

## THE SENATE OF VILNIUS UNIVERSITY PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR 2023

In 2023, the activities of the Senate of Vilnius University, which was established in the summer of 2022 and headed by Prof. Eglė Lastauskienė (deputies Prof. Dr Darius Abramavičius and Prof. Dr Rimvydas Skyrius), continued; the Quality and Development Affairs (chairperson Prof. Virginija Jurėnienė, deputy chair Assoc. Prof. Dr Arūnas Mickevičius), Research Affairs (chairperson Assoc. Prof. Dr Ramūnas Aleksiejūnas, deputy chair Assoc. Prof. Dr Justina Poškienė), and Studies Affairs (chairperson Assoc. Prof. Dr Nerijus Šepetyš, deputy chair – student Julija Jarutytė) Committees continued their work as well.

The Senate consists of 46 members in total: 36 representatives of core academic units, nine student representatives, and the Rector of the University (*ex officio* member of the Senate). Last year, the Senate underwent a change in its composition: Prof. Dr Justinas Čeponkus (Faculty of Physics), Assoc. Prof. Dr Indrė Isokaitė-Valužė (Faculty of Law), and Assist. Prof. Dr Gintas Karalius (Institute of International Relations and Political Science) became new members of the Senate as representatives of their units, replacing their resigned colleagues; the Vilnius University Students' Representation also appointed its representatives for a new one-year term. The full composition of the [Senate](#) and its [committees](#) is available on the University's website and on the [Senate section of the University's Intranet](#).

In 2023, the Senate held ten meetings and three electronic ballots, adopting 57 resolutions. The Senate carried out activities and performed functions directly prescribed in or arising from the Statute of Vilnius University and adopted decisions on relevant issues concerning studies, research, and general affairs. Some of the Senate's resolutions were subsequently submitted to the Council of the University for consideration in accordance with the legal acts of the University. Members of the Senate actively participated in Senate meetings (average participation rate of 83.33 per cent, compared to 84.67 per cent in 2022), and the meetings also attracted the attention of other members of both the academic and non-academic communities of the University.

Undoubtedly, the most important resolution of the Senate this year was the approval of the recast of the Vilnius University Regulations for the Organisation of Teaching Staff and Research/Art Staff Recruiting Competitions and Certification. This is a matter that is relevant to every member of the academic community, and therefore received special attention and engagement from the Senate members. The matter was discussed at two Senate meetings, a joint meeting of all committees, and several separate meetings of each committee. Members of the Senate actively submitted their comments on the draft document and engaged in discussions with the communities of the units and the drafters. The new Regulation of Doctoral Studies at Vilnius University also received considerable attention and was discussed at several meetings of the Senate too. It was extensively analysed and commented on by the members of the Research Affairs Committee. The Senate also approved the new Rules of Procedure of the Senate, which, in line with the current practice, clarify the processes of this governing body and improve its procedures.

The most significant decisions adopted at different meetings are discussed below.

**At the meeting of 31 January 2023 (Minutes No. SP-1)**, the Senate considered the Draft Vilnius University Revenue and Expenditure Estimate for 2023 and its implementation plan. Several important legal acts were approved at this meeting: recasts of the Study Internship Regulation of Vilnius University and the Regulations of the Research Promotion Fund of Vilnius University, as well as a new document – the Guidelines for Developing the Concept of a Study Programme Intended to be Implemented at Vilnius University. Members of the Senate heard presentations and discussed the findings of the attraction of international students, the doctoral

studies at the University, and the activities of the Central Academic Ethics Commission.

**The meeting of 21 February 2023 (Minutes No. SP-2)** focused on the issues in the area of studies as well as listened to the annual report of the Central Dispute Resolution Commission and updated the compositions of the Senate's commissions and committees.

**At the meeting of 21 March 2023 (Minutes No. SP-3)**, the draft annual performance report and the draft report on the implementation of the revenue and expenditure estimate were approved. The Rules of Procedure of the Senate were also substantially updated.

**At the meeting of 18 April 2023 (Minutes No. SP-4)**, the President of VU SA Neda Žutautaitė gave a presentation on the most important issues for the students which the Senate could contribute to solving or improving. The presentation focused on individual studies, student internship issues, improving student engagement in research activities, doctoral studies, and issues related to international study experiences.

**The meeting of the Senate of 23 May 2023 (Minutes No. SP-5)** was held at Kaunas Faculty. During this meeting, the results of the survey of doctoral students and the monitoring report of the strategy for openness to equality and diversity were presented and the Senate was briefed on lifelong learning activities and the initiative of the university of the third age. At the meeting, nominations for the extension of the employment contracts for employees over the age of 65 were considered. Upon the decision of the Senate, *Magna Cum Laude* diplomas were awarded to 19 students of the first cycle and 77 students of the second cycle and integrated studies. Lijana Savickienė, the newly elected president of the Students' Representation, read the Pledge of Commitment to the University before taking up her duties as a member of the Council.

**At the meeting of 20 June 2023 (Minutes No. SP-6)**, the Concept of General University Studies was repealed as part of the further transformation of the University's study system (at the same time, the General University Studies Commission was dismantled), and the regulation of this area was transferred to the procedure for individual studies being approved by the Pro-Rector of Studies. During the meeting, the activities of the Vilnius University Diversity and Equal Opportunities Strategy 2020–2025 Implementation Plan for the Period of 2020–2022 was presented and the implementation plan of this strategy for 2023–2025 was approved. A working group was set up to update the Criteria for Awarding *Cum Laude* and *Magna Cum Laude* Diplomas.

**At the meeting of 19 September 2023 (Minutes No. SP-9)**, as many as 11 items were discussed, including discussing the overview of the admission of students, a presentation on the attraction of students, and the approval of amendments to the Visual Identity Guide. The activities of the Culture Centre and the Health and Sport Center were presented to members of the Senate. Awards were presented to the authors of the most read books published by the VU Press, and the outgoing members of the Senate and the General University Studies Commission were honoured.

**At the meeting of 17 October 2023 (Minutes No. SP-10)**, the recast of the Regulation of the Doctoral Studies and the Concept of Interdisciplinary Studies at Vilnius University were approved. The Rector's team gave the reports on the University's participation in the ARQUS Alliance activities and the implementation of the Procedure for the Organisation of Teaching Staff and Research/Art Staff Recruiting Competitions and Certification in 2023.

**The meeting of 21 November 2023 (Minutes No. Sp-12)** focused on discussing the recast of the Vilnius University Regulations for the Organisation of Teaching Staff and Research/Art Staff Recruiting Competitions and Certification. In addition, honorary titles of the University were awarded by secret ballot: The title of an Honorary Doctor of Vilnius University was awarded to Daniel Petit, Anna Pikulska Radomska, and Hans Kjeldsen, whereas the title of a Professor Emeritus was awarded to Prof. Dr Romas Lazutka, Prof. Dr Valdas Sirutkaitis, and Prof. Dr Sigitas Tumkevičius.

**At the meeting of 19 December 2023 (Minutes No. SP-13)**, after a long and substantive discussion, the recast of the Vilnius University Regulations for the Organisation of Teaching Staff and Research/Art Staff Recruiting Competitions and Certification was approved. The Senate also decided to award the pedagogical titles of a professor and associate professor to 27 members of the academic community.

The issues that required prompt decision-taking were resolved by electronic voting of the Senate members, without convening a meeting. In 2023, three such ballots were organised

during which four resolutions were adopted.

The Senate also held and participated in festive or other solemn events:

- by a solemn meeting held in the St Johns' Church, the end of the academic year 2022/2023 was celebrated;
- on 1 September 2023, the beginning of the new academic year was commemorated by a flag-hoisting ceremony in the Library Courtyard, the festive procession of students, staff, and alumni on Vilnius Gediminas Avenue, and continued celebration in the Grand Courtyard of Vilnius University;
- the end of the calendar year 2023 was commemorated during the celebratory meeting held at the Theatre Hall.

Members of the Senate were enhancing their competence and improving team work skills during their awayday training session.

The resolutions adopted at the Senate meetings, the documents approved by them, the meeting agendas, and other relevant information on the activities of the Senate were published on the [University's](#) website, on the new [Senate section of the Intranet](#), and in electronic newsletters distributed to the Community.

Chairperson of the Senate

Prof. Dr Eglė Lastauskienė

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