Science for policy ecosystems in Lithuania

Discussion paper

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Introduction

This discussion paper provides information on the main actors within the ecosystem of science for policy and the state of affairs with respect to the use of evidence in the policy making in Lithuania. It aims to identify the main obstacles to a more consistent use of evidence in the policy making process in Lithuania, both within the Government and the Parliament and to suggest possible ways forward in removing them to facilitate better match between supply of evidence and the political demand for it.

The paper first discusses the supply side of science for policy by mapping the main institutional actors and structures which currently frame the landscape of this ecosystem. It then presents the general overview of the situation with respect to political demand for science in the work of Government and the Parliament by outlining the existing shortcomings and incentives which limit the use of evidence in decision making process. Finally, it concludes with observations aimed at bridging existing gaps between the supply of evidence and demand for it in order to improve the quality of policy making and responding better to contemporary challenges faced by society in Lithuania. It should be noted that the list of concrete recommendations, especially on the more systematic use of evidence within the civil service and the political demand for it have been prepared by the author as a roadmap for the implementation of OECD recommendations on mobilising evidence at the centre of government in Lithuania.

The discussion in this paper is limited only to those institutions and structures in the area of science which deliver policy relevant research and advice. The state of science in general as well as the science policy in Lithuania is beyond the scope of this analysis. In other words, the paper focuses on research which is relevant for public policy and could be used to inform and improve it, not on research and development policy and its shortcomings. It argues that the most important obstacles to the use of science and research for public policy purposes originate from limited political demand rather than constraints related to the supply of policy relevant research.

The paper has been prepared at the request of the European Commission as an input for the workshop on "Science for policymaking in Lithuania" (23 November 2021). The drafting of the paper has benefited from the insights of representatives of policymaking community (members of parliament and cabinet of ministers of Lithuania), as well as experts who participate in conducting evaluations and providing policy advice. The author is grateful for their time and valuable comments, which were expressed during 17 semi-structured interviews conducted in September and October 2021 on the state of affairs of using evidence in policymaking[1]. The author is also grateful for detailed comments on the first draft of the paper

[1] The majority of interviews conducted by the author for drafting this science for policy ecosystems paper have also been used for the drafting of the road for the implementation of the OECD policy review report on mobilising evidence at the centre of government in Lithuania. See OECD (2021), Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania: Strengthening Decision Making and Policy Evaluation for Long-term Development, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/323e3500-en (to be released on 29 November 2021). The author would like to thank Stéphane Jacobzone and Darius Žeruolis for their valuable comments during the drafting of the latter since there is a considerable thematic overlap.

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Supply of science for policy in Lithuania

Since early 1990s when Lithuania re-established independence and reformed its institutions, the science for policy ecosystem went through transformation which was driven by several factors. First, the reforms aimed at creating the conditions for market economy resulted in the emergence of the private entities active in providing evaluation and advice for policy makers. Domestic and internationally active research and consulting companies entered the market and continue to supply evaluation services and research-based advice on various policy issues.

Second, the reforms of state research institutes and high education institutions, which conduct policy relevant analysis, have been implemented in the pursuit of a better use of scarce resources and upgrading the quality of research. Previously politicised social sciences went through especially significant transformation in introducing the methods and tools of analysis trying to catch up with the state of research and scholarly debates in Western academia. Some entities in the field of policy analysis, like the Institute of International Relations and Political Science of Vilnius University, were established from scratch in 1992. Others went through a much more gradual transformation (i.e. faculties of economics). The education and research institutions benefited from foreign assistance, for example, by drawing on the advice and resources of Nordic and other countries. Supply of scholarships to study in the UK, the US and other Western universities was also important in upgrading the quality of research and advice relevant for policy making.

Finally, the process of accession into the EU strengthened the demand for the supply of evaluation services, ex-ante and ex-post impact assessments of EU-related policy decisions, which later spilled over into other policy making areas not related to the EU membership[2]. For example, the impact assessment system was set up in the work of Government in 2003 using the experience and expertise accumulated during the process of EU accession when the impact assessment methodology was prepared, detailed pilot impact assessment studies by externally commissioned experts conducted and civil servants trained to do basic impact assessments.

The need to evaluate the use of EU funding was particularly important in creating the conditions for the emergence of the supply of analytical services, mostly by private consulting and research based advisory companies, sometimes drawing on the expertise of analysts working in the universities and state research institutes. Lithuania's accession into the OECD also strengthened the attention to the importance of evidence in making policy decisions generally and in particular fields such as reform of the governance of state owned enterprises[3].

[2] The effects of EU accession on evaluations of public policy in Lithuania, including the establishment of the ex-ante impact assessment system in the work of government have been discussed in the study Vilpišauskas, R., Nakrošis, V., Ko verta politika? Politikos vertinimas Lietuvoje ir Europos Sąjungoje [What is the value of policy? Policy evaluation in Lithuania and the European Union], Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2005.

[3] The forthcoming policy review report on mobilising evidence at the centre of government in Lithuania prepared by the OECD is a good example of continuous support for fostering the culture of evidence informed decision making and technical assistance on how to advance it.

Lithuania's science for policy ecosystem consists of several groups of actors and practices, which are relevant in terms of the supply of research-based advice for policy makers. They are briefly presented below. It should be noted that they include rather different types of institutions some of which are located in the specific fields of policy research while others are active by attracting researchers for policy evaluation on the basis of particular projects and acting as intermediaries between researchers and decision makers by mobilising funding for evidence informed policy advice within particular policy areas[4].

Self-governing research institutions

Universities and research institutions connected to the universities are important actors active in supplying not only fundamental research but also policy-oriented analysis and advice in Lithuania. Vilnius University usually tops different rankings of country's state universities. Often scholars who teach and conduct research also act as advisors to the governmental bodies, participate as suppliers of expertise in the calls for evaluation and other expert services commissioned by ministries or other governmental departments. Members of the academic community are also important actors in providing expert services for the Research Council of Lithuania which administers funding calls for research important for the state on the basis of thematic requests collected from state institutions (President's Office, the Parliament, ministries and others).

While it has become increasingly common for university researchers to apply for funding through their universities by using their infrastructure and significant pool of expertise, they are still less effective than private research institutions and consultancies in managing the processes of preparing research project proposals, conducting them and providing the state of the art expertise to the policy making bodies. Therefore, some academic faculty members also work in private research and consulting companies either full time or employed on a project basis for concrete calls to provide research services.

Universities also constantly have to deal with budgetary constraints and growing competitive pressure for academic faculty members from private companies relying on research and data analysis, for example, services centres established by foreign investors, which try to attract data analysts from universities. This type of competition for data analysts has become particularly important in recent years as economic growth accelerated partly because of high inflows of foreign direct investments in Lithuania draining human resources from academic institutions. Although funding for universities has also been increasing, the financial and human resources remain dispersed among a relatively large number of education and research institutions for a country size of Lithuania. The attempts at institutional consolidation initiated by several successive governments have been met with resistance from stakeholders and led to limited incremental changes and merging of some institutions.

The Lithuanian academy of sciences is an umbrella institution, which brings together scientists from different fields, including education and research, culture, social development, economy,

[4] This wide interpretation of the variety of actors considered relevant within the science for policy ecosystem was inspired by the similar study conducted in Denmark – see Pedersen, D. B., Hvidtfeldt, R., The Danish eco-system of science for policy, Copenhagen: The Danish Council for Research and Innovation Policy, April 2021.

environmental protection, health care, technology and others. It is established as a state budgetary organisation by the resolution of the Parliament and aims to advice the Government and the Parliament. However, it is more visible in organising on behalf of the Government the activities related to awarding science prizes and grants, educational events and popular dissemination of science results rather than providing research-based state of the art advice to the policy makers[5].

Government research institutes

There is a number of government research institutes which are funded from the budget programme of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and work in particular sectors, often having direct working relationship with respective sectoral ministries or committees of the Parliament. These institutes work in sectors such as agriculture, energy, law, culture, sociology. Their research activities include both fundamental and applied research, including research for policy, which is usually one of the activities among other services offered by those institutes.

The Government Strategic Analysis Centre (STRATA) stands out as an expert institution which provides government and ministries with the independent research-based advice required for evidence informed public policy decisions. It was established following reorganisation of the Research and Higher Education Monitoring centre (MOSTA) which focused on the analysis and policy advice within the research and high education policy subsystem to a research institution with a horizontal profile aiming to foster evidence based decision making culture in the whole of government. This reorganisation was decided and implemented by the previous Government (2016-2020) in order to strengthen the impact assessments of public policy decisions.

STRATA performs public policy research and evaluations, prepares foresights on strategic issues, advices the government on public administration, pools the existing analytical competencies of state institutions into cooperative network and consults them on ex-ante impact assessments of draft policy decisions, collects and analyses data when requested by the government. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic STRATA was regularly presenting analysis of key socio-economic indicators to provide data for the crisis management decisions.

STRATA also interacts and cooperates with EU and OECD institutions in implementing policy reviews related to the use of evidence in policy making. It has also been organising trainings on conducting impact assessments and the use of data for policy making for civil servants from the Government and the Parliament. In some of its activities it draws on external expertise. STRATA cooperates with universities either on the institutional basis, for example, with Vilnius University in the preparation of the long-term strategy Lithuania 2050, or by drawing

[5] According to its strategic plan for 2021-2023, in 2021, it employed 60 people and 152 were working at the library which belongs to the academy. It overall budget was 5,628 million euros with absolute majority of it (4,513 million euros) dedicated to meeting the demands of information resources of science and education (see http://www.lma.lt/uploads/LMA_2021_2023_strateginis_planas.pdf). It also participates in some research projects funded by the EU structure funds but in all of them in a role of a partner. See http://www.lma.lt/eu-sf-projects.

on the expertise of researchers on an individual basis for particular research projects, development of methodological tools or conduct of trainings. The government currently is considering the future role of STRATA as a centre of competencies for analysis of public policy decisions, including its role in quality control of impact assessments. STRATA has a potential to become an important centre of evidence informed policy making which could form around itself a cluster of researchers from academia and policy making institutions.

Non-majoritarian state institutions

There are state institutions which make decisions based on analysis of economic and social data and could be categorised as expert institutions, even though they are not typically considered to be part of the research institutions. They include Competition Council, regulatory bodies overseeing different sectors such as telecommunications, energy and others. In particular, the role of the Bank of Lithuania in contributing to the supply of analysis on economic and social policy decisions is considerable. The Bank of Lithuania has two research units which conduct economic and financial research with direct importance for banking and policy making. It cooperates closely with Vilnius University and foreign partners not only in advancing policy relevant research but also educating potential future data analysts who could work within the civil service. State institutions such as ministries or the president's office often turn to the analysts of the Bank of Lithuania for economic and financial data analysis and advice on relevant economic policies.

The National Audit Office of Lithuania also contributes to better-informed decision making by supervising the use of public funds and execution of the budget. Based on its audits, especially performance audit, it provides recommendations to policy makers on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of publicly-funded programs and accountability of state institutions. It also acts as an independent fiscal institution supervising the adherence of Lithuania to the rules of the Economic and Monetary Union. It regularly submits its opinions to the Parliament. However, although its recommendations, especially on the draft national budget, receive public attention and provide a good basis for a better informed public discussion on policy priorities, they often tend to be ignored by decision makers in their daily routine.

Scientific councils

The Research Council of Lithuania is an important actor, which fulfils the role of the expert institution tackling the challenges of the development of science at the national level. It implements programme based competitive funding of research, administers the most important Lithuanian science development programmes, evaluates research performance and represents Lithuanian science in various European and other international organisations. The Research Council of Lithuania also performs the role of a counsellor of the Parliament and the Government on research and researchers training issues and on better policies for science more

generally[6]. Over time it has developed procedures and human resources particularly relevant for the science for policy ecosystem.

As it was mentioned before, some of the thematic calls for urgent short-term research are based on the expressed needs of state institutions, which present them upon the call of the Research Council, sometimes after informally consulting experts active in particular public policy fields. For example, in 2020 the Research Council issued calls within 8 thematic subjects, including the feasibility study of Lithuanian industry to take part in the wind-generated energy supply chain, the creation of the model of cyber security competencies, the analysis of the motives of citizens to not receive social support when they have a right to it or assessment of Lithuania-China relations within the context of global changes. In response to those calls it received 17 research proposals and 6 were awarded funding (half of them to researcher teams from Vilnius University). In 2021, altogether 23 thematic subjects for research were proposed by 9 ministries, which committed to covering at least 20% of the funding for their proposed themes. The list was submitted to the Chancellery of the Government for the screening on the basis of the following criteria: whether the theme is considered strategically important for Lithuanian state and society and whether the problem to be researched was urgent. The Research Council also funded short-term research projects on the effects and the management of the COVID-19 pandemics in Lithuania when 29 research projects within diverse fields ranging from health care to economy, public administration, education, culture and societal security received funding of 2,12 million euros[7].

The Research Council of Lithuania also regularly organises expert assessments of research activities of state and private institutions, assessments of the impact of national research programmes. However, more general directions of the research funding policy are decided by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport. There has been a tendency in the political discussions of the social and economic relevance of research activities to emphasise business needs of the market participants and urgent current needs of decision makers rather than long-term scientific activities with a potential to produce innovative research relevant for public policy and the development of the state. There is some ambiguity with respect to what types of public policy evaluations could be classified as research activities[8].

The Research Council of Lithuania acts as an important mediator between state institutions and researchers, who can provide research-based policy advice on the policy issues considered important by governmental institutions. It currently acts as one of the important clusters within the ecosystem of science for policy, which fosters cooperation between researchers and public sector institutions. However, the extent of actual use of studies funded by it in policy making is somewhat unclear and constrained not only by the sometimes limited quality and

[6] For more on the activities of the Research Council of Lithuania see https://www.lmt.lt/en/about-the-research-council/774.

[7] For more information on those projects see https://www.lmt.lt/lt/mokslo-finansavimas/valstybes-uzsakomieji-tyrimai/sprendimams-del-covid-19-padariniu-skirti-projektai/3405.

[8] These debates sometimes take place between private research-based consultancies, which participate in science for policy activities and apply for funding, and experts of the Research Council, making their judgements on the basis of the definition provided by the OECD Frascati Manual on Guidelines for Collecting and Report Data on Research and Experimental Development, 2015 (more concretely, the points 2.115-2.117 defining the types of policy related research which is or is not considered to meet the criteria of what can constitute research and experimental development).

applicability of conducted studies to solving public policy problems they aim to address but also by constraints on the side of political demand, which are discussed below.

Advisory bodies and individual advisors

Government and other states institutions sometimes establish advisory bodies which are mandated to advise on particular policy issue. For example, ad hoc expert advisory bodies were set up by both the current Government and the President to analyse data and propose solutions with respect to managing the COVID-19 pandemic. Some advisory bodies are set up with a broader mandate. For example, the Sunset Commission was created to analyse the performance of public administration and propose evidence based decisions for reforming it advised several successive governments from late 1990s to 2016 (although with some interruptions and changes of its composition). The Lithuanian Progress Council set up by the current Government to oversee the process of drafting the long-term Strategy Lithuania 2050 includes scholars and other analysts, different stakeholders and policy makers with STRATA providing analytical and methodological input as well as organising the processes such as stakeholder and public consultations. Usually work in such advisory bodies is conducted on the pro bono basis.

It is also common for the President, Prime Minister, ministers or members of the Parliament to employ policy advisors who, although being political appointees, often have links with research institutions or continue their scholarly work while advising policy makers. However, they often have limited resources and have to rely on networking and data analysis provided by other state institutions. Recently Department of Statistics gained in importance as a source of data and its analysis performed upon the requests of ministries and other state institutions.

Currently the Government is considering the introduction of the network of scientific advisors within the Chancellery and line ministries in order to improve the cooperation of the research community and policy makers as well as stakeholders such as businesses and to foster evidence based policymaking culture. This could provide a useful impetus for better alignment of demands of particular governmental institutions for policy advice and supply to meet them, although the actual impact will depend on the implementation. However, this reform should be aligned with the planning and inter-institutional coordination of ex-ante and ex-post impact assessments and empowerment of the civil service to conduct in-house impact assessments and to commission detailed impact assessments for priority policy initiatives to external experts. Besides, the ability of policy makers to formulate requests for policy analysis and general appreciation of the importance of having sound evidence to support public policy decisions is crucial for such arrangements to be meaningful.

Private companies providing research-based advice

As it was already noted, private companies and consultancies which offer research-based analysis and advice to policy makers, often by taking part in public tenders and calls for policy evaluations represent an important type of actors in science for policy ecosystem. There is a number of domestically grown and internationally widely present companies such as big four

accounting firms which conduct policy evaluations and provide evidence based advise. They are usually most visible in supplying evaluations of the use of EU funds taking part in calls for such services announced by the Ministry of Finance.

During the past 17 years of EU membership regular exercises of evaluating the effects of EU structural and investment funds commissioned by the Lithuanian state institutions to external experts had an important impact on promoting the growth of expertise for policy making through regularity and stability of demand for such services[9]. This is another important cluster within the science for policy ecosystem which contributed to the improvement of the implementation and management of this policy subsystem[10]. In recent years, scarcity of local analysts is leading Lithuanian research companies to look for policy analysts beyond the domestic market to internationalise and network in such a way.

However, some of the most active participants have gradually diversified or completely left this field for the EU-wide tenders and in some areas became the leading research for policy actors beyond Lithuania. The relatively slow increase in financial terms of those tenders compared to the growth of salaries for data analysts in service centres established by foreign investors, also reduced the motivation for locally grown research companies to participate in domestic tenders. Besides, another important factor which pushes some domestic research-based companies to reorient their activities from Lithuania to the EU wide tenders has to do with how ministries initiate and conduct tenders to commission external expertise. The criticisms expressed by the suppliers of analytical services point to still frequent lack of certainty regarding the concrete terms of references, inconsistent demands from beneficiary institutions, which are being modified during the course of a project, and to excessive formal requirements for providers of analytical services.

Other intermediaries

There are many advocacy organisations, NGOs, business and other associations and think-tanks that provide analysis on the issues which are relevant to their mission or the conditions for their own activities. They sometimes commission research on the policy issues relevant to them from the researchers' community on a project basis to use as arguments in public discussions of concrete policy initiatives. Traditionally there has been a popular perception shared by some policy makers that access of those actors to policy making process could pose a risk of exerting too much influence, which might be biased towards narrow interests. However, in recent years there is a tendency to make an effort to consult interest groups and advocacy organisations in a transparent way to benefit from their expertise and knowledge of those sectors which they represent. Although the practice of actively consulting societal groups is still underdeveloped, partly because the overall process of impact assessments within the civil service is not functioning properly, there is a growing appreciation on the benefits of public consultations for better policy making.

[9] For more on such evaluations see https://www.esinvesticijos.lt/en/.
[10] More on this see Martinaitis, Ž., Christenko, A., Kriaučiūnienė, L., Evaluation systems: how do they frame, generate and use evidence? Evaluation, vol. 25(1), 46-61, 2019, doi/10.1177/1356389018802135.

To sum up, there are different types of suppliers of science for policy in Lithuania, often overlapping, with the same people doing research in universities, working in private consultancies and advising state institutions. Several clusters have developed within the science for policy ecosystem around regular practices of demand for policy evaluations expressed through either calls for research by the Research Council of Lithuania, tenders of the Ministry of Finance for the assessment of the use of EU structural funds and more recently around STRATA acting on behalf of the Government to promote evidence based policy making. These processes point to the importance of consistent and clearly articulated political demand for advice based on policy analysis and evaluations backed by funding provided to such analysis on the competitive basis.

Although financial and small market constraints limit the competition for the supply of policy relevant research, the clusters themselves are changing and new actors from domestic and foreign markets can come in and provide their services without major obstacles. More important constraints exist on the side of political demand for sound policy relevant research.

Demand for evidence by policy makers

The main constraints related to the insufficient political demand for evidence to inform decision making originate from poorly planned and coordinated processes of both in-house and externally commissioned ex-ante and ex-post impact assessments (except when such assessments and evaluations are mandatory as it is the case with the use of EU funds). Over time since the introduction of the ex-ante impact assessment procedures within the Government in 2003, the conduct of impact assessments deteriorated into formality void of meaningful content. Relatedly, the systematic quality control of draft policy initiatives and their assessments is absent, public consultations are irregular and often undertaken as a formal exercise rather than being an instrument of collecting evidence.

Governments tend to suffer from agenda overload. There is a lack of political attention and resources dedicated to regular and proper discussions on the alternative solutions of policy problems identified in governmental programs. The principle of proportionality in assessing the impact of the most important policy initiatives by drawing on external expertise is rarely followed in practice. Each ministry decides individually on the need for commissioning external expertise and allocating funding for it. Also, the skills of drafting terms of references and formulating tasks for both in-house assessments and external researchers are underdeveloped within the ministries, including among its leadership. The growing gap between salaries in civil service and private sector or other types of employers such as state-owned enterprises or agencies under ministries, which are able to offer more attractive financial incentives, has become an important constraint on attracting and maintaining skilled analysts within civil service.

In the Parliament, legal initiatives proliferate without proper consideration given to the assessment of their potential effects, despite the provisions in the Statute of the Parliament (Art. 135) which foresee that draft legal initiatives should be accompanied by the regulatory impact assessment. Focus on drafting new legal initiatives at the expense of their quality originates from popular perception that voters will judge the performance of elected policy makers by

how active they were in proposing new laws. This applies particularly to the members of the Parliament elected on the basis of the single member constituencies (who make up half of the MPs). They are especially active in registering proposals for the public investments each autumn when draft national budget is being debated, even though absolute majority of those initiatives end up being rejected by the ruling majority.

Political polarisation between position and opposition as well as reluctance to be portrayed by media as spending too much of taxpayers' money on externally commissioned studies leads underutilisation of external expertise and research. External experts and researchers are sometimes invited to parliamentary committees to provide their opinions on draft laws, but the use of this procedure usually depends on each committee chair. Thus, political incentives and general lack of awareness of the benefits of science for policy and the concrete tools that could be used for evidence based policy making result in the lack of political demand.

In recent years ruling coalitions of different political formations increasingly acknowledged the need for more evidence and analysis to inform public policy decisions in Lithuania. For example, the coalition government of 2016-2020 established STRATA and initiated the review of the impact assessment procedures, drafting of the new methodology of ex-ante and ex-post impact assessments as well as training of civil servants on how to properly conduct them. The guidelines for conducting public consultations were commissioned and prepared.

The current coalition government, which started its work in late 2020, has continued and accelerated those processes. Its program underlines the importance of reducing the number of new legal initiatives and focusing on quality rather than quantity in the legislative process, proper conduct of regulatory impact assessments, which should be based on the principles of proportionality, professionalism and inter-institutional cooperation, inclusive consultations with society, undertaking ex-post impact assessments of existing regulations, review of the existing administrative procedures with a goal to reduce administrative burden, opening up the data registers, and reforming the public administration to make it more innovative, mission driven and effective. There are also sectoral initiatives of better regulation started, for example, by the Ministry of Economy and Innovation.

Prime Minister and her team as well as the leadership of most ministries share the understanding for the need to implement those provisions by drawing on the experience of previous similar reform efforts in Lithuania and on expertise and technical advice of organisations such as the OECD and the European Commission. It should be noted that similar attempts at public sector reforms have failed or were only partially successful in the past[11]. Besides, currently the government has to simultaneously manage COVID-19 pandemic and migration crises, and to implement planned reforms. Therefore, it will be a challenge to translate this political understanding into well-prepared and communicated concrete policy measures, which after being practically implemented should allow for more systematic use of evidence in public policy making.

[11] For the analysis of previous reform efforts see Nakrošis, V., Vilpišauskas, R., Kuokštis, V., "Fiscal consolidation and structural reforms in Lithuania in the period 2008-2012: from grand ambitions to hectic firefighting", International Review of Administrative Sciences, August 2015, vol. 81 (3), p. 522-540; Nakrošis, V., Vilpišauskas. R., Barcevičius, E., "Making change happen: Policy dynamics in the adoption of major reforms in Lithuania", Public Policy and Administration, 2019, vol. 34, No. 4, p. 431-452.

The **recommendations on bridging the gap between supply and demand for evidence** to be used more systematically in public decision making should include several types of measures:

a) procedural changes related to forward planning and funding both in-house and external impact assessments and other types of studies, which could be used for public policy purposes at a proper time, i.e. before political choices on concrete policy measures are taken, and by allowing external suppliers of research services to align their expectations;
b) training of the leadership of governmental institutions as well as analysts on the sources of data and other types of evidence as well as methods of using it, especially on the skills of drafting the terms of references and organising tenders for research-based evaluations and advice from external experts and conducting in-house impact assessments[12];
c) organisational changes to gradually set up a quality control mechanism within the Government and some additional checks within the work of the Parliament and its' committees;
d) to foster the culture of evidence informed decision making in all policy areas and prioritise incentives for improving the capacities for the use of evidence in public policy when conducing the reforms of public administration as well as education and research policy ecosystem, i.e. in strengthening those clusters which have been discussed above.

The concrete list of recommended actions has been prepared by the author of this discussion paper within the **OECD project on mobilising evidence at the centre of government in Lithuania[13]**.

[12] See Competence framework for policy makers developed by the European Commission at https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Policymakers%20Competence%20Framework%20BETA%20K4P_0.docx.

[13] OECD (2021), Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania: Strengthening Decision Making and Policy Evaluation for Long-term Development, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/323e3500-en (to be released on 29 November 2021).