedosejeva led carving and cutting classes. On 23 June, PDF hosted an “Ethnoculture Evening” where the community shared Lithuanian traditions and participated in workshops.
- On 29 June to 6 July, the exceptional Song Celebration “May the Green Forest Grow” was held to celebrate the centenary of the tradition. Laimutė Fedosejeva, a VVF lecturer, took part in the folk art exhibition “[From the Core](#)” organised on the occasion of the Song Celebration with her cuttings. Jurgita Stankūnienė, the lecturer and head of the SPF Nursing Department, [volunteered at](#) the Song Festival. Volunteer activities included not only helping with organisational issues, but also focusing on the needs of the community and upholding traditions. The Song Festival brought together thousands of participants and spectators, inviting them to enjoy the culture, music and spirit of the Lithuanian nation, which unites everyone so that the “green forests” can grow not only in nature but also in people’s hearts. Participants were fed in the VIKO SPF canteen.
- On 13 to 15 September, the Fair of Nations, a celebration of crafts, national foods and customs, was held in Vilnius. It has become a tradition for [MTF representatives to perform in the concert programme YOU AND I ARE VILNIUS](#). The event was hosted by Kamilė Vaitkutė, a student of Musical Theatre, and Emilijus Čiuteikis, a student of Cultural Activity Management. The students of the Popular Music and Musical Theatre programmes performed spectacular musical works.
- On 11 November, VVF lecturer Laimutė Fedosejeva took part in the exhibition “[Unforgotten Tradition](#)” at the Seimas with her wood carvings. On 29 November, an advent songs evening “[The fire burns behind the forests...](#)” organised by Viltė Jasukaitytė, a student of the MTF’s Cultural Activity Management study programme, took place. The event featured traditional songs and Lithuanian Advent customs. The event was attended by Asta Valiukevičienė – ethnologist, ethnomusicologist, custom specialist of the Lithuanian National Centre of Culture – who told about Lithuanian Advent traditions and presented the meanings of the songs performed. During the evening, the Vilnius Teachers’ House folklore ensemble “Srauna”, under the direction of Akvilė Rubikienė, invited everyone to listen to Advent songs and sing them together. The main goal of the evening is to learn at least one song by heart and become part of this tradition.

Most of the 2024 Blended Intensive Programmes (BIPs) organised for foreign guests included enrichment activities such as excursions and cultural programmes, during which foreign students were taught Lithuanian folk dances and sang multipart folk songs with the ensemble “Voruta”:

From 13 March to 17 May 2024, the SPF hosted a Blended Intensive Week (BIP) organised by the Department of Nursing, during which students from Belgium, Latvia, Portugal, Turkey, Estonia, Poland and Lithuania learnt important lifestyle skills at the events “[Lifestyle Matters](#)” and “Let’s Act”. Students from different countries and cultures were brought together in teams to complete tasks, communicate and have a great opportunity to experience cultural differences between countries. In the social part of the programme, the foreign students had the opportunity to become acquainted with Lithuanian culture, and the participants went to the enrichment museum “Vikingų kaimas”, where the guides introduced the participants to the key moments of Lithuanian history and a number of customs.

Three BIP events were held at the VVF: on 22 to 24 April BIP „*Modern Management*“ attracted more

than 30 participants from Estonia, Latvia, Georgia and Austria; 6 to 10 May BIP “*Applying AI in Social Media and Communication*” – participants from the Netherlands; 13 to 17 May BIP “*Innovation Expedition*” – more than 40 participants from the Netherlands and Austria; the participants took part in guided tours of Vilnius landmarks and listened to stories about famous Lithuanian personalities. They also shared their traditional sweets and tasted Lithuanian dishes.

We are also delighted that in April, four third-year students from the Business Economics and Banking study programme at EKF participated in the Erasmus BIP project “[International Dialogue through Stories](#)” in Hungary, during which the participants became acquainted not only with the folklore of other 6 European countries, but also shared Lithuanian folk songs, fairy tales and proverbs. The participants shared their thoughts that “through folklore, we can all get to know ourselves, our nation, its culture, and finally humanity itself much better. The project has helped us to understand how we, our nation, are different from other nations and, at the same time, how we are similar. It was great to broaden our horizons and learn about other cultures first-hand.”

National heritage and Lithuanian ethno-culture are included in various study programmes:

- The ATF Food Technology study programme includes the study subject Ethnic Heritage Food Technology.
- MTD Design studies in the Fashion Design and Image Design programmes include studying National Identity, Costume History, Creative Projects, etc.
- One of the themes of the STF subject Architecture and Structures of Buildings deals with cultural heritage, small-scale architecture, and therefore cultural and national heritage themes are analysed. A workshop on UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Lithuania and cross-carving is also organised (covering small-scale architecture such as crosses, memorials, krikštai (burial monuments), roadside shrines, etc.).
- VVF Tourism Management students analyse Lithuanian tourism resources in this discipline.

Final theses are drafted aimed at fostering national heritage and promoting Lithuanian ethno-culture in Vilniaus kolegija/HEI. For example, Kamilė Paškevičiūtė, a student of the ATF Food Technology study programme, defended her final thesis on the topic “Introduction of ancient Dzūkija dishes in R. Paltanavičienė’s IĮ”, which examines how the production of Dzūkija dishes of ethnic heritage is fostered by applying traditional production technologies and recipes based on historical sources (thesis supervisor Jurgita Lazdauskienė). Gabrielė Kasparavičiūtė, a student of Primary Education Pedagogy study programme, prepared the final thesis on “Integration of the 4th grade students’ ethnic culture programme in the lessons of world knowledge”.

The study “Lithuanian Market Participants’ Attitudes towards Folk Art and Products Created by Craftsmen of National Heritage” was commissioned by the social partner of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, the Vilnius Region Folk Artists-Creators Community, in 2024. The aim of the study was to investigate the attitudes of organisations operating in the market towards folk art and products created by craftsmen of national heritage, by assessing the behaviour of corporate gift purchasing in the organisation. On the basis of the results of the study, the research team (Birutė Vaitėnienė, Laimutė Fedosejeva, Egidijus Grigūnas) wrote the paper “*Position Of National Heritage And Folk Art Products In The Business Gifts Category (Lithuanian Market)*” and presented it at the conference “[Craft - the path from small business to success - synergies, challenges, opportunities](#)” organised by Opole University of Applied Sciences, as well as a presentation “Opportunities of synergy between the national heritage producers and the participants of the business gifts market” at the International Scientific and Practical Conference “Challenges of Culture and Education in the 21st Century” by VIKO Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies.

In summary, Vilniaus kolegija/HEI actively promotes Lithuanian ethno-culture and national heritage by encouraging cooperation with organisations and by strengthening the meaning of heritage in study programmes and artistic expression.

Developing sustainable business and sustainable economy

Sustainable business and sustainable economy ideas are practice-oriented, designed to ensure the long-term economic success of organisations while encouraging them to consider the well-being of society and the environment. Climate change, the continuing loss of biodiversity, the indiscriminate use of resources and other problems associated with the rapid degradation of the environment are forcing us to accelerate the transformation of our economy to one that is as environmentally friendly as possible, effectively applying knowledge in the fields of biology and the environment, while at the same time ensur-

ing economic prosperity and a dignified life for people.

VIKO promotes green economy, sustainable development, 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 by developing social partnerships with organisations that are interested in these areas.

Building a green economy is an important part of the development of a sustainable Europe and



a sustainable Lithuania, which is not only about economic sustainability but also about ecological sustainability. The EKF is contributing to the Green Deal through various studies in these areas. Green economy principles and sustainable development complement the Faculty of Economics' classical study programmes. The EKF has a strong focus on green finance. EKF lecturers actively publish scientific articles on this topic:

- Bankų veiklos vertinimas žaliuoju aspektu – Lapinskienė, G.; Danilevičienė, I. Assessment of Green Banking Performance. *Sustainability* 2023, 15, 14769. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su152014769>;
- Žalių finansų skirstymo efektyvumo vertinimas – Labenko, O., Sadauskis, A., & Lyman, V. (2024). The Efficiency of Financing Environmental Protection Measures in the Context of Ukraine's Future Membership in the EU. *Sustainability*, 16(14), 6090. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16146090>;
- Žalių paskolų išdavimo galimybių Lietuvos bankuose tyrimas – Lapinskienė, G.; Mečėjienė, G.; Naujalienė J.; Baltrūnienė, V. (2024). Žaliųjų paskolų Lietuvoje atvejo analizė. *Mokslo taikomieji tyrimai Lietuvos kolegijose*, 20, 31–88. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59476/mtt.v2i20.676>). This article has been prepared in cooperation with the social partners – banks.
- Žiedinės pramonės tema, kuri labai svarbi vystant žalią ekonomiką – Šimelytė, A. (2024). Innovation and transfer to circular economy: Case of Lithuania and Estonia. *Global Society in Formation of New Security System and World Order* (p. 17-19).

The transformation of the green economy is taking place through the digitalisation of various processes. EKF and EIF lecturers have prepared an article on the use of artificial intelligence to further digitise accounting processes - Lapinskienė, G.; Mačerauskas, E.; Achranovič, G.; Danilevičienė, I. (2024). Dirbtinio intelekto naudojimo ir poveikio apskaitai galimybių tyrimas, *Mokslo taikomieji tyrimai Lietuvos kolegijose*, 20 (2), p. 55-62. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59476/mtt.v2i20.676>.

Improving the social dimension is essential for a

sustainable economy, because without a safe and happy citizen, there will be no investment in the environment. The EKF, together with its partners, analyses the development of the social dimension in published articles:

- Apie Lietuvos ir Lenkijos piliečių gyvenimo standartus – Migala-Warchol, A., Stec-Rusiecka, J., Buckiūnienė, O., & Vitas A. (2023). Living standards of Polish and Lithuanian residents after the COVID-19 pandemic: the impact on living conditions. *Humanities and Social Sciences*, 30(4), p. 205-217. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.7862/rz.2023.hss.74>.
- Piliečių dalyvavimo siekiant skaidraus biudžeto skirstymo – Lapinskienė, G., Buckiūnienė, O., Urniežienė, R., & Tamulytė, R. (2024). Lietuvos valstybės biudžeto skaidrumo ir atskaitingumo principų vertinimas. *Mokslo taikomieji tyrimai Lietuvos kolegijose*, 20, 22–28. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59476/mtt.v1i20.642>.

In the reporting year, the Faculty of EKF and partners successfully completed the Erasmus + Higher Education Strategic Partnerships project on digital literacy for people with disabilities: “Promoting People with Disabilities’ Employment by Enhancing Their Digital Skills and Competences to Support a Remote Working Scheme” (*DigitAbility*), which aims to promote the employment of people with disabilities by enhancing their digital skills and competences, and to develop a digitally resilient remote working and learning scheme for training providers and students.

The Erasmus+ Higher Education Strategic Partnerships project “Summer Schools on Environmental Protection, Sustainability and Ecological Behaviour to Support the Integration and Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees in the Higher Education Enhance The University Professors Competences” (*IntegratEU*) is implemented by the EKF and aims to develop the necessary tools for higher education teachers to teach migrants and refugees about the importance of environmental sustainability and protection. Project duration: 01/12/2023 to 30/06/2026.

From 8 to 19 April 2024, the EKF organised a

[series of ten lectures on the Green Economy for students](#) by Prof. Dr. Zlatko Nedelko from the University of Maribor, Slovenia. “The Green Economy is one of the most topical issues today, and one that is relevant to students in different study programmes from their unique point of view.” All lectures were adapted for students studying at the Faculty of Economics in the following study programmes: finance, accounting, business economics, investment and insurance, banking.

Mindaugas Rutalė (ZD21 gr), a student of ATF Landscape Design study programme, successfully defended his thesis “Development of an engineering system for rainwater collection and management in Rietavas Park that meets the requirements of the Green Deal”.

Promoting socially responsible investment is not only about making a business financially profitable, but also about promoting the positive (or reducing the negative) social and environmental impacts of business. Promoting socially responsible investment can deliver a wide range of positive outcomes. The EKF promotes socially responsible investing through active student education and research, as well as articles analysing the ESG concept. On this topic, EKF researchers conducted a large study on the attitude of Generation Z towards green investing with the participation of students and published an article – Pašiušienė, I., Podviezko, A., Malakaitė, D., Žarskienė, L., Liučvaitienė, A., & Martišienė, R. (2024). Exploring Generation Z's Investment patterns and attitudes towards greenness. *Sustainability*, 16(1), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16010352>.

To ensure that not only sustainable and responsible organisations, which are not only concerned with immediate but also with long-term success, as well as organisations that make ethical and responsible decisions and mitigate any risks, and which are concerned with the reputation of being a trustworthy organisation, **operate in tomorrow's market**, organisations that produce and deliver quality and safe products and services, thereby securing the trust and loyalty of consumers, organisations that ensure not only safe and harmless working conditions but also a creative working environment, involving employees in decision-making processes and thus ensuring higher employee motivation,

and organisations that care about the views of the community. Socially responsible and sustainable organisations are better able to adapt to changing (and in particular more stringent) legislation, and are more focused on investing in sustainable innovation, which helps them to compete successfully in the market.

These objectives encourage the integration of sustainable development and social responsibility into the VIKO's study programmes. For example, all study programmes organised by the VVF include a module on Sustainable Development (10 cr.), which usually consists of the subjects Socially Responsible Business or Corporate Social Responsibility (4 cr.), Business Ethics (4 cr.), and Occupational and Civil Safety or Sustainable Business Environment (2 cr.). The TEF offers courses in Sustainable Development, Science Workshops and Sustainable Environment and Human Safety. The EKF study programme Investment and Insurance includes the subjects “Sustainable Business” and “Business Ethics and Social Responsibility”. Subjects taught at STF: “Sustainable Development”, “Sustainable Environment and Human Safety”, and students can take optional courses in “Materials Recycling and Reuse”, “Sustainable Buildings and their Assessment”, “Circular Economy”, “Energy Efficiency”, “Green Logistics”, “Green Supply Chain Management”, “Responsible Innovation”, etc. In some faculties, the subjects are aligned with specific areas of sustainable development, e.g. ATF: The Veterinary study programme includes “Animal Welfare”, the Food Technology study programme has “Food Safety and Quality”. MTF: The Fashion Design degree programme includes “Sustainable Fashion Product Development” and “Eco-design”. SPF: The Biomedical Diagnostics study programme includes “Quality Management”, “Professional Ethics”. Radiology study programme – “Quality Management”. Dietetics students develop entrepreneurial and social responsibility skills by studying various subjects: “Food Safety”, “Professional Ethics” and, from 2024, the new subject “Sustainable Food Systems and Sustainable Development”. “Professional Ethics” in the General Practice Nursing programme. Sustainability topics are also covered in other subjects, and assignments in the course report also deal with sustainable and socially responsible solutions. Sustainability and

social responsibility are also addressed through guest lectures by social partners.

Each year, students prepare final theses that based on the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2024, 211 final theses on social responsibility and/or sustainable development were defended.

Table. Number of final theses in line with the Sustainable Development Goals in 2024

Faculties	Number of BD
ATF	4
DIF	1
EIF	12
EKF	14
MTF	17
PDF	55
STF	4
SPF	58
TEF	-**
VVF	46
Total VIKO:	211

Research on sustainable tourism and hospitality is carried out at the VVF. Jelena Ščedrovienė and Salomėja Vanagienė, researchers at the Department of Tourism, analysed the challenges and prospects of inbound tourism in Lithuania (the research promotes a systemic approach to public sector management). Researcher Alina Katunian, together with researchers from Poland, Slovakia and France, carried out a comparative study in different countries of the European Union (EU) in order to better address the future needs of Generation Z in tourism products *Generation Z and its attitude to the challenges of uncertainty, the changes and the risk. Planning the future tourism product*. In 2024, a contract study on “Raising the profile of the Lithuanian Hotels and Restaurants Association” was implemented (contract concluded on 5 October 2023) (researcher Danguolė Baltrūnaitė): the Terms of Reference for the contract was drafted, a questionnaire for a quantitative survey was prepared. A survey “Satisfaction of hospitality companies with LVRA activities” (researcher Jadvyga Voišnis) was also carried out to find out the satisfaction of hospitality companies with the activities of the association. VVF annually celebrates [World Tourism Day](#) on 27 September. Each year, students

of the Tourism Management and Hotel and Restaurant Business programmes produce final theses on sustainable tourism and hospitality, usually in the form of commissioned research on hospitality sector organisations.

Sustainable fashion development is one of the strategic axes of sustainable development, aiming to raise public awareness of the sustainable use of resources, emphasising the importance of ethics, ecology and slow fashion. Although fashion is often seen as a collection of clothing items, its broader meaning indicates the impact of fashion on all aspects of lifestyle, e.g. home design, lifestyle choices, etc. The idea of sustainable fashion encourages more sustainable lifestyles and more responsible and green consumption. This social phenomenon is a prerequisite for a sustainable business model, which focuses on the principles of sustainable development and social responsibility, as well as on slower consumerism and respect for oneself, one’s environment and ethics. Fashion gives meaning to who we are because our consumption choices reflect our own values. In order to strengthen the direction of sustainable fashion development, the MTF focuses on responsible consumption and sustainability of clothing products, and also aims to raise public awareness by introducing waste-free production, creation from recycled materials, promoting the reuse of clothing by redesigning it or creating a new product from several second-hand ones, obtaining the same functionality with the minimum of resources. On 14 November 2024, MTF lecturer Jolita Raupelienė organised a practical workshop “Updating Clothes in the Context of Sustainable Fashion” and revealed the potential of thermo-press.

VIKO organises events closely related to sustainability – if not the main theme of the conference, then at least the topic of the conference session. On 12 April 2024, PDF organised the Sustainable Business Conference 2024, a conference to share ideas and practical examples of sustainable business.

It is very encouraging to see students presenting papers on sustainability at Young Researchers’ conferences:

On 17 April 2024, the EKF hosted the annual international student scientific-practical conference

“Economics. Business. Management”. The conference featured 47 scientific and practical [papers](#) on macroeconomic overview, sectoral analysis, green economy and social responsibility issues, the challenges of digitalisation, analysis of the evolution of public finances, and other aspects of business and management. This year, three dominant themes can be identified: the green economy: green finance, waste management; the challenges of managing modern organisations: the ever-evolving digitalisation solutions, working time management, communication challenges and crisis management; and, finally, the classic topics of macroeconomic analysis such as changes in unemployment, inflation, and other variables. The papers were contributed by 69 authors.

On 22 May 2024, at the ATF conference “Modern Technologies for a Sustainable Environment 2024”, students gave presentations on issues such as human well-being, trends in technological advances, environmental and green issues, sustainable food chains, food design, innovative landscaping and other issues.

On 5 December 2024, Morta Masytė, Ieva Česnauskaitė, Rugilė Čepulytė and Saulė Vrobliauskaitė (lecturer Rima Bačiūlytė), second year students of the MTF Cultural Activity Management study programme, took part in the [27th International Fair of Simulation Companies at Klaipėda Culture Factory, where they presented their idea of sustainable business. The aim of the competition is to use creativity to bring sustainable and innovative product ideas to the SC market that will help us save the planet and improve our lives.](#)

On 6 December 2024, the 13th International Student Scientific and Practical Conference “[Youth in a Changing Society](#)” was held at the VVF, where 113 presentations were given by 166 speakers, both physically and remotely.

Cooperation with the social partners also benefits from lectures by representatives of organisations or higher education institutions abroad:

On 4 September 2024, the STF hosted a lecture by UAB cargoGO Logistics on “Challenges in

logistics for UAB cargoGO Logistics”. The company representatives presented the main aspects of sustainability in the company.

On 9 to 13 September 2024, Dr Festus Viktor Bekun, a researcher at Istanbul Gelisim University (Turkey), visited the STF. The lectures, entitled “Assessing sustainability options for the transport sector and reducing the greenhouse effect. Sustainability and Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Criteria”, enabled the students to explore how to assess the sustainability of the transport sector based on economic, social and environmental criteria. They learnt how to analyse the environmental impact of transport and find ways to reduce the negative impact of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the transport sector, and how to apply different strategies to reduce GHG emissions, for example by switching to cleaner vehicles or optimising logistics processes.

On 23 October 2024, the representatives of UAB DPD Lietuva (which received the Green Transport Award in 2024 for its consistent implementation of CO₂ emission reduction measures and the results achieved) visited the STF and gave [a public lecture](#) on the company’s global and local experience and DPD’s brands worldwide.

In summary, VIKO has been a socially responsible higher education institution for many years which bases its principles on tradition and innovation, ensuring tolerance and responsibility to the environment and the community. It constantly challenges itself, expresses its desire to improve and promote the development of society, to develop educated, independent, active and responsible members of society, and to develop the intellectual potential of society, so that knowledge and science can contribute to the harmonious realisation of economic, social and environmental goals. As an active member of the state and the world, VIKO is aware of the urgency of contributing to a sustainable transformation and emphasises the pursuit of globally relevant activities in its strategy.

Volunteering, civic engagement and social support initiatives

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI actively promotes the personal social responsibility of every member of the community – student, lecturer, employee, social partner – by providing opportunities for self-expression and volunteering.

Members of the VIKO community not only contribute to the dissemination sharing, but also financially support the activities of the social initiatives “Moms’ Union”, “Maltesers”, “Youth Line” “Food Bank” and others.

Examples of volunteering (voluntary and unpaid activities) by VIKO staff during the reporting year:

- Dr Gražina Palaitytė, Associate Professor at

ATF, provided free advice to farmers on optimal fertilisation, crop rotation, and compliance with environmental protection requirements on farms. Other [lectures, seminars and tutorials offered by the ATF](#) are available on the Faculty’s website.

- Jolita Raupelienė, a lecturer at the Fashion Design Department of MTF, volunteered at the Antaviliai pension, where together with the pension’s specialists she led therapeutic classes for the elderly residents of the institution with her dog specially trained for this activity.
- Lecturer Asta Markauskienė of the Reha-

Photos: SPF Blood Donation Campaign.



bilitation Department of SPF volunteered for the Lithuanian Association of Blind and Visually Impaired Doctors (LASMEDA) and the organisation presented her with [a token of appreciation](#) for her long-term cooperation, useful qualification improvement seminars for therapeutic massage therapists and kinesiologists, her professionalism, and her valuable experience of community.

- ATF lecturers Dr. Inga Jančauskienė and Tomas Čižokas advised on the maintenance of the grounds of the Blessed Teofilus Matulionis Gymnasium.
- ATF lecturers Dr. Inga Jančauskienė and Tomas Čižokas and the students for the spring plantation management together with students of Landscape Design study programme at the Pomology Department of VU Botanical Garden, Public Enterprise “Vilnius City Parks”.

Students also volunteer at various events.

In 2024, the MTF volunteered at social partner events, for instance: the Naujininkai Community Festival, helping to organise the Faculty's events (hosting, photography, filming, etc.). TEF students participate in social activities by volunteering in non-governmental organisations, participating in civic events and campaigns (“Darom”), helping to organise events (Career and Studies 2024, Tech Days 2024), sports competitions (car slalom, pulling competitions), and stand guard at sports events. On 11 October 2024, SPF General Practice Nursing students Anastasija Rokaitytė, Karina Krukovska and Kornelija Šiupenytė volunteered to organise the 1st Republican Scientific and Practical Conference “Topics in CNS tumour treatment” at the National Cancer Institute. The organisers of the conference expressed their [gratitude to the students and the VIKO SPF community for their professional fellowship](#). ATF Food Technology students joined the initiative “Pie Day” organised by Moms’ Union to support children with cancer. [According to the recipe created by the students, a “Cake of Kindness” was baked, which](#) was eagerly bought and donated to the little sick children by the lecturers, employees and students of the Faculties of Agrotechnologies, Pedagogy, Economics. On 8 to 10 March 2024, ATF

[Veterinary programme students participated in the International Dog Show](#) and advised stakeholders on animal health care and nutrition.

Members of the VIKO community – lecturers and students – also volunteered at a number of events in 2024:

- On 14 September 2024, for the third year in a row, lecturers and students of the MTF Fashion Design Departments have been carrying out various educational activities in Vilnius Vingis Park at the event organised by the Lithuanian Cynological Society Training Centre to [commemorate World Animal Care Day](#).
- On 11 April 2024, ATF Landscape Design study programme, 1st and 2nd year students together with their lecturers Dr. Inga Jančauskienė and Tomas Čižokas [pruned trees and cleaned the environment on the territory of the charity and support foundation “Moms’ Union”](#).
- On 31 May 2024, a cosy, family concert [“Children – for Children!”](#) was held in the onco-haematology ward of Vilnius Santarų klinikos Children’s Hospital in a splendid atmosphere by the students of the All Stars Vocal Studio and the students of the MTF Musical Theatre Studies Programme (under the supervision of the lecturer of the Department of Performing Arts, Elžbieta Oleškevič-Sčiglo), which was dedicated to the children fighting against cancer.
- On 10 August 2024, PDF volunteers organised a food and clothing campaign for Ukrainian refugees.
- On 7 October 2024, MTF students and lecturers volunteered at [the World Animal Day event](#).
- On 9 to 10 October 2024, 13 full-time students (1st and 3rd year students) of the STF Transport Logistics study programme volunteered at the event [“Transport Innovation Forum 2024”](#) organised by the Transport Innovation Association together with its partners at the Lithuanian Exhibition and Congress Centre “Litexpo” (Vilnius). The

students carried out voluntary activities such as coordinating the logistics of the event, registering participants, providing information to guests, providing technical assistance during the seminars and contributing to the maintenance of the exhibition space and preparing for the discussions.

A working group at the Faculty of Sustainable Development and Corporate Social Responsibility of the VVF, in social partnership with the Food Bank Charity and Support Foundation, has been running the “[Bring a Jar – Contribute to the Food Bank Initiative](#)” campaign since the beginning of 2024, with more than 200 [jars](#) collected in the reporting year. The Faculty community collected and handed over more than 200 jars [to the charity and support fund “Food Bank” on 11 October 2024](#). This initiative is designed to fight food waste and to help and donate food to those in need. It also encouraged the community to donate 1.2% of the PIT paid to [the Food Bank](#) and the [Moms’ Union](#).

- On 6 November 2024, all faculties celebrate “Pie Day”, which is a great opportunity to contribute to the initiative of a chosen charity and support fund. During the event organised by the [SPF](#) Students’ Union, donations were collected for the Moms’ Union, an organisation that continuously inspires us with its generous work in supporting and empowering families. In addition to collecting donations for the Moms’ Union, on the eve of the Pie Day, the [VVF](#) invited the Faculty community to make sweets in the Faculty’s food laboratory.
- On 15 November 2024, the MI22 students of the MTF Fashion Technology and Business study programme, together with their internship supervisor, lecturer Ana Černiavskaja, had the opportunity not only to see the work of a designer and theatre costume designer [Juozas Statkevičius’ spectacular collection “Spring/Summer 2025”](#), but also to help behind the scenes of the spectacular event. The students enjoyed the invaluable experience of being able to participate in the preparations for the presentation of the collection,

to attend rehearsals, to see the clothes and accessories and to observe the work of the designer, the stylists, the hair and make-up masters and other professionals.

- On 27 November 2024, the students and lecturers Silvija Grušnienė and Aušrinė Trimonienė from the MTF Image and Fashion Design study programmes [for the project “LNK Challenge. Catch the wave!”](#), [created the hair and make-up looks for the participants](#).
- On 2 December 2024, the SPF hosted a [Blood Donation Campaign](#). This is a [traditional event in cooperation with the National Blood Centre](#), where the community of the Faculty donated blood. This voluntary activity, organised by the National Blood Centre, the VIKO SPF Nursing Department and the SPF Students’ Union, has united the faculty community for almost four decades to support patients in need of help, often essential for saving lives.
- On 3 December 2024, Vaidutė Navickaitė-Šakėnienė and Vaiva Suchodolska, lecturers at the SPF Department of Beauty Therapy, gathered a team of volunteers from the first- and second-year students of cosmetology and organised the “Beauty and Kindness Day” at the Fabijoniškės Social Services House. Seniors received manicures, pedicures, make-up and hand massages.
- On 4 December 2024, the third-year students from the MTF’s Management of Cultural Activities organised an exclusive Christmas workshop “Little Christmas Makers” at the Family and Child Welfare Centre. It was a great opportunity for the little ones to experience the magic of getting ready for Christmas. The event was not only fun but also provided valuable knowledge. Children had the opportunity to learn more about Christmas traditions, such as the history of the Advent wreath and tree decorations, and the importance of ecology during the festive season. The children also used their imagination to create unique decorations for their homes. “Little Christmas Makers” was an event that fully reflected the spirit of the holidays: joy,

fellowship and creative activities. Participants were proud of their creations and took them home to decorate their festive spaces.

- On 6 December 2024, the students from the MTF's Cultural Activity Management and Dance Pedagogy study programmes volunteered to organise the conference "Cultural and Educational Challenges of the 21st Century". Students greeted guests, registered participants, took photos, etc.
- On 27 December 2024, MTF student Rugilė Čepulytė volunteered at the event "New Year's Eve" organised by the first branch of the Lithuanian Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired (LASS) in Vilnius. According to Renata Mingilė, Chairperson of the first branch of Vilnius City LASS, "Rugilė felt the need for help perfectly, she is a brave, observant, friendly, helpful young woman, which is rare".

SPF's long-standing cooperation with the day centre "Šviesa" inspires a range of activities that

help to include people with disabilities or special needs in the community. This promotes students' humane attitudes towards people with disabilities and helps to form positive attitudes in society, encouraging students to get to know themselves and others better, develop personal values and a sense of responsibility. In 2024, Aurelija Kūgytė, a lecturer at the SPF Department of Beauty Therapy, organised educational visits to the day care centre "Šviesa" for people with intellectual disabilities and their relatives. [On Wednesdays in October and December 2024, SPF students invited the visitors of the day centre "Šviesa"](#), including adults with intellectual disabilities, to specially organised activities, the content of which had to be tailored to the needs and abilities of the guests, i.e. to use the principles of plain language. First-year students of the study programme "Physiotherapy" conducted various sports activities, first-year students of the study programme "Dietetics" gave lessons on health-promoting nutrition, and third-year students of the study programme "Radiology" presented several radiology examinations and told how to prepare for them properly. During the

Photo: Christmas fair for the visitors of the day care centre "Šviesa" and a concert of their band "Kalėdinis Rock Band".



events, the first year students of the study programmes “Occupational Therapy” and “Hygienic and Decorative Cosmetology” organised and carried out educational and employment activities for the participants of the centre, thus reducing social exclusion of people with intellectual disabilities and mitigating negative attitudes towards people with intellectual disabilities. On 2 December 2024, Aurelija Kūgytė, a lecturer at the Department of Beauty Therapy, organised a [Christmas fair for the visitors of the day care centre “Šviesa” and a concert of their band “Kalėdinis Rock Band”](#).

On 16 December 2024, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Chemotherapy Unit hosted a “[Beauty Afternoon](#)” for patients, organised in collaboration with NCI surgeon Dr. Audrius Dulskas, head of the Department of Medical Technology and Dietetics of the VIKO SPF Dr Ingrida Pumputienė and lecturers of the Department of Beauty Therapy Lina Sirvydienė, Vaidutė Navickaitė-Šakenienė, Irena Vilkenienė and students of the Hygienic and Decorative Cosmetology programme: Akvilė Prialgauskaitė, Viktorija Dainarovič, Kamilija Anoškaitė. The event included skincare, make-up and manicure tips and beauty treatments. The women who came to the free education enjoyed not only the make-up, manicure, hand massage and tips, but also the great atmosphere before the festive season.

ATF students and their lecturers Prof. Marina Valentukevičienė, Dr. Ramunė Žurauskienė and Rita Šuminskienė participated in the competition “Preparation of a project for the improvement of the environment of the houses in Vilnius District Kesmiškių Village”.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI aims to develop volunteering initiatives in the college community to increase social inclusion.

The ATF organised excursions “Colourful Šnipiškės” (6 October 2024), “Village in the City: Markučiai” (28 June 2024). The community of the faculty listened to a concert by the winners of international competitions Lina Juknevičiūtė (violin) and Rugilė Juknevičiūtė (cello), participated in a meeting-discussion with Kęstutis Dvareckas, a priest of Žvėrynas parish of Vilnius Immaculate Conception of St. Mary Church and the head of the community of addicts “I Am”.

On 21 March 2024, the SPF celebrated World Down Syndrome’s Day by inviting people to wear different coloured socks to show support and tolerance for people with Down’s syndrome.

On 29 May 2024, the “[Let’s Be Together](#)” festival was held by the social partners and the Vilnius International Club. It is a charity event for children from Lithuanian orphanages, day and social centres and schoolchildren from Ukraine. The aim of the event is to spend a day together with children who may have been excluded, organising joint leisure activities, sports and mobile games, a cultural programme, promoting social inclusion and active communication. Lecturer-practitioner Juventa Mudėnienė organised leisure activities and accompanied disabled teenagers from the social partner “Vilniaus Lakštingalos namai”.

On 31 May 2024, the Social Partners’ Festival “[The Sun to Every Heart](#)” took place with the participation of Juventa Mudėnienė, a lecturer-practitioner at the Rehabilitation Department of SPF. The aim of the event is to provide equal opportunities for all children and young people to express themselves through dance, music, vocal and other artistic activities, regardless of their talents, abilities, nationality or disability. The festival was attended by children, youth and adults from Alytus, Vilnius, Kaunas, and all of them were united by common educational activities, performances and communication. Vilnius City Municipality Administration presented a [certificate of appreciation to Vilniaus kolegija/HEI](#) for its participation in the festival.

On 13 to 21 July 2024, Jurgita Stankūnienė, Head of the SPF Department of Nursing and lecturer, volunteered at the [Independent Living Skills Summer Camp](#) organised by the Lithuanian Community of Care for People with Intellectual Disabilities “Viltis”.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI is committed to raising the profile and importance of social exclusion and social inclusion, and its lecturers share their knowledge with the general public:

On 25 April 2024, Juventa Mudėnienė, SPF lecturer-practitioner, took part in the international scientific conference “[Innovations in Inclusive Education and Special Educational Needs](#)” organised by the VU ŠA and gave a presentation: “Social inclusion: adolescents’ expression of community in

heterogeneous activity groups. The marginalisation of disability” and highlighted the meaningfulness of leisure activities for adolescents with disabilities and the aspects of working together with peers. On 26 April 2024, she participated in the national scientific-practical conference “[Labyrinths of Music and Science](#)” organised by the VU ŠA and gave a presentation “The Value of Cultural Inclusion of Children and Their Families in the Context of Disability. Aspects of Time and Perspective”, during which she presented research findings on the meaningfulness of inclusion of families with children with disabilities in an open society.

On 27 May 2024, Dr. Zyta Kuzborska, Associate Professor at the SPF Department of Nursing, and Dr. Jurgita Stankūnienė, Head of the Department of Nursing, organised a [training course on “First Aid” and “Home Nursing Skills”](#) for the members of the LPS Bočiai Community.

On 18 October 2024, Juventa Mudėnienė, SPF lecturer-practitioner, took part in the VIII LETA conference “Educational Uncertainty and Communication Challenges: the Intersection of Past and Future” organised by the Lithuanian Association for Educational Research and VILNIUS TECH University, and gave a presentation of the results of her research on the “[Transformation of Young People’s Perception of Disability and the Formation of Co-ethical Connections in Activities in a Heterogeneous Environment](#)”.

Education-related issues have been a major focus of recent **controversial discussions on inclusive education**. On 3 December 2024, Juventa Mudėnienė, a lecturer at VIKO SPF and occupational therapist, was invited by “Delfi” to take part in [a discussion on the situation of inclusive education in our country, and](#) shared her insights and experience.

On 5 December 2024, SPF lecturer-practitioner Juventa Mudėnienė took part in a public debate “Inclusive Education. Open Doors, Is That Enough?” at the conference “[Education. Only Forward?](#)”, organised by the ŠMSM, LINEŠA. During the event, education leaders, politicians, researchers, local government and business representatives shared ideas on how to create a stronger and more inno-

vative education system in our country, combine the strengths of formal and non-formal education, and include every child and family with disabilities in the community.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI provides effective support for learners with special educational needs.

In order to reduce social exclusion, cooperation with the Vilnius Verkiai Multifunctional Centre, where pupils with intellectual disabilities study, has been continuing for the third year now, and every year creative workshops and educational activities are organised in the centre and the MTF. Faculty lecturers, together with their social partners, participate in the assessment of the professional skills (sewing skills) of the pupils at the centre. SPF lecturer-practitioner Rasa Barčytė together with ER22 students volunteered and collaborated with the Lithuanian Centre for the Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Vilnius Verkiai School-Multifunctional Centre. The centres involve future, young occupational therapists in the training process, introducing them to the work of the centre, the routine, the needs of the clients, the opportunities, and their training programmes. Feedback: students have the opportunity not only to observe and see, but also to test themselves in interacting with children and applying elements of occupational therapy in the educational process for children with different needs and disabilities.

We cannot but welcome the fact that students of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI are participating in voluntary non-permanent military service. Student military volunteers are given access to compulsory military training. They are exempt from lectures and exams are conducted according to an individually agreed schedule. Such students study at both TEF and VVF.

To sum up, we can safely say that volunteering activities include a wide range of events, educational activities, donation campaigns and cooperation with social partners. These activities not only help to reduce social exclusion, but also promote a humane attitude, personal values and a sense of responsibility among community members.

Vilniaus kolegija/HEI's activities of 2024 in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- The ratio of the average monthly salary (AMS) of the VIKO staff to the Lithuanian AMS is at least 110%, and the ratio of the average monthly salary of the teaching staff to the Lithuanian AMS is at least 140% (as stipulated in the Strategy of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI for 2021-2025).
- VIKO students receive social grants from the National Study Fund and additional targeted benefits.
- The VIKO community contributes to various charities and support organisational (e.g. "[Maisto bankas](#)", "Mamų unija", "Maltiečių sriuba", "Maltos Ordino Pagalbos Tarnyba", etc.) initiatives (events, fairs, etc.) and collect donations of items and monetary charity.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- Most VIKO faculties (e.g. MTF, SPF, STF, VVF) provide facilities for students and lecturers to heat up their own food.
- The VIKO VVF and other faculty communities are actively [collecting half-litre jars](#) for the charity and support fund "Food Bank", which aims to fight food waste and help the people in need.

In the study process:

- Students and lecturers of the Dietetics study programme organised by the SPF are actively involved in educational activities (conferences, seminars, educational classes) to promote better and healthier diets for all age groups in society and to share the latest knowledge among themselves.
- Students and lecturers of the Food Technology and Agribusiness Technology study programmes organised by ATF are actively involved in educational activities. The ATF hosts various lectures, seminars and excursions to promote sustainable agriculture and livestock farming, e.g. on 1 February 2024, an open lecture was held with Dr Audronė Žebrauskienė, Associate

Professor at the VMU Academy of Agriculture, who gave a presentation on “[Seeds. Seeding. Cultivation](#)” (during the lecture, the associate professor explained the difference between professional and non-professional seeds, presented less frequently cultivated, more interesting vegetables, and highlighted their benefits for the human body. The speaker explained what information to look for on the seed packet, when to sow, how to care for the seedlings after germination and how to get the best possible yield); a seminar on “[Breeds and rearing technologies for dairy cattle](#)” was held on 28 and 29 February; a seminar on “[Efficiency and sustainability of dairy farms and the use of resources](#)” took place on 28 February; 16 April – conference “[Quality Food Products – Prospects for Lithuania](#)”, which focused on biosecurity, sustainability in poultry farming, feed quality and risk assessment, and poultry meat certification; 23 April – the conference “[Taste what’s real](#)”, organised by “Eko Žemaitija” (at the conference, Sandra Čapkauskienė, Doctor of Biomedical Sciences, Associate Professor at LSU, presented a topical paper “Health on my plate”, which detailed how food affects our health. Neda Jakubauskienė, advisor to the Crop Production and Green Technologies Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, spoke about organic production and labelling of organic products. Mindaugas Žutautas, head of the cooperative “Eko Žemaitija”, spoke about the organic products produced in his company, emphasised that today’s society is becoming more conscious about the consumption of organic products and that organic farms are working hard to maintain a cleaner environment); relevant final theses are being prepared.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



Healthcare:

- Annual health checks (paid for by the employer) are organised.
- The importance of psychological health is promoted in the VIKO faculties. Information on [where to go for help with psychological difficulties](#) is published.
- STF has a newly created first aid room (renovation work is underway).
- There are 2 electronic defibrillators registered at SPF.
- The EIF is involved in research and projects on the digitalisation of healthcare. Wellness platforms, mobile applications for health tracking and management are developed, such as the “E-Health Mobile App” in the final thesis. There are also seminars on healthy lifestyles and the application of technology in health.

Nutritional issues:

- Canteens are available at ATF, EKF, PDF (Studentų g. 39A), DIF and TEF (Olandų g. 16), STF (Antakalnio g. 54), and SPF (Didlaukio g. 45), allowing members of the faculties’ community (students, lecturers and other staff) to follow a meal regime and receive freshly prepared food every day.

- MTF, SPF, STF, TEF and VVF have made it possible for staff and students to prepare their own food (microwave ovens and kettles).
- Faculties also have snack and hot drink vending machines.

Physical activity:

- VIKO offers a free elective in physical training, Athletic Training, in all study programmes. The subject Physical Education is included in the studies of PDF. Physical activity is promoted through an event for teachers in Vilnius City.
- In 2024, members of the VIKO community actively participated in various sporting activities, including basketball, football and volleyball training, and exercised on their own in modern gyms. Student sports teams take part in the Lithuanian College Sports Games Championship. From 2023, a new form of leisure activity – yoga training – has been offered to the VIKO community. The VIKO community is active in sport for better physical health and a sense of balance.
- Students dance in the ensemble “Voruta”.
- The events organised by the SPF cover a wide range of healthcare areas, from radiology and home nursing to elderly health and nutrition. These events are open to members of the SPF community free of charge as listeners.
- In the autumn semester of 2024, the Vilniaus kolegija/HEI community actively participated in the WALK15 national mobility challenge for higher education institutions by walking. 842 members of the Vilniaus kolegija/HEI community took part in the Challenge. In total, 209,897,525 steps were walked between 16 September and 16 November.

Recreation:

- VIKO staff and students have the opportunity to express themselves and pursue their individual interests. Most faculties (e.g. EKF, STF, VVF) have active leisure areas for students, such as table tennis and table football.

Additional initiatives:

- On 16 April 2024, EKF students and staff [visited the Vilnius City Integrated Services Centre “Šeimų slėnis” \(Family Valley\)](#) bearing good emotions and gifts. During the visit, the students became acquainted with the centre’s comprehensive personalised services for children and families with children with disabilities, as well as with the latest modern methodologies applied in the centre for children with disabilities.
- On 20 to 24 May 2024, under the Erasmus+ Teaching Exchange Programme, ATF Prof. Dr. Marina Valentukevičienė gave a [lecture](#) on Green Infrastructure at the University of Life Sciences in Warsaw concerning the application of solutions for green roofs, urban gardens or water harvesting systems. This contributes to people’s physical health, mental well-being, climate regulation, social inclusion and biodiversity. These solutions improve quality of life at both individual and community level.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- Lecturers continuously develop their subject and teaching competences and collaborate with each other to ensure that their studies are relevant to the needs of modern society and of high quality. Competences are developed both in Lithuania and during traineeships abroad (e.g. under the Erasmus+ programme).
- The study process is taught not only by full-time lecturers, but also by guest lecturers: practitioners from organisations and foreign higher education institutions.
- Extended and full-time studies, organised on a sessional timetable, allow the “lifelong learning” initiative to be implemented, giving people of all ages the opportunity to study, as it makes it easier to combine study and work. Students can study according to their individual schedule.
- Partial or full distance learning on the MS Teams and VLE Moodle platforms enables people who want to combine their studies with work, live in the regions of Lithuania, live abroad or have a disability to access education.
- The VIKO study environment is adapted for people with various disabilities and special needs (adaptations for people with reduced mobility: lifts, elevators, doors of the right width and without thresholds, toilets suitable for people with special needs; for the visually impaired, stairs are marked by bright stripes, the VLE Moodle environment is adapted for people with visual impairments; for the deaf, more information is provided in writing, etc.). The [DIF](#), [STF](#) and [TEF](#) websites have introduced the ability to enlarge the text, making it easier to read information for the visually impaired.
- Introductory courses or lectures are arranged.
- In order to reduce the number of students dropping out of studies, student surveys are organised, meetings of heads of departments with academic groups are held, heads of departments and staff of faculty study units conduct motivational interviews with students who have expressed a desire to drop out of their studies, and other alternatives such as deferment of studies and academic leave are proposed.
- Monitoring of [study satisfaction](#) is carried out.
- Competences in sustainable development and corporate social responsibility are included in all VIKO study programmes.
- Every year, VIKO students and lecturers are invited to participate in the Constitution Exam and the European Exam to promote citizenship and Lithuanian statehood.
- For a modern and innovative study process, most faculties have classrooms equipped with smart boards, digital screens or projectors.

- The library and reading room resources are constantly updated according to demand. The library's opening hours are longer than those of the administration, and the library is also open longer during sessions. Meetings with library staff are organised for first-year students to explain how to use library resources.
- The STF also has equipment and tools for students with disabilities (visual impairment compensation equipment – portable video magnifier eMag 70HD, Schweizer 4 pcs.; visual impairment compensation equipment – software for versions Dolphin EasyConverter 2 pcs.; mobility impairment compensation equipment – adjustable-height desks ergoM1R-1000/680E 2 pcs.; mobility impairment compensation equipment – adjustable chairs 2 pcs.).
- All VIKO premises, buildings and dormitories have free internet access, providing a convenient environment for studying and working.
- In order to ensure the quality of the essays, the VIKO has developed the [General Requirements for Study Essays](#).
- The STF has 7 computerised classrooms, where students have access to free software for their studies. Students have access to 32 computerised workstations in the STF library and reading room.
- The STF has 4 lecture theatres, equipped for mixed lecturing. The VVF has 7 sets of portable equipment and any classroom can be adapted for mixed lectures.
- With 10 [international study programmes in English](#), VIKO has students from a wide range of foreign countries. Ukrainian students can study free of charge and are awarded scholarships. Every year, international students from partner higher education institutions abroad come to Vilniaus kolegija/HEI for part-time studies under the ERASMUS+ programme. This promotes cultural diversity and equality among students.
- In 2024, the project "Studies 2044: AI Hackathon" funded by the VSF call under the priority theme "Integrating AI into the study process" was organised. The aim of the project is to promote and develop the ability to make good use of AI tools in the study process, enhancing creativity, critical thinking, public speaking, knowledge and application of AI in the study process.
- The EKF runs the non-formal adult education programme "Accounting and Tax Basics + B1.It Work". In 2024, 26 participants completed the programme.
- During the reporting period, the ATF offered [lectures, consultations and seminars](#) to the public on various topics. [Education sessions](#) were organised for Lithuanian schoolchildren at their schools or in ATF laboratories.
- The EKF is running an ERASMUS+ project "[Educational Empowerment and Social Inclusion of Students with Disabilities through Digital Solutions and Assistive Technologies \(EESI-DIGI\)](#)". The aim of the project is to develop digital competences for successful graduation and entry into the labour market. The project activities developed and delivered learning modules for students with disabilities.

- The EKF implemented the ERASMUS+ project [“Promoting people with disabilities employment by enhancing their digital skills and competences to support a remote working scheme disabilities \(DigitAbility\)”](#) (Contract No 2022-1-IT01-KA220Vet-000087590), which [aims](#) to promote the employability and attractiveness of people with disabilities by enhancing their digital skills and supporting vocational training providers in developing more accessible education services for people with disabilities.
- The EKF is running the ERASMUS+ entrepreneurship project [“Youth, believe in yourself and become entrepreneur”](#). YOU-CAN-BE! for young entrepreneurs with their own social business ideas. During the project, teams of students developed business ideas. The young entrepreneurs visited the social business enterprise “Business or Art” (“Taško istorija”), which publishes books for blind children, and carried out educational activities: blindfolded participants tried to find pictures in objects, and in the “dark room” they touched and analysed pictures created by the blind. [Participants had lunch in social restaurants](#): “My Guru”, for ex-prisoners and people with addictions; “Pirmas blynas”, for people with various disabilities such as Down’s Syndrome, cerebral palsy, etc. The lecture was given by Vismantas Satkauskas, entrepreneur and director of UAB “Sėkmės sprendimai”. The topic of the lecture was “Business Opportunities and Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Environmental Issues, Vulnerable People, EU Funding”.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- The requirements and conditions for competition are the same for both men and women.
- In the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan adopted by Vilniaus kolegija/HEI, working groups are formed taking into account the possibility of combining the participation of both genders in decision-making.
- Salaries for both male and female employees are based on clear salary criteria.
- Both men and women have equal access to childcare.
- A survey of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI lecturers, staff and students on the state of gender equality in the organisation is conducted.
- Cooperation with the association “Lyderė”, which aims to encourage women to be more courageous in their careers and to contribute to gender equality and leadership in Lithuania is carried out.
- The EIF actively encourages girls and women to pursue careers in technology through various motivational initiatives such as the „Girls in Tech“ events. There are also mentoring programmes where successful women share their experience in technology and engineering, and more women are working in the faculty.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- VIKO provides all students, faculty, staff and visitors with a centralised supply of clean drinking water, as well as the delivery of used water to the city's centralised wastewater treatment system.
- Some faculties and the administration have drinking water facilities and the community is encouraged to drink tap water.
- STF's water use infrastructure is designed to save water resources.
- Showers are available at the gyms.
- Premises are cleaned and tidied up on a regular basis.
- ATF's Department of Chemistry and Food Technology conducts water chemistry tests for individuals and legal entities at a cost.
- The STF examines the state of water resources in Lithuania and the world through the subjects Sustainable Environment and Human Security and Sustainable Development. Water status and resource efficiency in buildings is analysed in the subject Water Management of Buildings.

Final theses:

- Mindaugas Rutalė (ZD21 gr), a student of ATF Landscape Design study programme, successfully defended his thesis „Development of an engineering system for rainwater collection and management in Rietavas Park that meets the requirements of the Green Deal“.
- EIF's final theses develop solutions for water saving and management. Examples include automated water supply management devices and systems that optimise water use in agriculture and industry, and the faculty has water stations where clean water is available. For example, Justinas Kudaba's 2024 EIF Electronic Engineering study programme thesis „Automation of a heating substation“.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- Motion sensors in public spaces in EKF, SPF, STF, TEF and VVF allow to save electricity consumption for lighting.
- College staff, lecturers and students are encouraged to use lighting efficiently, not to leave unused electrical appliances switched on, and not to use supplementary electric heating devices or electric kettles in classrooms.
- The solar panels installed on the roofs of the DIF and STF (Olandų g. 16), the SPF (Didlaukio g. 45) and the VVF (Didlaukio g. 49) generate renewable electricity, thus contributing to sustainable resource use.

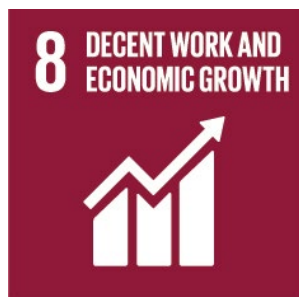
Additional initiatives have been implemented in the study process:

- On 29 April 2024, the students of the ATF Agribusiness Technology and Food Technology study programmes, together with lecturer Edita Kristina Kaurynienė, visited the [Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant](#) (IAE).

- On 14 June 2024, the lecturers and students of ATF Department of Chemistry and Food Technology visited the UAB [Kurana](#) plant which produces bioethanol, biogas, electricity, thermal energy and biomass.
- EIF students develop solutions to harness renewable energy. Examples include linear solar tracking and heat pump retrofits. Study programmes integrate energy efficiency and sustainability principles.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- The Departments contribute to the training of labour market professionals in cooperation with social partners (organisations, companies, institutions). Every year, VIKO faculties organise Career Days and Contact Fairs, where members of the community interact and find opportunities to collaborate with leading companies in the Transport and Construction sectors.
- Students have regular opportunities to interact with representatives from organisations through public lectures and company tours. They focus on discussing employability, analysing the skills needed in the workplace, assessing their potential as future labour market participants, and making many useful friendships.
- Students take part in ERASMUS exchange programmes for part-time studies, internships or short-term visits (BIPs, hackathons, etc.) abroad to acquire international competences.
- Traineeships (30 to 40 credits) are part of all study programmes.
- Theses are commissioned by organisations to contribute directly to sustainable, inclusive and balanced economic growth, productive employment and the promotion of decent work.
- Graduates' employability rates are monitored and evaluated annually, with a particular focus on graduate employment, and graduates' careers are tracked. Graduates from most of the programmes offered by VIKO are highly sought-after in the labour market.
- VIKO alumni are involved in the life of the faculty – they come to give lectures, participate in roundtable discussions, and go to schools together to promote the faculty's study programmes.
- Members of the VIKO community participate annually in scientific-practical conferences with presentations such as: "Challenges and prospects for sustainable development".
- VIKO participated in [the Green Ideas Festival 2024](#).
- STF students and lecturers take part in various competitions organised by the municipality or associations, where they can learn from each other – digital design, entrepreneurship, etc.
- The EKF launched the Erasmus Blended Intensive Programme), short for Erasmus BIP "[Green Finance](#)". The first phase of the project started with lectures and trips to Swedbank's laboratory for developing financial literacy among children and young people, the Rockit Fintech Centre, where participants learned about Lithuanian Fintech institutions and start-ups, etc.

Additional initiatives in the study process:

- From 8 to 19 April 2024, the EKF organised a [series of ten lectures on the Green Economy for students](#) by Prof. Dr. Zlatko Nedelko from the University of Maribor, Slovenia. “The Green Economy is one of the most topical issues today, and one that is relevant to students in different study programmes from their unique point of view.” All lectures were adapted for students studying at the Faculty of Economics in the following study programmes: finance, accounting, business economics, investment and insurance, banking.

**UN SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS****ACTIVITIES**

- In the field of creativity and innovation, there are collaborations with Lithuanian and foreign research institutions. For example: The VVF cooperates with the Lithuanian Social Innovation Cluster (LSIC).
- Lecturers conduct research on social business and sustainability.
- The innovation and creativity of the students at the VVF is fostered through annual creativity camps using the creative playground methodology.
- EIF, EKF, STF and VVF students take part in the republican college student competition “Profadienis”, where they explore aspects of socially responsible business, generate innovative ideas, and strengthen their negotiation and public speaking skills.
- The theses are commissioned by organisations, contributing directly to the development of resilient infrastructures, inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and innovation.
- EIF students develop technological solutions to modernise infrastructure, from robotic systems to control applications that help optimise production processes, research projects are implemented and the Student Research Society is active.
- STF coursework involves students working on real-life problems brought in from companies and conducting company-related research.
- The EKF organises a student scientific-practical conference “Economics. Business. Management” where students are encouraged to submit articles on the Green Economy and Digitalisation Challenges every year.
- VIKO merchandise is carefully selected for its need, relevance, usability and durability. For example: The EIF purchased a T-shirt (made of 100% cotton, 50% of which is recycled) printed with the Faculty’s logo. The T-shirts are available. We choose sustainable and recycled materials that ensure quality, durability, recyclability and a faster degradation process.

Additional initiatives:

- On 22 May 2024, the ATF hosted the International Scientific and Practical Conference “[Modern Technologies for a Sustainable Environment 2024](#)”. Not only guests from Poland and Bulgaria, but also colleagues from other Lithuanian higher education institutions – Vilnius University, Vytautas Mag-

nus University, Kaunas College, Kaunas College of Forestry and Environmental Engineering – gave presentations at the conference. Young researchers from the Faculty of Agrotechnology were also active in the conference. As many as 11 presentations were prepared and delivered by students of the Applied Chemical Analysis, Food Technology, Agribusiness Technology and Landscape Design programmes. Presentations at the conference explored issues related to human well-being, trends in technological progress, environmental and green issues, sustainable food chains, food design, innovative landscaping and more. The electronic publication “[Set of Articles for the Conference on Modern Technologies for a Sustainable Environment](#)” was published in November 2024.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- VIKO employs foreign lecturers.
- With 10 [international study programmes in English](#), VIKO has students from a wide range of foreign countries. Ukrainian students can study free of charge and are awarded scholarships. Every year, international students from partner higher education institutions abroad come to Vilniaus kolegija/HEI for part-time studies under the ERASMUS+ programme. This promotes cultural diversity and equality among students.
- VIKO employs people with disabilities.
- Most faculties have study environments that are adapted for people with various disabilities and special needs (adaptations for people with mobility disabilities: lifts, elevators, doors of the right width with no thresholds, WCs suitable for people with special needs; for the visually impaired, stairs are marked with a bright bar, the VLE Moodle environment is adapted for people with visual impairment; for the deaf, more information is provided in written form, etc).
- Students can receive social benefits from the National Study Fund.
- VIKO lecturers are actively developing their qualifications (seminars, projects, internships) to learn how to work with students with disabilities.
- The [DIF](#), [STF](#) and [TEF](#) websites have introduced the ability to enlarge the text, making it easier for visually impaired people to read the information.
- PDF is running a project “[Improving the competences of sign language professionals](#)” to increase social inclusion.
- This is further disclosed in [Chapter 4 of](#) this report.

Additional initiatives:

- In April 2024, four third-year students from the Business Economics and Banking programme at EKF participated in the Erasmus BIP project “[Intercultural Dialogue through Stories](#)” . Through folklore, we can all get to know ourselves, our nation, its culture, and ultimately humanity itself, much better. The project has helped us to understand how we, our nation, are different from other nations and, at the same time, how we are similar.

It was great to broaden our horizons and learn something new about other cultures first-hand.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- Bins are placed in all VIKO premises and public spaces to collect rubbish, which is then handed over to licensed waste handlers for treatment.
- There are bicycle parking facilities near the faculties (e.g. SPF, TEF, VVF).
- In their final theses and dissertations, STF students analyse topical problems of Vilnius city and/or Lithuania, taking into account the strategic plans of the country or region in their choice of solutions. In this way, the Faculty's activities are in line with the EU Green Deal, Lithuania's vision for the future "Lithuania 2050" and other documents.
- EIF students' theses include automated safety devices such as cleaning robots, infrastructure monitoring systems, etc. that contribute to urban sustainability and safety.
- EKF lecturer Žana Prokopovičienė and first-year students regularly participate in [the Waste Culture Examination](#). In 2024, the members of the EKF community achieved excellent results: out of 65 first-year students, 61 received diplomas (4 expert, 49 connoisseur, 8 advanced), and lecturer Ž. Prokopovičienė was recognised as the best performing participant in the Vilnius region and was awarded a prize of an electric scooter by the shopping valley "NØRDIKA".

Lectures:

- On 20 to 24 May 2024, under the Erasmus+ Teaching Exchange Programme, ATF Prof. Dr. Marina Valentukevičienė gave a [lecture](#) on Green Infrastructure at the University of Life Sciences in Warsaw concerning the application of solutions for green roofs, urban gardens or water harvesting systems.

Participating in competitions:

- In 2024, ATF *Landscape Design* study programme second year students Ugnė Bujanauskaitė, Gintautas Kerpiškis, Rokas Kalibatas, Loreta Bačiulienė, Mindaugas Rutalė, together with their lecturers prof. dr. Marina Valentukevičienė, doc. dr. Ramunė Žurauskienė and Rita Šuminskiene took part in the workshop of the project "[Smart City 10](#)" organised by the magazine "Structum", during which the team of the Faculty of Agri-Technology met with the representatives of the Vilnius District Municipality and the 16 project sponsors. The students introduced them to the innovative and sustainable solutions they have used in the environmental improvement project of the Kasmiškiai community centre. The participants discussed their concerns, and the students listened to advice on how to achieve the best results in creating an attractive environment for the community. Taking into account the evaluation criteria and the refined solutions for improving the project, the team developed an environmental improvement [project for](#) the Kasmiškiai community house based on innovative and sustainable solutions.

Attending conferences:

- On 8 to 10 May 2024, Mindaugas Rutalė (ZD21) presented a poster on *“The Attitudes and Experiences in Container Gardening: Practical and Aesthetic Implications”* at the 30th International Scientific and Practical Conference *“Human and Natural Safety 2024”*.
- On 22 May 2024, two (2) students from the *Landscape Design* study programme presented papers at the ATF International Scientific and Practical Conference *“Modern Technologies for Sustainable Environment 2024”*: Evelina Verbickaitė (ZD23) *“Application of Innovative Technologies in Office Buildings”* and Mindaugas Rutalė (ZD21) *“Public Perception and Attitudes towards Container Gardening”*.

Attending events:

- On 5 June 2024, dr R. Kondratienė and R. Kondratas, lecturers at the ATF Department of Landscape and Agribusiness Technologies, together with second-year students, took part in the “Green Ideas” festival for schoolchildren at the Presidential Palace, where they presented an innovative vertical plant cultivation technology.
- On 13 to 17 May 2024, ATF *Landscape Design* students took part in the Blended Intensive Programme(BIP) <https://atf.viko.lt/agrotechnologiju-fakultete-finisavo-penkias-dienas-trukusios-intensyvios-misrios-programos-bip-veiklos/> *“Sustainable Landscaping Solutions for Urban Areas”*. The aim of the programme is to build skills and apply sustainability-oriented solutions in landscaping to connect people with nature.

Final theses:

- In 2024, the members of ATF Landscape and Agribusiness Technology Department [in cooperation with the Municipality of Šalčininkai](#), as commissioned by the Municipality, were to produce thesis projects by the students of the *Landscape Design* study programme:
- Stankevičiūtė Vilma *“Design proposals for the landscaping design of the entrance area of the Civil Registry Office of Šalčininkai Municipality”*.
- Zlatkauskaitė Vilma *“Project for the redesign of the vegetation of the municipal square of Šalčininkai district, Vilniaus g. 49, in Šalčininkai”*.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- Green public procurement is conducted.
- VIKO promotes sustainable consumption and production through environmental initiatives. The faculties and the administration building have waste sorting stations, save electricity and promote responsible water use.
- Paper usage is rationally reduced (only necessary documents are printed). Paper is often reused (as long as it does not violate the protection of personal data).
- Most of the study programmes offered by the VIKO deal with sustainable consumption and production. For example: The subjects of the ATF Food Technology study programme are relevant to the development of the re-

gion and the country as a whole, and are linked to sustainable development trends.

- Students writing their final theses choose to analyse themes of social responsibility and sustainable development (e.g. environmental themes related to environmental initiatives to increase the sustainability of renewable and non-renewable natural resources in production and consumption).
- Students submit only electronic essays, theses and related documents (no printouts).
- STF operates a thrift shop that promotes the reduction of consumerism and a culture of sharing.
- During each VIKO FLORA Plant Fair, plastic pots are collected from individuals and planting businesses, which are then used to propagate and grow ornamental plants in the ornamental plant training garden.
- The MTF actively contributes to the implementation of the EU's Green Deal policy. For example, in 2024, Prof. Dr. E. Strazdienė, together with the lecturers of the Department of Fashion and the students of the Fashion Technology and Business Programme, implemented the EU Horizon Programme project "[Circular Economy Innova Initiative in Textiles for an Entrepreneurial Europe CITE](#)".

Additional initiatives:

- On 22 May 2024, at the ATF Faculty of Agrotechnology's conference "[Modern Technologies for a Sustainable Environment 2024](#)", students gave presentations on issues related to human well-being, trends in technological advancement, environmental and green issues, sustainable food chains, food design, innovative landscaping, and more. Justė Šarauskaitė, a student of the Food Technology study programme, gave a presentation on the topic "Creation of dishes using food design elements" (supervised by lecturer J. Lazdauskienė).
- In June 2024, EKF Business Economics students Domas Paplavuchinas, a third-year student, and Aras Šakanis, a second-year student, visited Portugal as part of the Erasmus+ BIP programme on [responsible consumption](#). Responsible consumption and production is a hot topic today, involving the efficient use of resources and the reduction of waste, so that consumption habits do not harm the planet or jeopardise the needs of future generations. The students looked at what it takes to produce more with less raw materials and reduce pollution.
- In 2024, ATF Food Technology programme lecturers carried out the project "[Development of recipes and technologies for buckwheat products](#)". Representatives of UAB "Lašų duona" were introduced to buckwheat products developed by J. Lazdauskienė and E. Grinė, lecturers of Food Technology. Customers selected 9 buckwheat products, and the lecturers prepared recipes and descriptions of production technologies for the company.

UN SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- Good waste management (separating batteries, waste).
- Lecturers carry out research on sustainability issues.
- Students writing their final theses choose to analyse the importance of sustainability (e.g. environmental topics related to environmental initiatives to increase the conservation of renewable and non-renewable natural resources in production and consumption).
- The STF is actively involved in climate change and adaptation activities, encouraging students to explore climate change issues, change their habits, and discuss ways to reduce their impact on the climate, whether in lectures, meetings with social partners, or in the preparation of assignments.
- The EIF has set up a Fix Lab for students to repair the electronic equipment of Faculty staff.

Additional initiatives:

- On 21 May 2024, Rimantė Rimgailaitė, a lecturer at MTF, gave a presentation „Sustainability in Fashion Design“ at the practical conference „Fashion Identity and Innovation FIAI2024“.

UN SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- Proper sorting of waste.
- Environmental initiatives are carried out.

Final theses and projects:

- *ATF Landscape Design* study programme student Mindaugas Rutalė (ZD21) successfully defended his thesis “Development of an engineering system for rainwater collection and management in Rietavas Park that meets the requirements of the Green Deal”.
- Final projects of MTF *Fashion Design* and *Image Design* students:
- Ugnė Pienė Noreikytė. Original creative collection “[350p](#)” (supervisor Morta Nakaitė),
- Antanina Šukaitytė. Original creative collection “[Beneath the Ocean’s Surface](#)” (supervisor Erika Gudienė)
- Gintarė Skorbutė. Image photo session “[Pain under water](#)” (supervisor Silvija Grušnienė).

Conference presentations:

- In 2024, Mindaugas Rutalė (ZD21) presented a poster “*Effectiveness of biological agents and enzymatic catalysis in wastewater treatment*” at the 30th International Scientific and Practical Conference “*Human and Natural Safety 2024*” at VMU.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- VIKO aims at reducing the accumulation of waste. For example: Documents are signed and processed using the electronic document management system (DMS) Kontora; students and lecturers use the virtual learning platform (VLE) MOODLE; paper advertisements are less frequently printed and more frequently transferred to TV screens; furniture is not frequently changed, etc.
- Faculty communities participate in the “We Sort” platform, through which they deliver used batteries and other e-waste. For example: In 2024, 485 kg of e-waste and 14 kg of batteries were collected and properly handed over to the EIF.
- Participation in the “[Darom](#)” clean-up campaign has become a tradition.
- On 27 November 2024, the MTF organised a student conference, [Ecoforum’2024](#), in line with the environmental initiative *The European Week for Waste Reduction (EWWR)*. Moments of the event were shown on the TV programme “[Labas vakaras, Lietuva](#)”.

Initiatives in the study process:

- STF students learn how to design timber construction projects, optimise the routes of transport companies, and discover ways to protect the earth’s resources and quality.
- The STF tests concrete mixtures, including recycled waste and other impurities.
- Students in the EIF’s Programme in Application Systems are developing websites, mobile apps and other information systems that contribute to work facilitation and seamless access to electronic documents when going paperless.
- For more information, see [chapter 8](#) of this report.

Additional initiatives:

- On 19 March 2024, the ATF held a [workshop to celebrate World Earth Day](#). The aim is to draw the attention of the faculty’s community to the intensive use of natural resources, the causes of biodiversity loss and the consequences of economic activities.
- On 29 to 30 October 2024, ATF and its partner EIT FOOD Centre for Digital Innovation AgriFood Lithuania DIH organised the [HACK AgriFood Challenge Lab’24](#), an event where students from different study programmes develop and present prototypes related to challenges in regenerative agriculture, innovative IT solutions and technologies in the agri-food sector, sustainable food packaging, and the utilisation of by-products from food production.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- Vilniaus kolegija/HEI annually produces the Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Report ([from 2019](#)).
- All faculties contribute to the VIKO Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Report through their initiatives.
- VIKO has a [Labour Council](#), an [Academic Ethics Committee](#), a [Disputes Committee](#), a [Workplace Violence and Harassment Committee](#), which is formed if necessary, and an option to join the [Trade Union](#) is available.
- The long-running competition, which in the reporting year covered the whole of the VIKO, "[Misconceptions](#)", is a celebration of the United Nations' English Language Day and the World Day for Innovation and Creativity.

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTIVITIES



- Lecturers and students collaborate on commissioned research on social responsibility and sustainable development.
- VIKO cooperates with various organisations to implement social responsibility and sustainable development activities (more on social partnership in [Chapter 3](#)), with particular reference to:
 - general education schools,
 - higher education institutions in Lithuania (particularly meaningful cooperation with the Medards Čobot University of the Third Age),
 - higher education institutions abroad,
 - business organisations,
 - public bodies (municipalities, ministries),
 - social enterprises, NGOs,
 - professional societies and associations,
 - etc.



Vilniaus kolegija/HEI Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development SWOT

STRENGTHS:	WEAKNESSES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitments to social responsibility and sustainable development are set out in the 2022-2025 Vilniaus kolegija/HEI Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Programme: VIKO is actively involved in social projects, volunteering activities and environmental initiatives. • Promoting diversity and inclusion ensures that all members of the community feel valued and respected. • Sustainable development is integrated into all VIKO study programmes, encouraging a socially responsible and sustainable future. • Researchers' research expertise enables them to develop innovative solutions and technologies in the fields of sustainability and social responsibility to address global challenges. • The involvement of the VIKO community is quite strong, with staff, lecturers, students and social partners actively participating in the life of the establishment and in social initiatives. • Active cooperation with various organisations to implement joint projects and initiatives. • Investing in sustainable solutions: electricity-using and energy-reducing (smart) equipment, renewable energy generation and a waste reduction programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some areas (e.g. human resources), there is a lack of a systematic approach, as it is not foreseen in the 2022-2025 Programme for Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development of Vilniaus kolegija/HEI. • Some areas may lack a clear and coherent long-term strategy or, more specifically, lack key performance indicators (KPIs) to achieve social responsibility and sustainable development objectives. • Not all students are motivated to take part in social responsibility and sustainability activities, which can reduce the overall impact of initiatives. • Limited funding for social responsibility and sustainability initiatives, limiting their scale and impact.

OPPORTUNITIES:	THREATS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek partnerships with private and public sector organisations, which can provide additional resources and opportunities for sustainability initiatives. • Promote international cooperation to increase access to international projects and networks to share best practices and access funding for sustainable development initiatives. • Increased involvement in local community projects can strengthen VIKO's links with the community. • Technological advances can help to make sustainability initiatives more effective and foster innovation. • Increasing public attention to sustainability and social responsibility can raise VIKO's profile and attract more students and partners. • The College could pursue various sustainability certifications and accreditations that would enhance its prestige and attract more students and partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in public opinion and expectations regarding social responsibility and sustainability can put pressure on VIKO to adapt quickly and meet new standards. • Rapid technological change can create challenges that require continuous investment in the latest technology and staff training. • Economic challenges can reduce funding and support for social responsibility and sustainability initiatives, making them more difficult to implement.





Vilnius HEI,
Science Department,
Saltoniškių st. 58,
08105 Vilnius