



*LIETUVOS  
SPORTO  
UNIVERSITETAS*

*LITHUANIAN SPORTS UNIVERSITY*



*STRATEGY*

*2023–2027*

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# INTRODUCTION

Lithuanian Sports University (LSU) is the only university in Lithuania that conducts research in all core areas of sports and health, delivers higher education programmes in these areas and trains high-level professionals in the fields of sport, physical education, physiotherapy and sport and leisure management. This broad profile of a specialised university allows LSU to respond to the needs of Lithuania and to organise research activities and higher education in a rational manner, to reveal and exploit the human potential in sport and health studies, research, innovation and leadership for the well-being of society. The Lithuanian sports tradition is closely linked to the Lithuanian Sports University. The graduates of the University have trained the vast majority of Olympic, World and European champions, whose achievements are the pride and joy of Lithuania. According to athletic achievements per capita ratio, Lithuania ranks among the European leaders.

## ***Essential outcomes of the implementation of Strategy 2018-2022:***

- International recognition of research done in LSU. LSU went up from 208<sup>th</sup> place in 2018 to 133<sup>rd</sup> place in 2022 in ShanghaiRanking's Global Ranking of Sport Science Schools and Departments.
- In 2022 LSU launched a unique innovative mobile sports science laboratory, which integrates the most advanced technological solutions and allows LSU researchers to use original research methodologies developed by them and conducts objective fitness tests.
- Study programmes and study quality management system were updated. Student tutoring system was introduced to reduce dropout rates. Research outputs allowed for delivering only research-based study programmes.
- High quality non-formal education services (professional development, retraining, University of the Third Age) were designed and provided in the framework of lifelong learning.
- A Dual Career Centre has been set up to support athletes in combining their career in sports with their studies, in order to acquire the necessary competences to integrate into the labour market after finishing the athletic career.
- Increased internationalisation of doctoral studies: not only more international students are enrolled in doctoral studies, but doctoral students are supervised by experienced expert researchers from foreign universities.
- Leadership of the University as an expert in sports science and public health achieved through the wide dissemination of expert insights in the media and social networks, and through various communication and marketing projects.

Lithuanian Sports University has set strategic goals for 2023-2027 and has developed the strategic plan to achieve these goals basing on the provisions of the strategic documents of the Republic of Lithuania: the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania <sup>1</sup> (to promote the development of the regions and the country by scientific and educational activities in collaboration with

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<sup>1</sup> Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (2009). *Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania* (30 April 2009, No XI-242). <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.343430>

public bodies and economic operators); Lithuania's Progress Strategy 2030<sup>2</sup> (the objective Smart Society); the National Progress Plan 2021-2030<sup>3</sup> (strategic objectives – "Transition to knowledge, high-technologies and innovation-based sustainable economic development and stronger international competitiveness of the country"; "Enhanced social welfare and inclusion, better health and more positive demographic situation in Lithuania"; "More inclusive and effective education responding to the needs of the individual and the society"; and "Stronger national and civic identity, better pervasiveness of culture and higher creativity of society"); Lithuanian research and higher education foresight 2030 "Educated Lithuania 2030"<sup>4</sup> (the role of research and higher education, studying, teaching and learning in the broadest sense, expands and becomes universal in an educated society); Law on Sport of the Republic of Lithuania<sup>5</sup> (to train specialists who will achieve a scientific degree in the field or group of fields of sport studies or the necessary qualification upon completion of the physical education teacher training programme); Programme of the 18th Government of the Republic of Lithuania for the period 2021-2027<sup>6</sup> (to create opportunities for lifelong learning at the university); the Health Strategy of Lithuania 2014-2025<sup>7</sup> (to develop the culture of healthy lifestyle) the National Public Health Development Programme 2016-2023<sup>8</sup> (to enhance physical activity and to create conditions for people to be physically active in all areas of life).

The guidelines for open access to scientific publications and data<sup>9</sup> have been prepared in accordance with the Procedure for uploading electronic documents of Lithuanian Sports University to the information system of the Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library and according to the Open Access Guidelines of Horizon Europe 2021-2024 and the Guidelines for Open Access to Scientific Publications and Research Data of the Research Council of Lithuania.

The University actively participates in the processes of creating the European Higher Education Area (hereinafter EHEA). LSU strategic directions embed EHEA provisions outlined in the following documents: The Lisbon Recognition Convention (1997)<sup>10</sup>, the Standards and guidelines of European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2015)<sup>11</sup>, the European Research Area documents the New ERA for Research and Innovation (2020)<sup>12</sup>, the European Commission's Strategic plan 2020-2024 – Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (2020)<sup>13</sup>, Horizon Europe 2021-2024 (2021),<sup>14</sup> Communication A

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<sup>2</sup> Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (2012). *On the Approval of the State Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"* (15 May 2012, No. XI-2015). <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.425517>

<sup>3</sup> Government of the Republic of Lithuania. (2020). *On the Approval of the National Progress Plan 2021-2030* (2020, 9 September, No. 998). <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/c1259440f7dd11eab72ddb4a109da1b5?jfwid=-whxwii77y>

<sup>4</sup> Research and Higher Education Monitoring and Analysis Centre. (2011). *Lithuania's Vision for the Future of Science and Studies: Science Lithuania 2030*. [https://strata.gov.lt/images/documents/analize/trumprasciai/2011/moksloji\\_lietuva\\_2030.pdf](https://strata.gov.lt/images/documents/analize/trumprasciai/2011/moksloji_lietuva_2030.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (1995). *Law on Sports of the Republic of Lithuania* (20 December 1995, No. I-1151). <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.23317/ixdxXGQqEt>

<sup>6</sup> Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (2020). *Resolution on the Eighteenth Programme of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania* (2020, 11 December, No. XIV-72). <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/973c87403bc311eb8c97e01ffe050e1c>

<sup>7</sup> Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. (2014). *Resolution on the Approval of the Lithuanian Health Programme for 2014-2025* (26 June 2014, No. XII-964). <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/35834810004f11e4b0ef967b19d90c08?jfwid=-fxdp770g>

<sup>8</sup> Government of the Republic of Lithuania. (2015). *Resolution on the Approval of the National Public Health Development Programme 2016-2023* (9 December 2015, No. 1291). <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/35c41ab0a3c411e59010bea026bdb259>

<sup>9</sup> LSU guidelines for open access to scientific publications and data. Accessed via: <https://www.lsu.lt/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/LSU-Atvirosios-prieigos-prie-mokslo-publikacij%C5%B3-ir-duomen%C5%B3-gair%C4%97s.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> The Council of Europe. (1997). *Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region* (1997, November 4, No. 165). <https://www.coe.int/en/web/higher-education-and-research/lisbon-recognition-convention>

<sup>11</sup> ENQA. (2015). *European Quality Assurance Framework and Guidelines for the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*. <https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/filebase/esg/ESG%20in%20Lithuanian.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Council of the European Union (26 November 2021). *A new pact and governance structure for the European Research Area (ERA)* [Press release]. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/lt/press/press-releases/2021/11/26/new-pact-and-governance-structure-for-the-european-research-area-era/>

<sup>13</sup> European Commission. *Department of Education, Youth, Sport and Culture*. [https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/departments-and-executive-agencies/education-youth-sport-and-culture\\_lt](https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/departments-and-executive-agencies/education-youth-sport-and-culture_lt)

<sup>14</sup> European Commission. *Horizon Europe*. [https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/horizon-europe\\_lt](https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/horizon-europe_lt)

Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth (2012)<sup>15</sup> and the Bucharest Communication (2012)<sup>16</sup>.

The Magna Charta Universitatum <sup>17</sup> , which includes the fundamental principles of academic freedom, ethics and quality of education, emphasises that the modern university is an autonomous institution. Its research and teaching must be intellectually and morally independent of all political influence and economic interests. The Charter also stresses that the autonomy of the University guarantees its community the right and the duty to take their own decisions on the future of the institution.

The University, as an important centre of sports science, a promoter of physical education and sports values and traditions, has been serving the people of Lithuania for more than eight decades. Over the next five years, the University aims to bring together European higher education institutions in strategic partnerships in the fields of sport and health research to create a strong consortium of European universities, which will contribute to enhancing the international competitiveness of the universities participating in the Consortium. The aim of this international consortium of universities is to create an integrated and structured platform for strategic collaboration, to pool human, intellectual and technological resources and to introduce more flexible and innovative curricula that allow students to obtain a higher education diploma by combining their studies in several partner universities in order to strengthen the research and development potential of the universities.

The LSU budget, drawn up and approved each year, shall reflect the necessary financial resources as set out in the actions for the implementation of the LSU Strategy Paper. The LSU Strategy Paper shall be monitored on an annual basis and revised as necessary.

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<sup>15</sup> European Commission (2012). *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A stronger partnership for progress and growth in the European Research Area* (17 July 2012, No 392). <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/LT/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52012DC0392&from=LT>

<sup>16</sup> Bucharest Communiqué. (2012, April 26-27). *Making the most of our potential: Consolidating the European higher education area* [Conference session]. [http://www.ehea.info/Upload/document/ministerial\\_declarations/Bucharest\\_Communique\\_2012\\_610673.pdf](http://www.ehea.info/Upload/document/ministerial_declarations/Bucharest_Communique_2012_610673.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Magna Carta for Universities. Available at: <https://www.magna-charta.org/magna-charta-universitatum>

## *THE MISSION, VISION AND VALUES OF THE UNIVERSITY*

### **MISSION**

*Unlocking and actuating human potential through sport and health studies, science, innovation and leadership for societal well-being.*

### **VISION**

*Recognised as a leader in sport and health studies, research and innovation in the Baltic Sea Region.*

### **VALUES**

*Curiosity, proactivity, integrity, unity.*

#### **Curiosity**

An innate vocation and a determined desire to inquire, to explore, to understand, to create, to experiment, thus enriching the sports science. It is a continuous learning and self development, a will to improve and to foster academic excellence.

#### **Proactivity**

Openness to change, initiative and the courage to lead in sports science, activities and achievements, which we realise in our professional fields, by mobilising the community and sharing knowledge and expertise.

#### **Integrity**

A holistic approach and the understanding of human potential: tolerance, coherence, sustainability, respect and service to society provided by the leading institution in sports science and studies.

#### **Unity**

Bringing together the sports community and stakeholders, fostering collaboration in University activities in Lithuania and worldwide; creating a culture of sharing, helping, accessibility and support.

## OVERVIEW OF THE SPORTS SECTOR

The European Commission recognises the potential of sport as having to improve the health well-being of Europe's people and to help tackle wider societal challenges such as racism, social exclusion and gender inequality.

In 2021, 1.4 million people were employed in the sport sector in EU countries, men being more represented than women (55% and 45%, respectively). People aged 30-64 represented 65% of sport employment and nearly a third of all (32%) working in sport were aged 15-29.

Since the start of 2020, the European sports sector faced a series of unprecedented crises: the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns restricted the availability of sports activities, and sports competitions were cancelled. The number of people employed in sport in the EU fell by 4.3% compared to 2019. In 2021, the number of people working in sport in the EU recovered to 2019 levels, while in 2022 the employment rate in the sport sector increased and shows the upward trend.

According to data from the State Data Agency<sup>18</sup>, the nominal value added created in the Lithuanian sports sector grew by 16% in 2019 and accounted for 1.03% of the country's gross value added. The largest share of value added in the sports sector was generated in education (34.7%), while the share of value added in sport and sports organisations was 17.6% (see Figure 1).

In 2019, 25 000 people were employed in the sport sector (2.1% more than in 2018), or 1.8% of the total employed population in the country (see Figure 2). The largest share of the

employed population is in education (42%) and sports and sports organisations (30%).

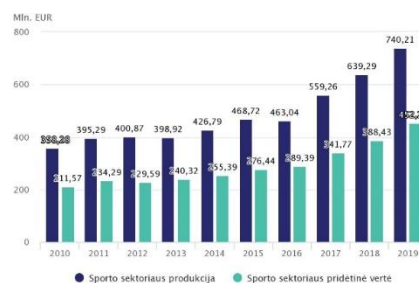


Figure 1: Output of the sports sector and added value

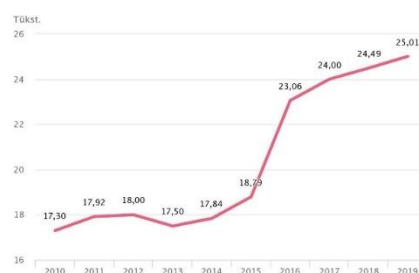


Figure 2: Employment in the sports sector

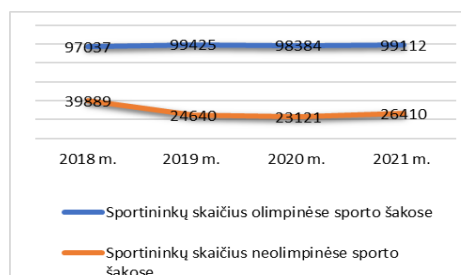


Figure 3: Number of athletes in Lithuania in 2018-2021

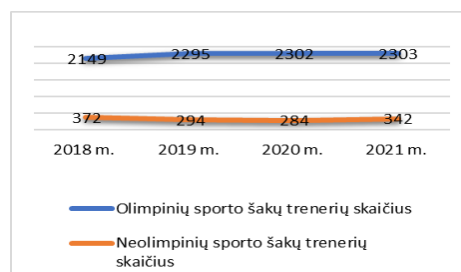


Figure 4: Number of coaches in Lithuania in 2018-2021

<sup>18</sup> Official statistics portal. (2021). *Education, Culture and Sport* (2021 edition). <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/lietuvas-svietimas-kultura-ir-sportas-2021/apie-leidini>

According to the Lithuanian Sports Centre<sup>19</sup>, the sports sector in 2021 saw an increase in athletes in Olympic and non-Olympic sports (see Figure 3). Such figures in the Lithuanian sports sector reflect the popularity of sports and public awareness of the benefits of physical activity. There was also an increase in the number of coaches both in Olympic and non-Olympic sports (see Figure 4).

Lithuanian Sports University trains and mobilises sport and health specialists, athletes, sport and health organisations, and the public interested in sport and health. We are proud to be the only higher education institution specialising in sport and health promotion. Around 80% of coaches working in Lithuanian sports schools are trained at the Lithuanian Sports University. LSU alumni are employed in all sports and health organisations, and LSU staff are members of national and international sports organisations.

We not only train future sports and health specialists, but also offer courses, workshops of continuing studies, hold conferences and forums, provide expert services, participate in Lithuanian sports policy making, create popular science programmes, and publish articles to promote sports science.

We are the home of sports and health community where leadership is fostered and knowledge is shared.

Lithuanian Sports University (LSU), the only specialised university in the country and member of European Network for Sport Science, Education and Employment (ENSSEE), the European Observatory for Sport and Employment (EOSE), the Baltic Sport Science Association (BSSS), the European Association of Sport Management (EASM), and the European College of Sport Science (ECSS), delivers six

undergraduate (bachelor), ten graduate (master) and two post-graduate (doctoral) study programmes and conducts research in all fields of sport science and related study fields. Among the academic staff there are experienced sports lecturers and researchers, who actively participate in sports research and policy making at national, European and international level.

The University is the pioneer of physiotherapy in Lithuania and for eight decades has been training the best physiotherapists equipped with professional knowledge and skills and able to apply them creatively. The distinctive feature of LSU Physiotherapy study programme is the knowledge of sports physiotherapy, which is useful when working with athletes.

The Physical Education and Sports study programme is one of the oldest at the University. The University trains modern physical education teachers and coaches who are able to use state-of-the-art methods and tools to build a positive attitude to physical activity and sport, inspire children to adopt a physically active lifestyle and take care of their health.

Until 2022, the LSU Coaching Systems Study Programme was the only study programme in Lithuania that trains world-renowned sports coaches. LSU Students enrolled in LSU Coaching Systems degree programme can choose one from the 37 specialisations offered that suits them best: a specific sport, disability sport, athlete coaching or personal trainer.

The Sports and Tourism Management study programme is an exceptional study programme with a long-standing experience, the only university study programme in the field of management and business in Lithuania, which has been training specialists in the field of sport and tourism management since 1995. The need for the Sport and Tourism Management study

<sup>19</sup> Official statistics portal. *Database of indicators*. <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/statistiniu-rodikliu-analize?hash=41eeb5dc-2140-490a-ab27-0e885ff51591#/>

programme is partly justified by the Sport Development Programme 2021-2030<sup>20</sup>, which identifies a shortage of qualified sport specialists in top level management positions. The need for competent and qualified sport management professionals is obvious. In view of the growing international sports market, which is projected to grow until 2026<sup>21</sup>, effective and smart management competences are needed to deliver good quality services. Sports and tourism managers are also important for the tourism sector, which, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation<sup>22</sup> and the World Travel and Tourism Council<sup>23</sup>, is ranked as one of the world's largest economic sectors.

As a specialised university, LSU aims to provide the labour market with highly qualified sports and health professionals who can flexibly adapt to changing conditions and participate in lifelong learning. According to the Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community<sup>24</sup> and the Study on sport qualifications acquired through sport organisations and (sport) educational institutes<sup>25</sup>, sport covers the following classes of activities:

- Coaching (the class of activities focused on the development of athlete performance);
- Management (the class of activities focused on developing and managing small and large sports organisations, events, facilities and services);
- Refereeing (the class of activities focused on overseeing sports competitions according to set rules);

- Instruction (the class of activities focused on developing non-competitive activities of athletes, training qualified professionals (bachelors, masters) working in sport, graduates of specialised sport programmes and courses in sport-related fields (recreation, leisure, fitness and outdoor activities).

The career of LSU graduates is monitored on a regular basis in order to track the employability of the graduates within 6-9 months after graduation. According to the 2018-2021 data, the average employment rate of LSU graduates within 6-9 months after graduation, was 83.5%, of which 63% were employed in their field of specialisation (see Figure 5).

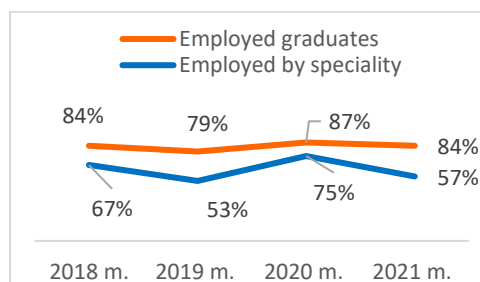


Figure 5. Graduate employability within 6-9 months after graduation in 2018-2021

The monitoring is carried out by means of a survey according to the Procedure for Collecting Graduate Student Consent for the Purpose of Career Tracking (Rector's Order No 167/S, 20 May 2011). The employability rate is calculated from the answers of the graduates who fill in the survey questionnaire.

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. (2021). *Sports Development Programme 2021-2030*.

[https://smsm.lrv.lt/uploads/smsm/documents/files/Administracine%20informacija/planavimo%20dokumentai/pletros%20programos/Sporto%20PP%20rengimas\\_%20III%20dalis\\_11-17\\_%20redag\\_maket.pdf](https://smsm.lrv.lt/uploads/smsm/documents/files/Administracine%20informacija/planavimo%20dokumentai/pletros%20programos/Sporto%20PP%20rengimas_%20III%20dalis_11-17_%20redag_maket.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Statista. (2023). *Sports industry revenue worldwide in 2021, with a forecast for 2022 and 2026*. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/370560/worldwide-sports-market-revenue/>

<sup>22</sup> UNWTO. <https://www.unwto.org/>

<sup>23</sup> World Travel & Tourism Council. <https://wtcc.org/>

<sup>24</sup> Eurostat. (2008). *NACE Rev.2: Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community*. European Communities. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3859598/5902521/KS-RA-07-015-EN.PDF>

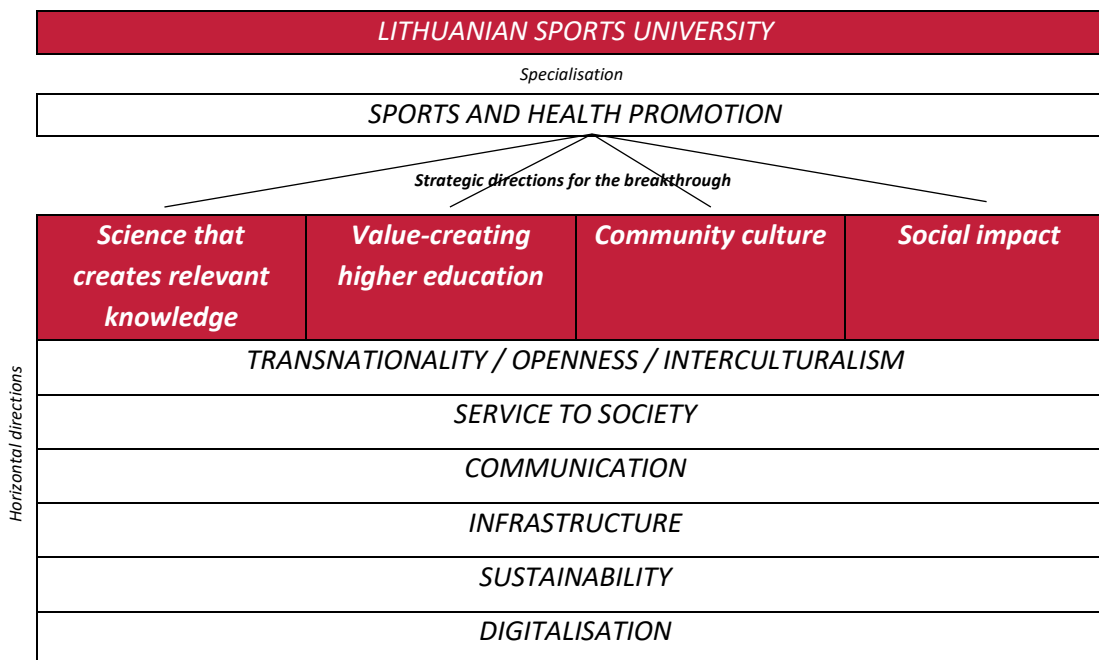
<sup>25</sup> Publications Office of the European Union (2016). *Study on sport qualifications acquired through sport organisations and (sport) educational institutes*. [https://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/50481981-9ab1-11e6-868c-01aa75ed71a1.0003.01/DOC\\_1](https://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/50481981-9ab1-11e6-868c-01aa75ed71a1.0003.01/DOC_1)

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE BREAKTHROUGH

The University's activities are closely linked to its specialisation in sports and health studies, science, innovation and leadership.

Sport and Health Promotion comprises: higher education (in the fields of sports, physical education, educology, physiotherapy, sport and leisure management, and economics), research, a practical framework that integrates advances in the natural, social, medical, and health sciences and develops new technologies, methods and solutions relevant to elite athletes and physical activity of ordinary people. As a specialised university, LSU aims to:

- prepare highly qualified sport and health professionals for the labour market with skills to adapt flexibly to changing conditions and participate in lifelong learning.
- promote sustainable progress in society through original research and innovation in sports and health promotion.
- contribute to the training of elite athletes, Olympic and Paralympic athletes, and support them in building dual careers.
- mobilise the University community to become a modern, open and identity-driven higher education institution.
- make a significant contribution to the making and implementation of Lithuanian sports and physical activity policy by educating society through physical activity and ensuring physical, mental, emotional and social well-being.



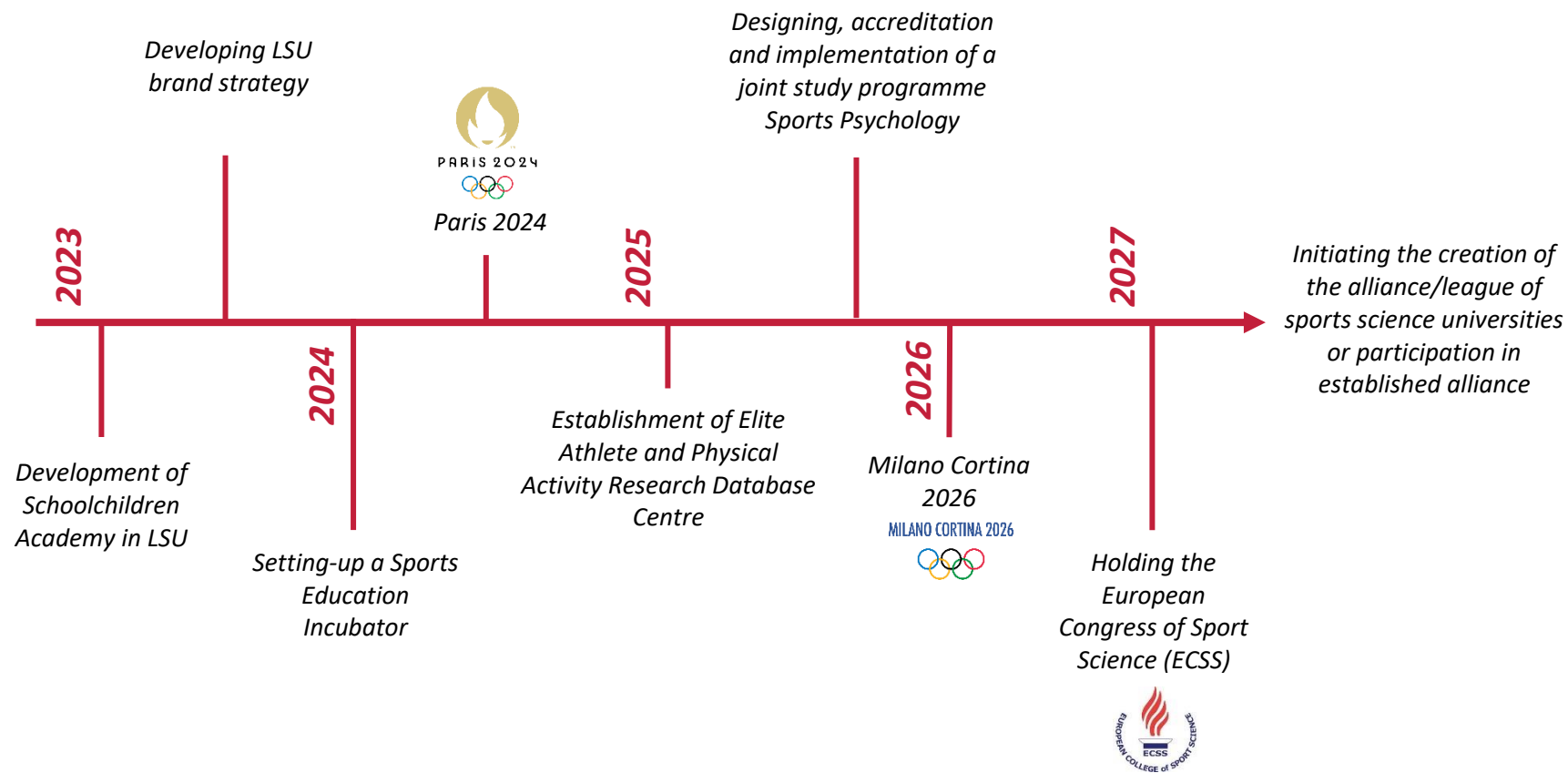
**Figure 6:** Strategic breakthrough areas and horizontal directions of LSU

## HORIZONTAL DIRECTIONS

<i>Directions</i>	<i>Relationship to strategic breakthrough areas</i>
<i>Transnationality / openness / interculturalism</i>	<p>The University appreciates the importance of openness and transnationality in higher education and research, and therefore strives to maximize the openness to different cultures by increasing the international mobility of LSU community and by actively participating in various higher education and R&amp;D projects and international organizations, inviting lecturers and researchers from other countries to participate in LSU activities. The University also undertakes to increase respect for social diversity in LSU community and to develop intercultural competence by fostering a culture of tolerance and respect for others.</p>
<i>Service to society</i>	<p>Service is understood as the University's social responsibility to act and create value for the benefit of society by meeting its expectations, and to share knowledge, experience and advice that contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- developing a knowledge-seeking and brave society (personality), encouraging change in the environment (world) around them.</li> <li>- developing the social and economic well-being of society through sport, physical activity, recreation and rehabilitation.</li> </ul>
<i>Communication</i>	<p>The University's communication strategy includes internal and external dissemination of information, strengthening visual identity, fostering community spirit and tradition by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- providing the public, politicians and all stakeholders with up-to-date recommendations (knowledge) on sport, physical activity, recreation and rehabilitation for the socio-economic development of the country.</li> <li>- enhancing the reputation of the University as a leader in sports science and education, a sustainable and open university.</li> <li>- making LSU the foremost expert (authority) on sport and fitness in the country.</li> <li>- looking for new sponsors and partners to collaborate with the University.</li> <li>- being an important member of the sports and fitness community in Kaunas and across the country.</li> <li>- fostering the University's community spirit and traditions.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensuring that the infrastructure helps to deliver high quality studies;</li> <li>- innovation, significant research and experimental development;</li> <li>- improving the quality of the surroundings and sports infrastructure to promote physical activity;</li> <li>- developing infrastructure that is well-received by the general public taking into account environmental sustainability and wider social interests, and increase public accessibility of LSU facilities;</li> <li>- continuing to improve the campus buildings in line with the European Green Deal and energy saving.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p>Sustainable development is a qualitatively new concept of economic growth, a development that is both rapid and socially and environmentally sustainable (responsible). Sustainable development encompasses three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. Economic development must reconcile the protection of social and environmental balance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- integrating the topics of sustainable development, carbon neutrality and resilience to climate change into the curriculum and other educational experiences of students.</li> <li>- initiating and conducting research related to sustainable development, climate change and climate governance in line with the University’s strategic research agenda.</li> <li>- taking into account the University’s commitment to sustainable development and climate change when organising activities.</li> <li>- planning and implementing activities that contribute to the building of civil and mature society aware of sustainable development and climate change.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Digitalisation</b></p>	<p>Generally speaking, digitalisation is a means of recording processes and results in real time using a wide range of hardware and software. In the University digitalisation aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improve access to learning, the quality of curricula and its content, and to ensure that students have the skills, abilities and confidence to use digital technologies while studying at the University, and that the digital skills they acquire after graduation can be used in the labour market.</li> <li>- integrate digital technologies into research.</li> <li>- improve the efficiency and quality of the University’s processes through the use of digital technologies.</li> <li>- use digital technologies for change-making and addressing a wide range of societal challenges in sports and health.</li> </ul>

## LSU ROADAMP TO 2027.



## Science that creates relevant knowledge

**THE AIM** is to create and deliver relevant knowledge that meets the needs of students, general public, business, and the public sector and that unlocks human potential through sport.

The knowledge and research provided by the University contributes directly to the well-being of the society by unlocking human potential through sport. The science of the Lithuanian Sports University is recognised worldwide. LSU, together with other sport science higher education institutions and departments in the world, was ranked in the Shanghai Ranking's Global Ranking of Sport Science Schools and Departments. In 2022 LSU was in the 133rd place. The University community seeks leadership in sports science through the development of research, experimental development and innovation (R&D&I) activities responding to the society's sustainable development needs. Sports research of relevance to society is conducted using the LSU innovative mobile research laboratory. In order to achieve a greater breakthrough in R&D&I activities and the valorisation of research results, there are plans to establish the centre of elite athlete and physical activity research database.

We have the capacity to be among the world's top 100 sports science universities and departments in the next five years. By upholding and adhering to internationally recognised standards of research, we can achieve a score of at least 4-5 in the Comparative expert assessment of R&D activities.

### To achieve this goal, we will:

- Improve the quality of research and results in the sport, natural, social, medical and health sciences in collaboration with the top universities in the world.
- Focus research on education and the needs of society, business and the public sector in order to achieve sustainable development of the University, social partners and the Lithuanian community.
- Focus on research, experimental development and innovation (R&D&I), to create social and economic benefits for the University, Lithuania and the international community.

### Indicators

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Number of WoS and Scopus (social sciences) publications per researcher (staff with a PhD)	1	1	1	1	1
Publications in journals indexed in Scopus (social sciences) and WoS Q1 quartile, %*			29 %	31 %	33 %
Scientific publications with foreign partners	50 %	50 %	50 %	50 %	50 %
Increase in R&D activity income, % (compared to the previous calendar year)			5 %	5 %	5 %

\*An updated indicator is applied from 2025

## *Value-creating higher education*

**THE AIM** is to deliver sports research-based study programmes that will provide higher university education complying with the current international level of knowledge and technologies following the principles of lifelong learning; to develop a fully educated, civic-minded, socially responsible, creative and entrepreneurial personality.

In recent years, various processes have taken place as a result of human activity, resulting in climate change, biodiversity loss, migration, epidemic, global conflicts and economic hardships. This is also a challenge for higher education. Developing an integral, physically active and health-conscious personality capable of acting in a balanced and sustainable manner is an important challenge for curriculum design. That means that studies must be oriented towards the future and lifelong learning processes in order to meet the needs of students who will have to live through the periods of crisis, surprise and uncertainty, and to take into account their ability to cope with difficulties.

Personal knowledge management is crucial, referring to the individual's understanding and ability to manage his or her career and life in an ever-changing environment. It is important that the individual is not only able to cope with an overload of information, but also to keep up-to-date and to apply it to his or her activities while facing life and market challenges. Therefore, one of the main challenges for higher education is to ensure the personalisation of teaching and learning processes (including the use of artificial intelligence), interdisciplinarity, innovation of methods, and a new level of digitalisation.

In recent years, the number of students has started to decline and competition between Lithuanian universities has increased. The reputation and specificity of universities have become success factors. Lithuanian Sports University is a specialised professional university where students have the opportunity to build their own experience by searching for career-oriented learning content, participating in relevant sport research and partnership-based placements. The number of physically active people in Lithuania is projected to increase, but the population is ageing and there will be a need for a change in competences due to the changes taking place in society (to achieve a safer social environment, to reduce inequalities in physical activity, to reduce social exclusion, and to develop a culture of healthy lifestyles).

Priority activities in the field of education: development of curriculum, proper organisation of the study process, development of high-quality distance learning programmes and modules.

To achieve this goal, we will:

- Strengthen specialised studies.
- Improve the quality of study programmes and keep them up-to-date; improve the administration of studies and modernise the learning environment.
- Ensure the internationalisation and visibility of studies.
- Attract motivated Lithuanian and foreign students to specialised studies.
- Respond to the needs of modern society and the LSU community, continuously improve knowledge and develop an attractive system of lifelong learning services, taking into account the needs of career change.
- Provide conditions for students to plan their careers in the sport and health sector.

## Indicators

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Student performance	70 %	72 %	74 %	76 %	80 %
Successful career of graduates (employability within 6-9 months after graduation)	60 %	62 %	65 %	70 %	75 %
Student satisfaction with their studies	80 %	80 %	85 %	90 %	95 %
Intrinsic motivation of lecturers	70 %	70 %	75 %	75 %	80 %
International study projects	10	12	12	15	15
Innovation-based on initiatives of student	1	2	2	2	2
International joint (consortium) study programmes	2	3	3	3	4
Visiting lecturers and researchers from the EU countries	2	4	6	6	8
Number of first-year international students enrolled (full-time)	110	110	150	170	200
Number of first-year students enrolled (excluding international students)	350	370	390	420	450
Number of lecturers and researchers included in the governing bodies of international organisations or representing a country	5	6	6	6	7
Number of refresher courses offered (international/national)	1 / 5	2 / 6	2 / 6	2 / 6	2 / 6

## Community culture

**THE AIM** is to bring together the University community that values collaboration and openness, and to promote the University's values nationally and internationally.

The LSU community is made up of students, staff, alumni and their families. As individuals, we have a wide range of creative talents and intellectual abilities; we are valued as a community where people with an interest in sports interact and collaborate to address key public health challenges. LSU is much more than just a university: it is a place that fosters the integration of deep scientific expertise with innovation, sports and human creativity. The creation of a proactive structure to support the University's education and research missions is an important step towards the continued success of LSU as a community of learning, sports and discovery. Attracting and retaining outstanding diverse talent remains a key challenge for LSU, as it remains a main area of interest for students, athletes and staff.

### To achieve this goal, we will:

- Create a diverse, inclusive community and environment, where LSU employees, athletes, students and alumni develop an exceptional ability to work, play, learn and live in a variety of environments.
- Improve the daily life of LSU employees, focusing on management and leadership training, mentoring, greater involvement in decision-making, collaboration, career opportunities and merit-based incentives.
- Attract and retain talented staff, high performing athletes, fostering a culture of support for professional and personal development.
- Create and develop the environment that prioritises physical and mental health and well-being, finding ways to reduce unnecessary stress in the academic environment and promoting a good work-life balance.
- Ensure that staff, athletes and students are involved in the life of the University, being proud of the unique LSU community and honoured for their role in its overall success.

## Indicators

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Community involvement, % of total staff members	53 %	57 %	60 %	63 %	67 %
New recruits as % of total staff members	3 %	4 %	5 %	6 %	7 %
Perception and realisation of LSU values, % of total staff members	50 %	55 %	60 %	65 %	70 %
Effectiveness of internal communication, % of total staff members satisfied with internal communication	40 %	45 %	50 %	55 %	60 %

## Social impact

The aim is to create, disseminate, use and apply of the University's scientific knowledge and potential in a non-academic environment to improve the economic and social efficiency of the society at the national, regional and local levels.

The University shall carry out its functions taking into account the needs of society and the market, and relate its activities to the social and economic context. The University's social impact (in response to socio-economic changes) is understood as all actions that relate to the University's creation of scientific knowledge in sports and health promotion, the targeted practical application, commercialisation and dissemination of academic knowledge in non-academic settings addressing people's social problems in relation to health promotion; shaping the values of a healthy, free, happy and active human life through education, sport, physical activity, recreation and health promotion, and the pursuit of top performance in sports. This means that the University actively and consciously takes responsibility for improving the quality of life of people in the society for which it works. The University intends to track its progress (in innovation, partnerships, reputation, environmental, social, cultural and economic areas) in the University Reputation Ranking and the UI GreenMetric World University Ranking. Universities are awarded for their efforts to reduce the University's ecological footprint in their day-to-day activities and in the sustainability of their studies and research.

### **The implementation of the strategic value Social Impact is based on the following priorities:**

- Shaping public opinion and proactive engagement with society.
- Lifelong learning possibilities for different target groups (age, education, qualifications, ethnic groups, etc.), responding to their needs.
- Expertise and collaboration.
- Transfer of technology and innovation in partnership with public and private companies and other organisations.

## Indicators

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Participation in expert activities (committees, commissions, councils, working groups) preparing national and municipal documents (number of activities / representatives)*			5 / 3	5 / 3	6 / 4
Participation in expert activities (committees, commissions, councils, working groups) preparing international documents (number of activities / representatives)*			6 / 4	7 / 5	10 / 8
Number of media reports with LSU experts	22	25	28	35	40
Number of social partner agreements in force	220	225	225	230	230
Number of public presentations introducing new non-formal education programmes	2	3	4	5	6
Number of events open to the public (lectures, seminars, sports events, initiatives, etc.)	45	45	45	45	45
Number of LSU student volunteers	190	200	200	200	200
Number of commissioned recommendations for target groups (number of activities/people)	25 / 20	25 / 20	25 / 20	25 / 20	25 / 20
Number of participants at the University of Third Age	120	120	120	120	120

\*An updated indicator is applied from 2025

