

EUROPEAN RTD EVALUATION NETWORK

Update on Recent National Developments in Research Evaluation November 2018

Lithuania

Changes in the evaluation of research and development activities

Since 2009, the Research Council of Lithuania (LMT) organised evaluation of research activities carried out in tertiary and research institutions. The procedure of LMT evaluation process until 2018 was dual: the formal (quantitative) assessment and an expert (qualitative) assessment. The assessment included qualitative and quantitative evaluation of scientific (artistic) publications, funds obtained through participation in projects of international research programmes, funds received in pursuit of orders from economic entities. In the qualitative assessment of publications 5 grade evaluation system was used and the main criteria were originality and significance of the scientific output. In the formal evaluation, publications were categorized and for each publication a certain amount of points was given that depended on the category and publication scope (in author's quires) or unit. The evaluation was carried by national experts.

In 2017 new external R&D assessment regulations were introduced and in 2018 the new R&D activity evaluation system has been started. The formal evaluation (quantitative evaluation of scientific publications and R&D projects) of LMT remained with some changes from previous assessments and will be continued annually (Annual Evaluation - AE).

In addition to the formal evaluation, Comparative Expert Assessment (CEA) of R&D activities has been conducted and organised by MOSTA. In the CEA foreign experts were invited to assess R&D activities in Lithuanian Higher Education and research institutions. This dual system will be used for budget allocation for R&D activities: 40 percent of allocation depends on AE and 60 percent depends on CEA. CEA will be conducted every five years. The funding under this evaluation model will be allocated to research and education institutions from 2019.

The regulation of CEA methodology, approved by the Minister of Education and Science, has been developed considering a pilot Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) organised in 2014–2015. The aim of CEA is to evaluate all participating Units of Assessment (UoA) using three criteria: research quality, economic and social impact and development potential. The Higher education institutions or State research institutes and their constituent faculties/departments/research groups were evaluated. The institutions, involved in the assessment process, formed their Units of Assessment (UoA) engaged in one area of research (agricultural sciences, humanities, biomedical sciences, physical sciences, social sciences or technological sciences). One Institution could have more than one UoA. The quality of R&D activities was evaluated in one of two levels – either in a research area (broad field) or a research field (narrow field) depending on the size of the research field considering researcher's FTE and the study

fields in which the UoA operates or holds a PhD right. Economic and social impact as well as development potential were evaluated only in research area.

Six expert panels (61 experts from 26 countries) were appointed to perform the assessment. Expert's panels were asked to assess 118 UoAs in 31 institutions. The evaluation by the Panels was based on the materials prepared by the UoAs for the years 2013-2017 and other official sources as well as site visits and meetings with the representatives of the UoA. Experts visited Lithuania from September 10th to October 5th, 2018 and during this period they made site visits to all UoAs. All provided materials by UoA were read in detail and preliminary assessed by at least three Panel members and then discussed by the whole Panel on at least two occasions, namely, before and after the Panel visits to the Units. During the visits at least 3 experts from the panel visited the UoA (at least one, who have preliminary assessed the UoA's and at least one, who have not preliminary assessed the UoA). Each UoA was given a score for quality, socio-economic impact and development potential on a five-point scale, namely, ranging from excellent [5] to poor [1] or no R&D [0]. The evaluation period was 2013–2017.

The results of the CEA will be announced on November 2018. Currently Experts are finishing their final reports, where argumentation about the given scores and recommendations will be presented.

Monitoring and evaluation of Smart Specialization

From 2017 MOSTA together with Ministry of Economy produces a monitoring report every year. In 2018 an interim evaluation has been started. Around 30 entrepreneurial discovery meetings of expert groups were held in order to evaluate the development of the Smart Specialisation strategy (hereinafter – S3). Combined with the analytical background it will provide crucial insights for the improvement of the strategy. The expert group assessed the progress of the state aid strategy for innovation in the context of the Smart Specialization priorities. The Smart Specialization priorities potential in area of science and business was assessed regarding several aspects: international publishing, patenting, implementation capabilities of international projects, availability of infrastructure and highly skilled human resources, the ability to create spinoff and start-up companies, the state of the capabilities of enterprises to create the technologies foreseen in the Smart Specialization programme, the ability to attract investment in R&D.

Suggestions for the state research institutes' quality assurance

The working group of different representatives of Lithuanian research institutions, governmental bodies, Research Council, Academy of Sciences and etc., analysed the situation of 13 state research institutes and 9 non-state research institutes and proposed suggestions for the quality assurance of the mentioned institutions. The group analysed legal regulation of the activities of research institutes, the development of these institutions, research outputs of recent years, reports of expert evaluations of the institutes; the experiences of other countries regarding the activities of similar research institutions. The group analysed whether the activities of the research institutes meets the scientific criteria; whether the potential and competences are sufficient to achieve the set goals; whether the activities are important to the state and are not duplicated in other research institutions (for example Higher education institutions); whether the research institute operates effectively in regard to the R&D activities it supposed to implement; are there a sufficient amount of outsourced orders. Taken into account the results of each research institute, the suggestions about further development of the institutes were made (whether to leave the same status, to integrate the particular institute(s) to other

institutions or to merge institutes into one research institute, etc.). In addition to that, the group formulated some suggestions regarding the legal regulations and funding schemes of the research institutes. The suggestions are under consideration now and needs further discussions with the research community.

New regulation on the Technology and Innovation

In 2018 the Parliament agreed on the new Technology and Innovation Law, where the structure of technology and innovation system, policy making and implementing institutions, subjects implementing technological and innovative activities and funding for such activities were defined. The law will come into force on 1st of January 2019. Until the new regulation, experimental development in the technological area was regulated via the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania, which doesn't specifically regulate technological activities, but focuses more on research and higher education. According to the new Law, the Ministry of Economy will be solely responsible for designing state policies in the field of technology and innovation. The "Innovation Agency" will be set up (merging other agencies) to implement technology and innovation policies in Lithuania.

In the new Technology and Innovation Law it is foreseen, that evaluations in the field of experimental development will be carried out according to the methodology approved by the Government or the Minister of the Economy. Institution, authorised by the Government, will organise the evaluation of the subjects seeking to get funding for their experimental development activities (if the activities assessed relates to the research and experimental development, then the institution, organising the assessment, should collaborate with the Research Council of Lithuania, which is also responsible of R&D and doctoral studies evaluations).

The Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Education and Science are entrusted to develop a long-term strategy for the development of research, technology and innovation, which, upon the Government's proposal, would be approved by the Parliament.

