



# Implementing the Principles of Social Responsibility in Higher Education Institutions

**Andrius Guoba\*, Prof. Dr. Birute Zygaite, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Inga Kepaliene**

Vilnius Kolegija, Higher Education Institution, Lithuania

## Abstract

To identify the principles of social responsibility implemented in higher education institutions, a literature and document analysis as well as qualitative research was carried out at the Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies of Vilnius Kolegija / Higher Education Institution (VIKO ACTF). The article analyses the implementation of the principles of social responsibility in higher education institutions from the point of view of teaching staff. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted interviewing 12 lecturers: two lecturers from each of the six study programmes of the VIKO ACTF with at least 5 years of experience working in an organisation, holding a university degree, who were involved in socially responsible activities. The qualitative data processing and analysis process was used and included: transcription, coding, distinguishing key categories and sub-categories, and presenting summary results. The summary of the views of the teachers who participated in the in-depth semi-structured interviews revealed that the principles of social responsibility are being implemented at VIKO ACTF. Teachers identified such priority principles of social responsibility as ethical behaviour, transparency, the importance of stakeholders' interests, the elimination of social inequalities, and the protection of the environment, which they integrate voluntarily in their work. The implementation of social responsibility principles has led to positive changes in terms of reducing negative environmental impacts, increasing accessibility of activities remotely, cooperation with partners and social exclusion groups. All the teachers who participated in the study answered unequivocally that the principles of social responsibility contribute significantly to the effective operation of higher education institutions (HEIs) and promote trust in the organisation.

**Keywords:** social responsibility, principles of social responsibility, higher education

## 1. Introduction

Socially responsible companies and organisations are becoming increasingly more appealing to consumers, employees or investors compared to other companies offering the same services

(Allui & Pinto, 2022; Nave & Ferreira, 2019). Research by Šimanskienė and Paužuolienė (2010) shows that integrating social responsibility principles into organisation's activities and creating an organisational culture can help strengthen the organisation's relationship with its employees, increase employee loyalty and foster a desire to perform well. Moreover, the introduction and embedding of social responsibility principles in organisations not only provides a range of benefits, but also ensures growth in financial performance and profitability in the long term (Pivato et al., 2008).

Corporate social responsibility is most often emphasised in business, but it is equally important in public sector organisations. Ali et al. (2021) point out that a key difference between corporate social responsibility and HEI's social responsibility is that HEI's social responsibility is just another commonly accepted interpretation of the phenomenon of corporate social responsibility. According to Ali et al. (2021), the concept of corporate social responsibility of HEIs, compared to other categories of organisations, places more emphasis on ethical and moral aspects of the HEI's service to society – study, research and development. Moreover, socially responsible activities of both businesses and HEIs need to be carried out voluntarily and in a way that aligns interests of stakeholders (Carrillo-Duran et al., 2023).

Research by Latif et al. (2022) found a positive and significant impact of universities' social responsibility on their performance, i.e. universities can improve their performance through socially responsible activities. In addition to improving the quality of services provided by universities, corporate social responsibility can also improve university reputation, student satisfaction and trust in the organisation (Latif et al., 2022). Aledo-Ruiz et al. (2021) also found that good practices of social responsibility in HEIs promote positive emotional well-being among students, with a significant impact on their attitudes and behaviours.

There are many definitions of corporate social responsibility, but the most common one relates corporate social responsibility to the three main areas of performance – economic, social and environmental – and to balancing the results of these areas. Tunčikienė and Juknelytė-Osauskienė (2018) define organisational social responsibility as the appropriate and desirable ethical behaviour of business entities in modern society. Scientific literature distinguishes such elements of social responsibility as philanthropic responsibility of the organisation, which aims to improve the quality of life of the community; ethical responsibility, where the aim is to do only what is right and does not cause harm to others; legal responsibility, where the principles of law and laws are followed; environmental responsibility, where the business aims to achieve a balance in the use of natural resources in its activities; and economic responsibility, which indicates that business profit must be earned honestly (Caroll, 2016; Tunčikienė and Juknelytė-Osauskienė, 2018).

The unique role of higher education institutions can be extinguished, as they are the ones which, while engaging in research and training specialists for future generations, must also produce socially responsible citizens for the country. In this respect, organisational social responsibility is an important instrument for the development of society, embracing the achievements of the past and the present and shaping expectations for the future (Čiburienė, 2020). Organisational social responsibility is thus a dynamic phenomenon, directly linked to societal expectations, prevailing attitudes and their change.

The European Commission (2019) points out that companies can become socially responsible if they integrate social, environmental, ethical, consumer and human rights issues into their business strategy and operations, with the aim of reducing or eliminating potential negative impacts on society. The implementation of corporate and organisational social responsibility is closely linked to the introduction of various internationally recognised social responsibility principles, standards or guidelines in companies or organisations to ensure employees' rights,

ethical service delivery and environmentally friendly products. Organisations voluntarily undertake initiatives to improve the well-being of their employees, local communities and society as a whole.

Carrillo-Duran et al. (2023) highlight not only the importance of socially responsible activities in HEIs, but also the need to communicate these activities and to disseminate ideas of social responsibility and sustainability to the public.

Attempts to universalise the approach to corporate social responsibility have led to the development of international recommendations contained in the ISO 26000 standard. This standard developed a set of “best practices” in the area of corporate social responsibility, regardless of the focus or orientation of the organisation (Valmohammadi, 2014). According to ISO 26000, organisational social responsibility is defined as the responsibility of an organisation for the impact of its decisions and activities on society and the environment. ISO 26000 provides guidance in the areas of organisational governance, human rights, labour practices, environment, fair practices, consumer issues, community engagement and development. The standard also provides guidance on principles for social responsibility, recognition of social responsibility, stakeholder engagement, key areas of social responsibility, challenges and ways to integrate socially responsible behaviour throughout the organisation. ISO 26000 is based on seven principles of social responsibility: accountability to the community at large, transparency, ethical behaviour, respect for stakeholder interests, respect for the rule of law, respect for international standards of conduct and respect for human rights (Figure 1). Organisations that implement the management practices recommended by this standard are formally recognised as socially responsible.

Figure 1. ISO 26000 social responsibility principles



Source: compiled according to International Organization for Standardization (2018)

In her analysis of the integration of social responsibility principles into quality leadership practice, Duckworth (2015) highlights the focus of managers on a long-term and consistent commitment to social responsibility principles. According to Duckworth (2015), an organisation must pay particular attention to communicating and engaging with its stakeholders, i.e. employees, customers, the local community, etc., in order to be guided by social responsibility principles. In their study of students’ attitudes towards social responsibility principles, Saari et al. (2024) emphasise the integration of social responsibility principles into the content of higher education studies, with the aim of developing socially

responsible specialists who are able to address environmental, social and ethical challenges in their future careers.

One of the most well-known and widely developed activities to promote social responsibility at global level is the United Nations' initiative "The Global Compact", which was first launched in 1999 by then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the World Economic Forum. It is the largest voluntary social responsibility initiative of companies and corporations encouraging them to act responsibly. The initiative has two main objectives: to help companies embed the principles of the Global Compact into their corporate or organisational strategy, and to promote cooperation and partnerships across sectors, within and outside the country, in order to achieve the universal goals of global development. "The Global Compact" is based on the principles of human rights, labour and the environment, as enshrined in such international instruments as the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), the *International Labour Organisation's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* (1998), the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* (1992), and the *United Nations Convention against Corruption* (2003). The UN Global Compact is based on public accountability and transparency, and bases its approach to responsible corporate governance on ten guiding principles that cover four areas: human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption (Figure 2). In 2024, 24319 companies and organisations from more than 160 countries participate in the Global Compact.

Figure 2. UN Global Compact areas and principles



Source: UN Global Compact

Social responsibility principles are often adopted or integrated by both companies and higher education institutions from a range of internationally recognised policies, guidelines or standards, and can often be developed by the organisation itself, taking into account the nature of its activities and the specific responsibilities that need to be fulfilled in order to properly implement social responsibility principles. It should be noted that the application of the principles established by international standards must take into account the organisation's environment and be integrated accordingly.

## **1.1 Methodology**

In order to identify the principles of social responsibility implemented in higher education institutions, a literature and documents analysis as well as a qualitative study was conducted at the Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies of Vilniaus Kolegija / Higher Education Institution (VIKO ACTF). The aim of the study was to investigate the implementation of the principles of social responsibility in a higher education institution from the point of view of teaching staff.

Following a theoretical analysis of the principles of social responsibility, an in-depth semi-structured interview was conducted. To find out the views of teachers from different study programmes, two VIKO ACTF teachers from the study programmes of Cultural Activity Management, Dance Pedagogy, Fashion Design, Fashion Technology and Business, Musical Theatre and Popular Music participated in the interviews. The respondents were selected on the basis of the following criteria: has at least 5 years of work experience in the organisation, is involved in socially responsible activities, and has a higher university education. 12 teachers took part in the study, including 8 women and 4 men. 5 of them had more than 15 years of work experience, 4 had been working in the institution for 10 to 15 years and 3 – for 5-6 years.

The study was conducted during the period from December 2023 till February 2024. The ethics of the study were ensured when organising the study: permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Dean of the VIKO ACTF, the participants agreed to take part in the study free of charge and voluntarily, also ensuring the privacy of the participants. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the participants, their names were coded D1-12.

Interviews were recorded on a dictaphone and later transcribed into a word document. The qualitative data processing and analysis process was used and included: transcription, coding, distinguishing key categories and sub-categories, and presenting summary results.

## **2. Results and Discussion**

### **2.1. Principles of Social Responsibility in documents of Vilniaus Kolegija / Higher Education Institution**

Social responsibility is emphasised in the documents of Vilniaus Kolegija / Higher Education Institution: the Strategy of Vilniaus Kolegija / Higher Education Institution 2021-2025 (Vilnius College Strategy 2021-2025, n.d.) and its Social Responsibility Reports.

The Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy of Vilniaus Kolegija / Higher Education Institution (2021-2025) sets a strategic goal – to provide professional higher education studies and lifelong learning that meet the needs of the Lithuanian and international labour market. To achieve this goal, the task is to develop and improve competitive, social responsibility-oriented vocational higher education study programmes, improving the currently available study programmes in accordance with the needs of the society or the labour market.

Pursuant to the Law on Research and Education, the social responsibility of Vilniaus Kolegija / Higher Education Institution is associated with sustainable development of the region by cooperating with the local community, business and government groups and by developing individual and community abilities to think and act independently and creatively (Law on Research and Education of the Republic of Lithuania, 2016).

The Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Programme of Vilniaus Kolegija/ Higher Education Institution (2022-2025) emphasises the principles of social responsibility and sustainable development, including the sense of community, initiative and leadership, equal opportunities, environmental responsibility, citizenship, volunteering, transparency and

accountability. Integration of these principles aims to collaborate, create and develop joint projects with social partners, and develop new initiatives in line with personal and community value priorities. Ensure that all individuals enjoy non-discriminatory working conditions and promoting social inclusion. Prioritise the needs of society and play an active role in building the well-being of the state and the community. Contribute to the solution of societal needs through unpaid personal effort. Carry out activities honestly, openly and informatively and provide information to all stakeholder. Improve the quality of the environment and take responsible environmental decisions (Vilniaus Kolegija / Higher Education Institution, 2022).

In 2018, Vilniaus Kolegija / Higher Education Institution became a member of the United Nations Global Compact network and committed to creating and promoting the well-being of society based on the principles of social responsibility and sustainable development, and to publicly reporting on its social responsibility activities every year, providing in the reports information on the social and environmental activities carried out, presenting the results achieved and informing stakeholders.

The Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development 2022 Report (Vilniaus Kolegija / Higher Education Institution, 2022) emphasises social responsibility by focusing on good working conditions and labour relations, compliance with the law, and ethical and sustainable relationships. The social responsibility of HEIs is linked to quality and market-responsive education, additional benefits for students in the form of strengthening relevant competences and building relationships based on mutual respect. The importance of ethical and socially responsible governance, transparent decision-making and cooperation with the local community are emphasised in order to make higher education institutions more socially responsible.

## 2.2. Principles of social responsibility from the point of view of teachers

In order to find out the internal situation of the implementation of social responsibility principles at the Faculty of Arts and Creative Technologies of Vilniaus Kolegija/ Higher Education (VIKO ACTF), i.e. to identify the principles being implemented and to distinguish the priority principles, we asked teachers how they perceive social responsibility and which social responsibility principles they consider to be the priority. The respondents' answers are categorised and presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Priority principles of social responsibility in HEIs (from the point of view of teachers)

Category	Subcategories	Supporting statements
Priority principles for social responsibility	Ethical behaviour	<...appropriate working conditions...> D3; <...harmonious working relationships...> D7; <...community-oriented culture...> D12; <...Respect for employees without categorizing them by status...> D4; <...compliance with the law, ethical conduct in collaboration, research, study and administration...> D5; <... personal responsibility, respect for relationships...> D6; <... Principles of academic conduct: integrity, fairness...> D8; <... peer relationships, fair treatment of students...> D6; <... Code of Academic Ethics, which defines ethical norms at VIKO...> D1; <...open-mindedness, the possibility to choose activities in which you are strong, constructive criticism, ethical academic cooperation...> D2; <...respectful relations with colleagues, with students...>D10, <...improvement of psychological climate...> D11
	Transparency	<...annual activity reports and social responsibility reports are prepared and published on the institution's website...> D4,12; <...annual activity reports are published...> D1; <...a systematic review of the activities and results of teachers is carried out, and a faculty self-assessment is presented...> D3; <...documentation on financial processes is made available on the webpage...> D10; <...it is important to consult the staff when making

Category	Subcategories	Supporting statements
		<i>decisions, to publish public competitions for positions...&gt; D6; &lt;...transparency creates conditions for development...&gt; D8; &lt;...when you take part in problem solving, when you are exposed to information, you feel part of the community, which is the most important thing - unconcealed, truthful information...&gt; D5; &lt;...publicly available information...&gt; D11</i>
	Stakeholder interests	<i>&lt;...caring for students: ensuring quality studies, is the main task...&gt; D8; &lt;...annual events, outings (team buildings) organised to unite the faculty and the whole institution...&gt;D5; &lt;...the team gets together in the opening and closing of the academic year, New Year's Eve celebrations...&gt;D6; &lt;...The community works together to create joint projects between teachers and students, concert programmes for city festivals and national holidays...&gt; D1; &lt;...ongoing cooperation with local organisations and communities ensures socially responsible activities: projects are implemented together with partners, students gain practical experience, employers share their insights into the need for future professionals...&gt; D11; &lt;... Students, teachers and social partners are consulted in the decision-making process, and their views are essential for improving study programmes and responding to labour market needs...&gt; D3; &lt;...The well-being of the community is important: conditions for professional development (training), meaningful leisure time, the faculty has areas for relaxation, sports, cultural events, concerts, partners provide free access to arts and science events...&gt; D9; &lt;...the interests of all stakeholders are important...&gt; D4</i>
	Tackling social inequalities	<i>&lt;...all interested persons are welcome to study...&gt; D6; &lt;...the faculty implements projects and social actions to integrate socially excluded persons into society, as well as cooperates with day centres for the disabled, non-formal education institutions, which aim to integrate persons from various vulnerable social groups...&gt; D11; &lt;...D4; &lt;...we hold charity events...&gt; D8; &lt;...workers' rights, health protection, solidarity in the community, enabling employees with special needs to work...&gt; D9; &lt;...it is important to enable the inclusion of all in the organisation's activities, to reduce social exclusion...&gt; D7.</i>
	Environmental protection	<i>&lt;... waste must be separated not only at home but also at work, more containers are needed for paper...&gt;, &lt;...it is important to separate and recycle waste...&gt; D1; &lt;...it is important to buy environmentally friendly products, it is important to be resource efficient, to save electricity, water...&gt; D4; &lt;...green procurement...&gt; D6; &lt;...reducing waste is a priority, where possible working with students to develop projects using recycled materials...&gt; D9; &lt;...projects are carried out combining several items, looking at how to reuse things, designing new clothing patterns and implementing them...&gt; D12.</i>

When analysing social responsibility at the HEI, the majority of the teachers interviewed identified three priority principles: ethical behaviour (12 respondents), transparency (9 respondents), and the importance of stakeholder interests (8 respondents).

All the teachers who took part in the study mentioned the importance of ethical behaviour in a socially responsible HEI. The analysis of the answers of the teachers revealed that they emphasize proper working conditions, working relations, compliance with applicable laws, ethical and respectful mutual relations, improvement of the psychological climate, and ethical behaviour with colleagues and students. In encouraging students to pursue knowledge and providing equal opportunities, teachers must demand total integrity from themselves and from students, foster a culture of trust, which encourages free exchange of ideas and enables all to exploit their potential. One of the respondents (D5) said that *"the job of a teacher requires personal responsibility, a high level of morality and a value system that helps to make decisions, to treat students fairly and to build harmonious relationships with colleagues"*. The teacher (D10) with many years of experience said that *"it is very important to rely on mutual*

*respect and ethical attitudes in a higher education institution when dealing with people of different beliefs, different views, ethical and moral attitudes".*

The principle of transparency was identified by the majority of the respondents as being of paramount importance, as it encourages higher education institutions to improve, to be socially responsible in their decision-making, and to ensure transparent and fair operations. According to the respondents, the public provision of relevant information, the involvement of staff and students in decision-making and problem-solving, and the publication of annual activity reports provide conditions for improvement, for moving in the right direction, and for responding to the needs of the community. According to the respondent D8, *"honest work, implemented activities and open, informative presentation of information to all stakeholders ensures consistent movement forward"*.

Two thirds of the teachers surveyed mentioned the importance of stakeholder interests as a priority for a socially responsible organisation. The interests of internal stakeholders, namely, students, teaching and administrative staff, are particularly important. All the respondents mentioned that the main activity of higher education institutions is to provide quality education to students, also concluding that social responsibility is usually linked to quality and market-oriented studies as well as additional benefits for students. Higher education institutions build mutually beneficial relationships with external stakeholders such as the local community, social partners, alumni, employers and actively cooperate through partnerships and projects.

Half of the respondents (6) mentioned the elimination of social inequalities as a very important principle of social responsibility in HEIs. According to the respondent D6, *"all applicants have equal opportunities in the choice of study programmes regardless of their place of residence, age, gender, ethnicity, or financial capacity. The environment has been adapted to the needs of students with disabilities, also providing them with a possibility to have individual knowledge checks"*. *Students from low-income families or those who have lost a parent receive social scholarships.*

Five respondents mentioned the importance of proper waste sorting and going paper-less. *"We organise workshops where students resurrect objects and textiles, present sustainable fashion projects...> (D12); <...we take part in the European Week for Waste Reduction: we link theory with practice, we run educational workshops to teach the community how to create household items using unwanted textiles, such as pet beds...> (D9).*

The priority principles of social responsibility identified by the respondents reflect the values of the VIKO ACTF, and their integration contributes to the creation of a responsible and more sustainable higher education institution.

Teachers were asked about the meaning of social responsibility. All the teachers interviewed mentioned the positive benefits of engagement in their work in response to the question about the meaning of social responsibility. The respondents stated that *"<...investing in the environment, in relationships, in the immediacy of the relationship with employees motivates people to perform...>", "<...the organisation's employee-centred values, motivation of employees, gives a sense of being valued, makes you feel part of the organisation...>, <...socially responsible activities promote community involvement, builds a collaborative team...>."*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to find out which benefits of implementing the principles of social responsibility were identified by the teachers. All respondents mentioned that the implementation of social responsibility principles ensures fair and safe working practices, care/respect for employees' rights, and provides opportunities for development.

The respondents were asked how the implementation of social responsibility has evolved over the last five years and what positive changes they have observed. The teachers were asked to provide examples to illustrate how the principles of social responsibility have been expressed. To summarise the answers provided by teaching staff of VIKO ACTF, they were sub-categorized and are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Social Responsibility Principles in HEIs (from the point of view of teachers)

Category	Subcategories	Supporting statements
Implementing the principles of social responsibility	Environmental impact	<...quarantine has led to a reduction in the use of paper...> D1; <...no printed documents, posters were used, students submitted their written work online> D5; <...no computer disks...> D8; <use of virtual learning environments where students upload their work, printing the theses was not required> D3; <...design of creative works, design projects using computer programs, elimination of materials such as paper, plastic, glue, etc., D12; <...discarding disposable containers...> D4; <...green procurements...> D7; <...the study programmes include courses where students deepen their knowledge of social responsibility, sustainable development, and look for alternatives to use fewer materials to create an object with the same functionality...> D11; <...create from recycled materials...> D2; <...participate in the European Waste Reduction Week events...> D9; <...students develop socially responsible projects to reduce climate change...> D10; <...creating sustainable fashion collections...> D6; <...making use of teleworking platforms, some lectures are delivered remotely, thus using means of transport is no longer necessary reducing pollution...> D6
	Remote access to activities	<...use of teleworking platforms...> D1; <...events were held remotely and have made participation in events a simpler process for all...> D11; <...sittings are held, meetings with stakeholders are organised, which ensures greater engagement...> D6; <...recorded lectures, trainings, seminars - providing opportunities to learn at a convenient time...> D4; <...easier access to international colleagues...> D7; <...information made easily accessible to students, students from remote areas...> D7; <...classes for students were held during the quarantine, which ensured that a wide range of listeners were able to join in and take part in the classes...> D3; <...recorded remote dance classes...> D8
	Cooperation with partners and social exclusion groups	<... efforts have been made to maintain the community spirit by organising events remotely, involving people who find it difficult to physically come to events...> D2; <...free events are organised, inviting people who are in social exclusion...> D5; <...charity projects are organised...> D9; <...camps are organised for children from disadvantaged backgrounds...> D10; <...activities involve non-nationals...> D12; <...close cooperation with the community of the district where the HEI is located...> D1; <...open creative student examinations: the screening of the final work of the musical theatre programme, theatre and dance performances, inviting seniors of the community and all interested persons to attend...> D7; <...volunteer campaign are held to contribute to the solution of problems of vulnerable groups...> D8

The study found that teachers are aware of and integrate the principles of social responsibility. Teachers gave examples of the expression of the principles of social responsibility which illustrate positive changes. All the respondents in the study indicated that there has been a marked change in the past year in terms of reducing the negative impact on the environment: less use of paper and other resources in creative projects, using recycled materials instead; students' works were not printed, the use of computer programmes, storing students' work in a virtual environment, updating the content of courses to include environmental topics.

More than half (8) of the teaching staff indicated that the popularity of the use of remote platforms during the quarantine period has brought positive changes: better access to all

interested students, remote lectures, recorded lectures, facilitating students' access to learning at their own convenience, and increased opportunities for communication with social partners. The same number of respondents (8) indicated that there has been a recent positive change in cooperation with social partners and groups in social exclusion, involving people of all ages, statuses and backgrounds, a broader range of activities, training, education, actions, charity projects, camps, artistic performances etc. Many events are free of charge.

The survey also aimed to find out about the perceived barriers to the implementation of social responsibility principles. Half (6) of the teachers who participated in the study indicated that not all colleagues engage in socially responsible activities. The majority of respondents (10) indicated that the implementation of activities is time-consuming and demanding. Teachers mentioned that many of them have several jobs, which makes it more difficult to coordinate and align joint activities and long-term projects. Respondents (7) stressed that they emphasise social responsibility when working with students, but often students lack the time and motivation to carry out socially responsible activities and to engage in volunteering. Some teachers (4) pointed out that more funding for socially responsible activities would be needed in addition to voluntary incentives.

The study aimed to find out the opinion of the teachers on the implementation of social responsibility principles and the effectiveness of performance of HEIs. All the teachers who participated in the study answered unequivocally that the principles of social responsibility significantly contribute to the effectiveness of performance of higher education institutions, create a positive image of higher education institutions and encourage trust in the organisation, which has added value in competition with similar organisations.

To sum up, the study allows concluding that the principles of social responsibility are implemented at the VIKO ACTF: teachers understand the expression of social responsibility, identify priority principles of social responsibility, which they integrate voluntarily in their work, illustrate them with examples, and point out the importance and advantages of implementing social principles.

### **3. Conclusion**

1. Higher education institutions integrate social responsibility principles from a range of internationally recognised policies, guidelines or standards. Social responsibility principles may be developed by the organisation itself, depending on the nature of its activities and responsibilities. The concept of social responsibility in HEIs emphasises voluntary action, taking into account interests of stakeholders, and the ethical and moral aspects of study, learning and development. Social responsibility by universities can improve the quality of the services provided, the reputation of the university, student satisfaction and trust in the organisation, and increase the loyalty of staff and their willingness to do their job well.
2. The interviews with teaching staff of VIKO ACTF revealed that the definition of social responsibility principles in documents of the higher education institution and the implementation of them in teachers' work are in line with the theoretical values of social responsibility promoted. The respondents identified the following ethical, moral and environmental principles of social responsibility to be implemented in order of priority: ethical behaviour, transparency, importance of stakeholders' interests, elimination of social inequalities, and environmental protection. In implementing the principles of social responsibility, the respondents mentioned that they have seen positive changes in reducing negative environmental impacts, improving access to activities by remote means, cooperating with partners and groups in social exclusion.

3. All the teachers having participated in the study answered unequivocally that the principles of social responsibility significantly contribute to the effectiveness of performance of higher education institutions and encourage trust in the organisation. The respondents identified the positive role of social responsibility in work engagement, fair and safe working practices, concern for employees' rights, and created conditions for development. However, some teachers mentioned lack of involvement of colleagues and students in socially responsible activities, lack of time and insufficient funding as barriers to the implementation of social responsibility.

## References

- Aledo-Ruiz, M. D., Martínez-Caro, E., & Santos-Jaén, J. M. (2022). The influence of corporate social responsibility on students' emotional appeal in the HEIs: The mediating effect of reputation and corporate image. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 29(3), 578–592. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2221>
- Ali, M., Mustapha, I., Osman, S., & Hassan, U. (2021). University social responsibility: A review of conceptual evolution and its thematic analysis. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 286, Article 124931. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.124931>
- Allui, A., & Pinto, L. (2022). Non-financial benefits of corporate social responsibility to Saudi companies. *Sustainability*, 14(6), Article 3446. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14063446>
- Carrillo-Durán, M. V., Blanco Sánchez, T., & García, M. (2023). University social responsibility and sustainability. How they work on the SDGS and how they communicate them on their websites. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 00, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.12470>
- Carroll, A. B. (2016). Carroll's pyramid of CSR: taking another look. *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility*, 1(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-016-0004-6>
- Čiburienė, J. (2020). Įmonių socialinė atsakomybė kaip visuomenės ugdymo veiksnys [Corporate social responsibility as a factor in developing society]. *Šiuolaikinės visuomenės ugdymo veiksniai*, 5(1), 99–116. <https://doi.org/10.47459/svuv.2020.5.6>
- Duckworth, H. (2015). Embedding social responsibility principles within quality leadership practices. *Quality Management Journal*, 22(1), 6–9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10686967.2015.11918415>
- European Commission. (2019). *Corporate social responsibility, responsible business conduct, and business & human rights: Overview of progress* (SWD 143). <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/34482>
- International Organization for Standardization. (2018). *Discovering ISO 26000: Guidance on social responsibility*. <https://www.iso.org/files/live/sites/isoorg/files/store/en/PUB-100258.pdf>
- International Organization for Standardization. (2021). *ISO 26000:2010: Guidance on social responsibility*. [http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue\\_detail?csnumber=42546](http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue_detail?csnumber=42546)
- Latif, K. F., Tariq, R., Muneeb, D., Sahibzada, U. F., & Ahmad, S. (2022). University social responsibility and performance: The role of service quality, reputation, student satisfaction and trust. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841241.2022.2139791>

- Lietuvos Respublikos mokslo ir studijų įstatymo Nr. XI-242 pakeitimo įstatymas 2016 m. birželio 29 d. Nr. XII-2534.* (2016). [Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Science and Studies No. XI-242 Amendment Law of 2016 June 29 No. XII-2534]. <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/81a7b822444a11e68f45bcf65e0a17ee/asr>
- Nave, A., & Ferreira, J. (2019). Corporate social responsibility strategies: Past research and future challenges. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 26(4), 885-901. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1729>
- Pivato, S., Misani, N., & Tencati, A. (2008). The impact of corporate social responsibility on consumer trust: The case of organic food. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 17, 3-12. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8608.2008.00515.x>
- Saari, U. A., Ojasoo, M., Venesaar, U., Puhakka, I., Nokelainen, P., & Mäkinen, S. J. (2024). Assessing engineering students' attitudes towards corporate social responsibility principles. *European Journal of Engineering Education*, 49(3), 492-513. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2023.2299731>
- Šimanskienė, L., & Paužuolienė, J. (2010). Įmonių socialinės atsakomybės svarba Lietuvos organizacijoms [The importance of corporate social responsibility for Lithuanian organisations]. *Management Theory and Studies for Rural Business and Infrastructure Development*, 20(1), 138-145.
- Tunčikienė, Ž., & Junkelytė-Osauskienė, G. (2018). Socially responsible and social business: From business concept to more detailed properties. In *Science – Future of Lithuania. Business in XXI Century*, Article vvf.2017.026. <http://jmk.vvf.vgtu.lt/index.php/Verslas/2018/paper/viewFile/224/141>
- Valmohammadi, C. (2014). Impact of corporate social responsibility practices on organizational performance: An ISO 26000 perspective. *Social Responsibility Journal*, 10(3), 455-479. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SRJ-02-2013-0021>
- Vilniaus kolegija / Higher Education Institution. (2022). *Socialinės atsakomybės ir darnios plėtros 2022 m. ataskaita* [Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development 2022 Report]. <https://byt.lt/XSMUK>
- Vilniaus kolegija. (n.d.). *Strategija 2021-2025* [Strategy 2021-2025]. <https://www.viko.lt/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2014/07/VIKO-strategija-2021-2025.pdf>