

# ANNUAL REPORT / 2021



Vilnius  
University  
Library



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University  
Library**



# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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# DIRECTOR GENERAL'S PREFACE

## The year 2021 in Vilnius University Library



Director General of Vilnius University Library Irena Krivienė

In the second year of COVID-19 pandemic we could not avoid the quarantine owing to which we carried out our work in a remote way until the end of May and could provide our services only in a limited scope. Our main focus this year has been the best possible addressing information needs of academic community. Despite of restrictions imposed by the pandemic, VU Library (hereinafter referred to as the Library) organized borrowing of traditional resources in a contactless way, the use of electronic information resources was being promoted, while the ordinary work was resumed only from autumn, after all pandemic restrictions were fully lifted. It was a great joy to see users returning to reading rooms, to hold

again various events in the Library premises and to welcome state and university's guests coming for visits, to enjoy a possibility to work in ordinary working places alongside with colleagues.

One of the most significant activities this year has been the preparation of the Library strategic plan that is in line with the VU strategic activity plan for the years 2020–2025. We prepared it *in corpore* with students, academics, researchers, social partners. In an opening session, directors of the long-standing Library partners, namely the University and State Library Darmstadt (Germany), Helsinki (Finland) and Tartu (Estonia) university libraries, shared their strategic insights and good practices. The activities of the Library's strategic plan for the new period directly meet the aspirations of VU, focusing on the development of the society and the state, cooperation and sustainability, and being in line with the responsibilities and competences assigned to the Library, they contribute to the implementation of its long-term goals. The nearest five years the Library's activities will focus on the promotion of both open science and cultural heritage in virtual and traditional ways, on enhancement of information competences of service users, on making services more personal, on expansion of the digital library and on strengthening the sense of community in our organization.

For the first time activities directly associated with open science have been clearly articulated, planned and included into VU's strategic plan for 2021–2025. Given the task to coordinate preparation of VU's Open Science Policy Guidelines, the Library together with representatives of different science fields and areas, worked intensively and prepared the final version of the guidelines' project. Besides that, while implementing the annual activity of the VU strategic plan "Open Science: Accessibility and Dissemination of Scientific Outcomes", both the number of

full-text publications in eLABa system and the number of research data/sets in MIDAS system have been increased thus contributing to the long-term indicator of the VU strategic plan "A Significant Growth of Scientific Communication". We expect that after the inclusion of MIDAS system in OpenDOAR (Directory of Open Access Repositories) catalogue and in EOSC (European Open Science Cloud) B2FIND system in 2021, the visibility of VU scientific research activities will also increase.

Compared to the first year of the pandemic, the number of users of the Library services in 2021 has increased; however, due to the quarantine restriction that lasted for half a year, when compared to the previous years, the number of visits to the Library as well as borrowing of traditional information resources has considerably decreased. On the other side, after the completion of the structural funds project resulting in the decrease by a third in the number of electronic information resources (databases), the use of the latter when compared with the previous years, has only slightly decreased. This was the result of active communication and the launch of open, available-to-all-students trainings "Search for Information Resources for Research Papers" which contributed a lot to the visibility of services and information resources provided by the Library. In 2021, over 2,500 participants in total attended the trainings.

This year, we had an opportunity to present visitors of both virtual and traditional Library with exceptional beauty of architectural and documentary heritage. After the completion of restoration in Franciszek Smuglewicz Hall, for the first time the hall was opened to the public while celebrating the 100-year birth anniversary of the former long-standing rector of VU Jonas Kubilius. In marking the occasion, a jubilee exhibition dedicated to this distinguished personality and his work at VU was opened in the hall. At the same time, an exceptionally beautiful story about decorative paper and the art of decorative paper in the Library was presented on the virtual exhibition platform *Google Arts and Culture*.

The year 2021 has been the final year of the ongoing project "Lithuania in Vilnius University Library". Ten Lithuanian cities and towns were visited with exhibitions dedicated to the particular places and people. On the bases of materials collected for the exhibitions, a publication representing rich collections of the Library's cultural and scientific heritage was prepared and delivered for printing. Based on the documentary heritage accumulated and kept at the Library, more than a dozen exhibitions were arranged in the Library; documents were borrowed by other memory institutions in great numbers for expositions. The historical exhibition dedicated to the famous Lithuanian military commander Jan Karol Chodkiewicz "Fearless to Die for the Homeland" was opened in the White Hall and attracted exceptional attention and interest, also the Library assisted actively in the preparation of a series of documentaries about hetman Chodkiewicz "The Path of Triumph".

The outcomes of the research activities carried out by the staff of the Research and Heritage Collections Department are really encouraging. Fourteenth articles, 13 overviews and 18 reports for research conferences were prepared and published in Lithuanian and foreign research publications. The project "Dissertations of the Old Vilnius University (1579–1773)" funded by the Research Council of Lithuania has been started, while the large-scale research project on the parchment book bindings of the 17th century that are kept in the Rare Books Division has been continued in 2021.

Some major change that had an impact on the infrastructure and services has been introduced in the structure of the Library in 2021. On 1 January Adam Mickiewicz Museum that operated under the Library was included into the structure of Vilnius University Museum and became one of its

divisions. On the same day, 1 January, after the merge of Šiauliai and Vilnius universities, while implementing the plan of integration of the universities, their activities and resources, after the reorganization, Šiauliai University Library has become VU Šiauliai Academy Information Centre (ŠAIC), an integral part of Vilnius University Library. Thus, the geography of the Library has expanded and now we have branches not only in Kaunas, but in Šiauliai as well.

The variety of information resources and services, ability to adapt to the changing operational environment have been positively evaluated by the users of the Library services. This year for the first time the Library employed a service quality evaluation tool recognized in the international library world LIBQUAL to examine users' opinions and obtained detailed results on how its customers evaluate the effectiveness of the provided services, information delivery and the Library as a place. The obtained results – high evaluation of all services provided by the Library – are both pleasing and binding for the future.

Director General of Vilnius University Library Irena Krivienė



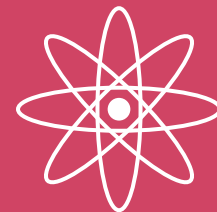
The buildings of Vilnius University Library in Vilnius Old Town and Sauletekis

## Facts and figures



- Library holdings – **4,916,337** items
- Electronic holdings – **383,161** items
- Manuscripts Division has **339** archival units and **346,886** documents of various types
- Collection of the Graphic Arts Cabinet consists of **95,540** works
- Rare Books Division has **167,916** publications
- **40,430** registered users
- **234,779** visits
- Borrowed documents – **143,836** items
- On average **4** documents were borrowed by a registered user
- Number of study spaces for users – **1,894**
- Study spaces with PCs for users – **342**
- On 31 December 2021, Library's electronic catalogue had **1,176,336** bibliographic records on **2,557,792** copies
- Users had access to **66** subscribed databases
- Database users performed **744,356** searches
- Database users read **1,684,258** full-text documents
- In 2021 (**24,716** students studied at VU) on average in databases subscribed by VU Library a student performed **30** searches and read **68** full-text documents
- Restored/preserved **58,921** nominal pages of VIII category
- **5,400** pages digitised
- **12,122** digital copies of various cultural heritage objects made for users
- **180** members of Library staff (163.75 positions)
- **8** new members of staff recruited
- Expenditure for information resources (books, periodicals, databases) – **985,547.02 €**
- **1,585** persons from **29** countries participated in **143** guided tours around the old campus of VU and the Library
- **6** guided tours around the Scholarly Communication and Information Centre. **76** persons participated in the tours
- **1** specialist from abroad had a traineeship in the Library
- Due to the pandemic, no internships were organized for students at VU Library
- **1** volunteer worked in the Library
- **54** events were held in the Library, **29** out of them exhibitions
- **160** members of Library staff improved their qualification





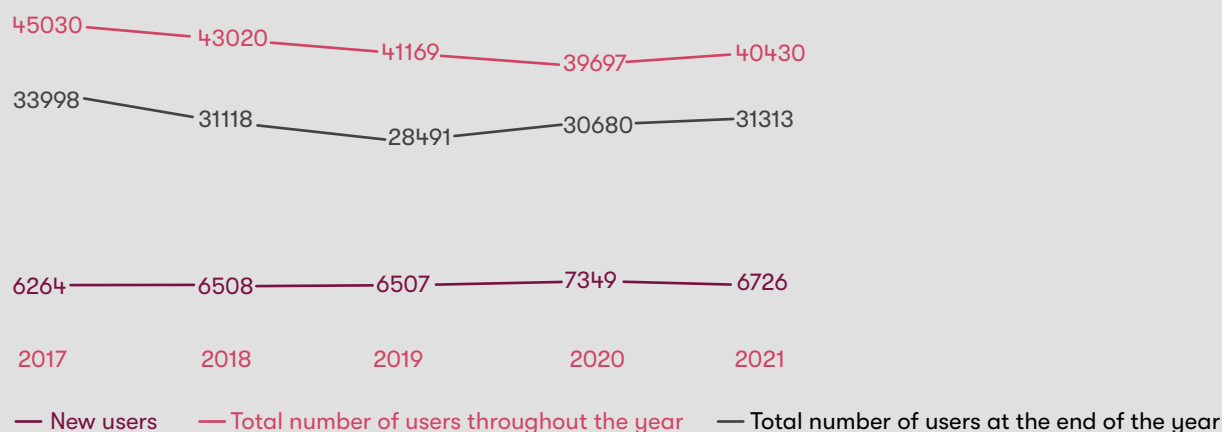
# INFORMATION SERVICES FOR SCIENCE AND STUDIES

## Library users and visitors

On 31 December 2021, the Library had **31,313** registered users with an unexpired Library user card. However, throughout the year of 2021, total number of Library users was **40,430**.

**6,726** new users were registered in the Library in 2021. If compared with the year 2020, in 2021 the number of new registered users has decreased (by 8,5 per cent), however, the total number of users throughout the year has increased.

### The change of registered users in 2017–2021



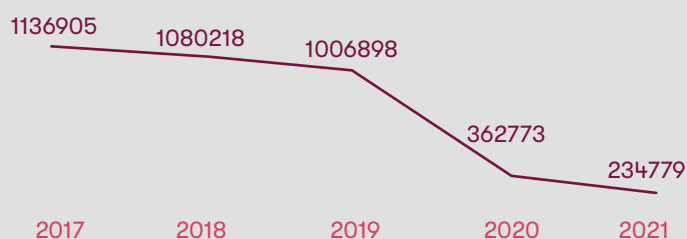
## Visits to VU Library

In 2021, there were **234,779** visits to the Library, whereas in 2020 there were 362,773. Due to the quarantine restrictions, the number of visits has decreased by **35,3** per cent or 1.5 times. The decrease of visits is related to the quarantine restrictions.

In 2021 from January to 15 April users were not allowed to come and study in the Library. Remote services provided for the users were not taken into account.

In 2021 virtual visits to the Internet website, catalogues and Virtual Library have reached the number 1,098,000.

### Visits to Vilnius University Library in 2017–2021





## We are presenting Šiauliai Academy Information Centre of Vilnius University Library!

After the merge of Vilnius University and Šiauliai University and the latter becoming Šiauliai Academy, libraries of both universities have also merged. Former ŠU Library became a part of VU Library's user service division – Šiauliai Academy Information Centre of Vilnius University Library (ŠAIC of VU Library).

From now on, VU Library is inter-regional: VU Library operates in three cities: Vilnius, Kaunas and Šiauliai.

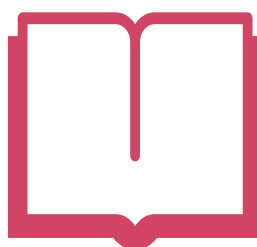


### The most active groups of users

The most active readers of the Library are librarians, VU students and VU joint doctoral students.

Out of all VU faculties, students of the Faculty of History (62.7 per cent), the Faculty of Law (60.0 per cent) and the Faculty of Chemistry (59.9 per cent) as well as Life Sciences Centre (56.4 per cent) and the Faculty of Physics (54.7 per cent) are the most active readers of the Library.

The lowest activity was observed in Šiauliai Academy (17.9 per cent) and Business School (18.1 per cent). Students of the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics can be attributed to less active readers as well (20.3 per cent).



# Information resources

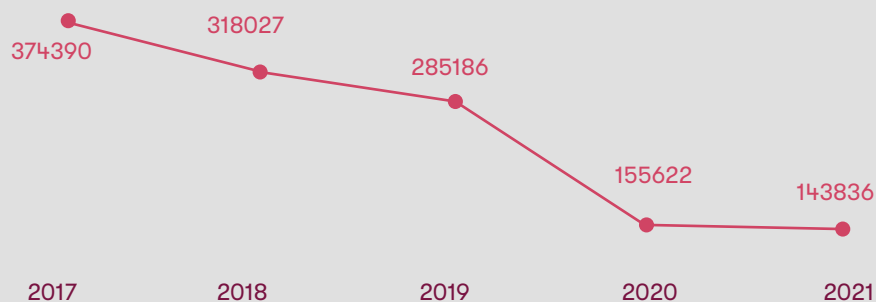
## The use of printed and electronic information resources

Since 2013, the loans of printed information resources have been decreasing. The same trend has been observed for the following five years: in 2017 loans of printed information resources decreased by 17 per cent, in 2018, by 10 per cent, in 2020 by 45 per cent and in 2021 by 8 per cent.

## Borrowing of printed information resources during the quarantine period

Taking into account the needs of users for information resources, the Library made effort to meet these needs at least in some ways during the entire quarantine period. While the reading rooms were closed, books were lent to graduates and VU employees in a contactless way via the Virtual Library (VU Library's electronic catalogue). During the first quarantine, 13,258 items were lent, while the Library prepared much better for the second quarantine and as many as 43,780 items were lent to users of the Library!

## Dynamics of printed resources borrowing for 2017–2021

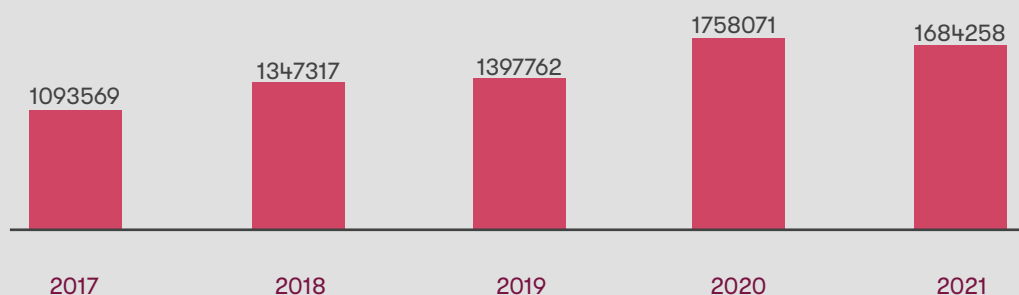


If compared with the year 2020, the decrease in loans could be observed in the Central Library (by 19 per cent or by 9,893 items) and in the SCIC (by 18 per cent or by 13,174 items). The increase of borrowing by 30 per cent or by 11,281 items was observed in the faculty libraries. This happened due to the fact that from 1 January 2021 a new unit Šiauliai Academy was integrated into the structure of VU, and loans from Information Centre of this unit have increased the number of loans in general. Overall, in 2021, at VU Library borrowing of printed resources has decreased by 8 per cent. The more information resources are available in electronic format, the less is the use of traditional information resources. The number of traditional printed resources is decreasing, as the Library offers users more and more collections of electronic resources and databases, the content of which is constantly updated, so the user has access to the latest and most relevant content. Such a trend is characteristic for the academic libraries all over the world.

In 2021, Library users had access to 66 subscribed databases: **27,265** titles of electronic journals, **257,083** titles of electronic books and **98,813** titles of other objects (non-full-text documents, videos, patents and others). In 2021, **1,684,258** full-text documents were downloaded from databases.

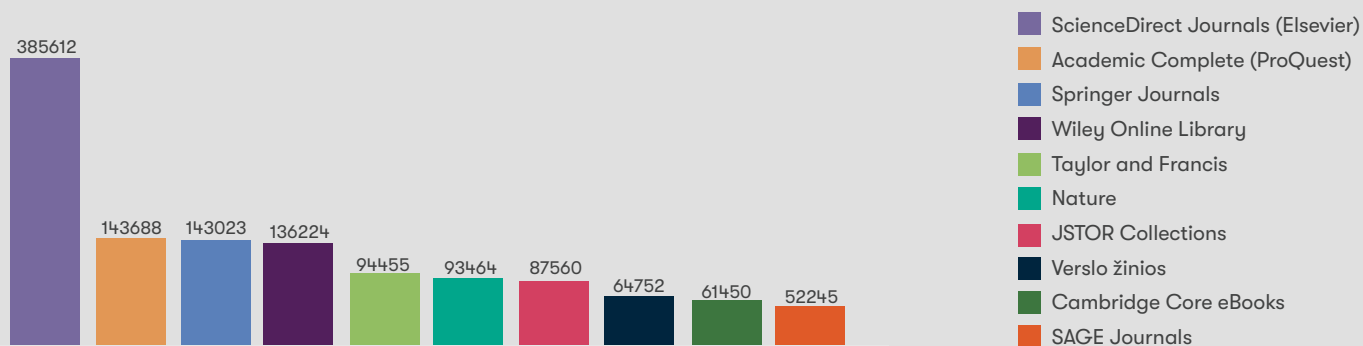
Although the number of article downloads has increased steadily in recent years, in 2021 it decreased by 4 per cent as due to reduced funding VU community members lost access to 31 databases.

## The dynamics of downloading full-text articles in 2017-2021



In 2021, the number of content views was 167,014. When compared with the year 2020, the number of content views in 2021 has increased by approximately 19 per cent. In 2021, users were actively using Clarivate Analytics tools to which the Library is subscribed to, such as *Web of Science*, *InCites Benchmarking*, *InCites Journal* and *Highly Cited Data* – 92,949 content views. Much attention in 2021 was given to *Complete Anatomy (Elsevier)*, an atlas of human anatomy, subscribed by the Library for the first time – **21,104** content views. In 2021, the most read collection was *ScienceDirect Journals* – **385,612** downloaded full-text documents. For the second year in a row the portal “Verslo žinios” is among 10 most popular databases.

## 10 most popular DB according to the number of full-text document downloads in 2021



## Development of electronic book collection

In 2021 *Evidence based acquisition (EBA)* model, which was tested and applied for several years, has been used for the acquisitions. The main idea of the model – users are given access to the selected e-book collection for 12 months, and after that, based on usage statistics, the most read and relevant books are chosen for permanent access. In following this model, **219** e-books were acquired from *Cambridge Core* platform. From 2020, the Library is given access to **Oxford Scholarship Online** e-book collection and the same e-book acquisition model is applied. In 2021, while using this service, users of VU Library downloaded **6,772** chapters of e-books bearing **1,074** titles.

# Scholarly communication

## Open access

For many years, in various ways, Vilnius University Library has been promoting the application of the principles of open access in scholarly communication. In 2021, the Library has continued goal-orientated activities focused on VU community's supply with information, holding consultations, enhancing practical skills and lastly educating in various forms.

In 2019, as the new regulations of Vilnius University on *Open Access to Science (art) and Study Works* have entered into force, between January and June 2021, trainings for researchers, doctoral students and other members of the University community were organized in the University departments, besides that, external trainings were also provided. During the trainings, members of VU community were presented with open access implementation requirements, scientific research data management principles, eLABa system. VU community was given 11 trainings attended by 557 participants. In 2021, 161 participants were provided with 3 external trainings.

## Novelty at VU Library – LibQUAL to measure user satisfaction

In 2019, for the first time, the Library employed a service quality evaluation tool recognized in the international library world LIBQUAL to examine users' opinions and obtained detailed results on user expectations, to compare the data on inter-institutional level, to ascertain the best library service practices and to apply them in their own organizations.



## Open Access Week

As every year, in October, the Library has invited VU community to celebrate a global Open Access Week. On that occasion, VU Library published a special issue of "Open Science Postcard". It presented an interview with Silvia Bottaro, an Open Science Legal Officer of the European Commission's Directorate General for Research and Innovation, about the European Commission's most important initiatives, challenges and recommendations for the scientific community regarding open science.

Artificial intelligence was also discussed in the festive "Science Postcard" issue – readers were presented with an interview with Professor Olga Kurasova, a researcher of AI from VU's Institute of Data Science and Digital Technologies.

The other way to celebrate "Open Access Week" was to attend the lecture "Free and Open Software and Philosophy" organized by VU Library on 28 October and delivered by Pablo García Sánchez, Director of the Free Software Office of the University of Granada.



## VU Open Science Policy Guidelines

VU Library organized its activities according to the operational plan for 2021 that was prepared in accordance with VU's strategic priorities so that the Library could contribute to the implementation of VU's strategic goals. To achieve the indicator of the long-term goal 1.3.2 of the plan "Significant Growth of Scientific Communication", a working group led by Irena Kriviene has prepared a draft of VU Open Science Policy Guidelines. This document aims to ensure the formation of an open scientific culture, adherence to the principles of open science, promote openness in the scientific community and its activities, improve the quality of scientific and artistic outcomes and educational resources based on them, thus increasing the dissemination of scientific research to the public. Besides that, the Library contributed to the implementation of the abovementioned indicator by carrying out its annual activity "Open Science: Access to and Dissemination of Research Outcomes" and ensuring the growth of both full-text publications in the eLABa system and scientific research data/sets (in the MIDAS system).

### Data Days

On 17 November and 9 December, VU Library organized "DuoDi: Data Days". This year, it was organized at the Faculty of Philology and Šiauliai Academy and attended by 35 participants. During the events, the attendees were introduced to the concepts of "scientific research data" and "scientific research data management", the reasoning as to why it is important to talk about research data management and why more and more research funding organizations require or at least recommend data sharing were presented. The main part of the lecture presented a life cycle of scientific research data and discussed the most relevant technical, legal and administrative aspects for certain stages of the cycle.



## Scientometrics

Trainings on scientometrics and bibliometric analyses have been the main activities that were intensively carried out in this area.

In February, a distance training "Evaluation of Research Activity Using the InCites Analytical Tool" was provided to the University community, attracting more than 70 participants and receiving positive feedback. At the request of the Pro-Rector for Research, a review of the abovementioned analytical tool was carried out, while focusing on the indicators of publications downloaded by the Faculty of Chemistry and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration.

In addition to the traditional annual bibliometric analysis of the University researchers, it was proposed to prepare both bibliometric analyses of smaller structures (departments and chairs) and lists of individual publications indexed in WoS and Scopus DB. Taking into account the expressed needs, a bibliometric analysis of the Faculty of Law was carried out and lists of 55 individual researchers' publications indexed in WoS and Scopus DB were compiled.

## Scientific Research Data Management

MIDAS is a united and open national scientific research data digital archive that enables to provide electronic services, to collect and preserve data of various fields and areas of science as well as other information related to scientific research thus providing users with possibility to access this data easily, conveniently and free of charge through the updated MIDAS portal.

While continuing the practice of promoting scientific research data management, in 2021 "DuoDi" – Data Days have been organized at the University faculties and departments. The purpose of the event is not only to draw the attention of the VU academic community to the importance of research data management in the context of the development of open science, but also to familiarize the VU scientific community with research data management and the possibilities of MIDAS, to encourage them to store and publish data in this repository. In 2021, Data Days were organized in two departments of the University – the Faculty of Philology and Šiauliai Academy. During 2021, the number of MIDAS research studies increased by 44 items, 6 out of them were published and 38 unpublished. Overall research data growth in 2019 amounted to 19 per cent. In total, between the years 2015 and 2021, data and/or metadata of 71 research studies were published in MIDAS.

## MIDAS in international catalogues and search engines

In March 2021, MIDAS has been included in the OpenDOAR catalogue. The directory, maintained by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) of the UK, compiles and provides information about open access repositories to the general public.

In July, the interface between MIDAS and the research data retrieval system B2FIND has been launched. B2FIND is a service of EUDAT, an international research data surveillance network, which allows searching for research data published in various data repositories. With the creation of a metadata exchange link between MIDAS and B2FIND, that is, based on the OAI-PMH protocol, MIDAS became one of the 45 repositories, where published data can be found through this search engine.

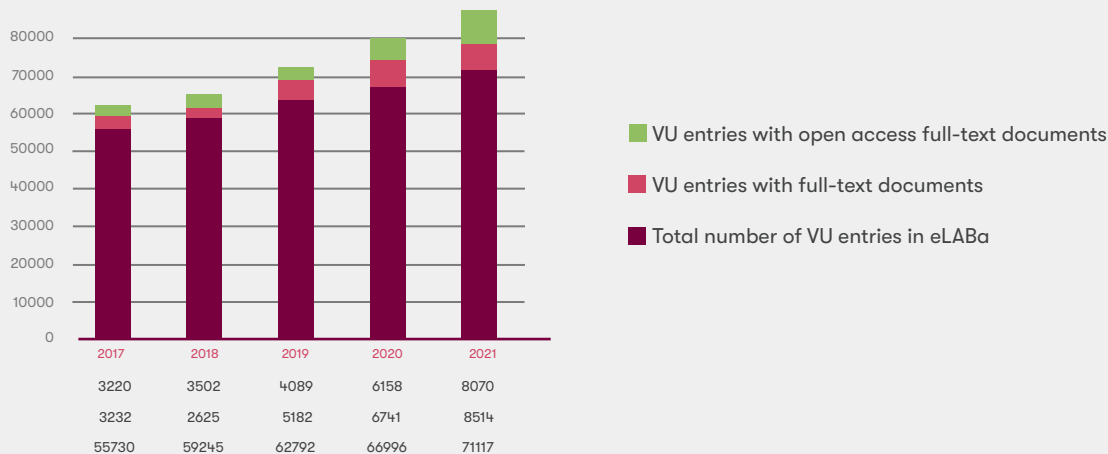


eLABa is a national information system that was put into operation in 2015 when implementing the project of EU structural funds “Creation and Development of eLABa Integral Services”. The objective of the project is to centrally manage the outcomes of Lithuanian science and study institutions and results of scholarly activities by means of information technologies.

Full-text documents' repository eLABa consists of Scientific Publications Database (PDB), Electronic Theses and Dissertations Database (ETD) and Plagiarism Check subsystem.

In 2021, eLABa VU PDB subsystem has been supplemented with 4,121 records on scholarly publications, 1,773 out of which were with full-text documents. The majority of eLABa registered publications with full-text documents consist of scientific articles licensed under the CC BY open content license (the application of open content licenses allows to ensure that others can legally use works on the Internet under the conditions specified by the property copyright holders) and retrospectively uploaded articles from scholarly journals published by the VU Press. Since the start of operation, a total of 71,117 VU scholarly publications have been registered in the system, and 8,070 (11.35 per cent) of these publications are open access.

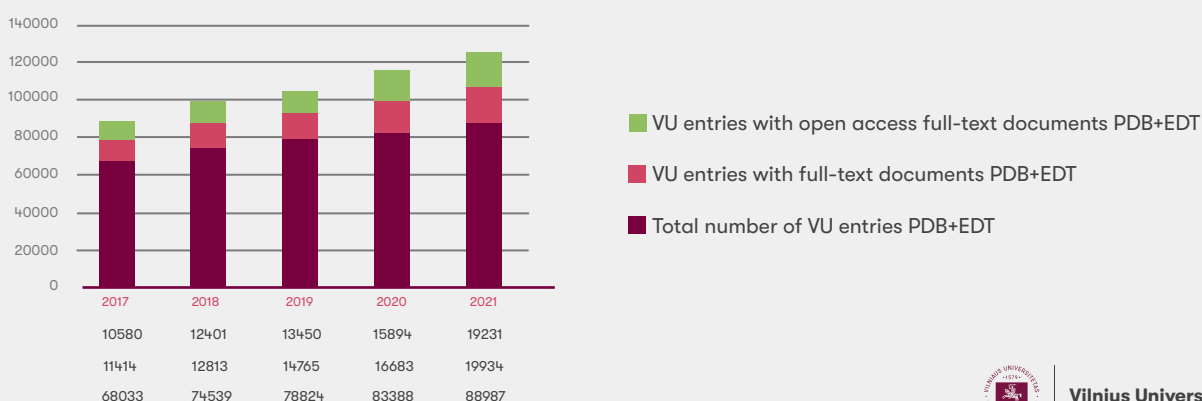
### Scholarly publications in eLABa of VU's PDB subsystem and their access status (2017–2021)



In 2021, 125 doctoral dissertations and 59 abstracts of dissertations were uploaded to the system. The total number of VU doctoral dissertations in the eLABa system – 1,759 (92.5 per cent out of them are open access), while the number of dissertation abstracts 1,592 (94.1 per cent out of them are open access).

Throughout the year 2021, the total number of VU documents in both databases of eLABa system (PDB and EDT) has increased by 5,599 (by 6.7 per cent), out of them full-text documents – 3,251 (by 19.4 per cent), while open access full-documents – 3,337 (22 per cent).

### Number of entries in eLABa's PDB+EDT subsystems and their access status (2017–2021)



## Studies and research support

### Freshers' Integration Week

In 2021, VU's *Freshers' Integration Week* has been held for the sixth time. Due to the continuing pandemic, the integration week was organized in a combined way that is an interpersonal and remote way. Although the entire September was dedicated to the freshers' integration, key activities took place in the first days of September.

VU Library presented itself to the freshers at the fair #Studentauk that took place in the Grand Courtyard. This has been the second year that Library participates in this contact fair, as the last year the Library was quite popular among students. During the fair, students were acquainted with services and resources of the Library that are relevant to them, with a system of reading rooms in faculties, SCIC and Central Library, and with career and volunteering opportunities. During the integration week, freshers were supplied with Library's informational and representational materials.

In 2021 tours of the integration week did not take place as the main activities of the integration week were organized between 31 August and 3 September. After evaluating the attendance statistics, necessary human resources and time consumption of tours guided in 2020 and the fact that tours are needed most in the first days of September, before the start of studies (at that time other events of integration week take place), it was decided not to organize tours, but to try an alternative – students were invited to visit **Integration Spaces**. In these spaces Library staff answered students' questions regarding library services, resources and study spaces available in the Library. Students could ask for an individual consultation on how to search for resources necessary for studies, how to find the reading room of the faculty or spaces designated for studies or recreation, and who should be approached if they have questions about information search, events, exhibitions, tours that take place in the Library, possibilities for volunteering and traineeships. About **230** Lithuanian and **40** foreign students have visited the integration space in two weeks.

This year students had a possibility to be acquainted with library services virtually – they could watch an updated video on *Youtube* platform presenting the Library in Lithuanian and English that was created for the integration week for the freshers. Updated video about VU Library in the Lithuanian language can be watched: [Acquaint yourself with Vilnius University Library](#). In total, this video has been viewed (data of 12 January 2022): in Lithuanian language – 2,967 times (on *Youtube* platform this video has two versions from 2020 and 2021, therefore the number of views is aggregated), while in English language – 692 times.

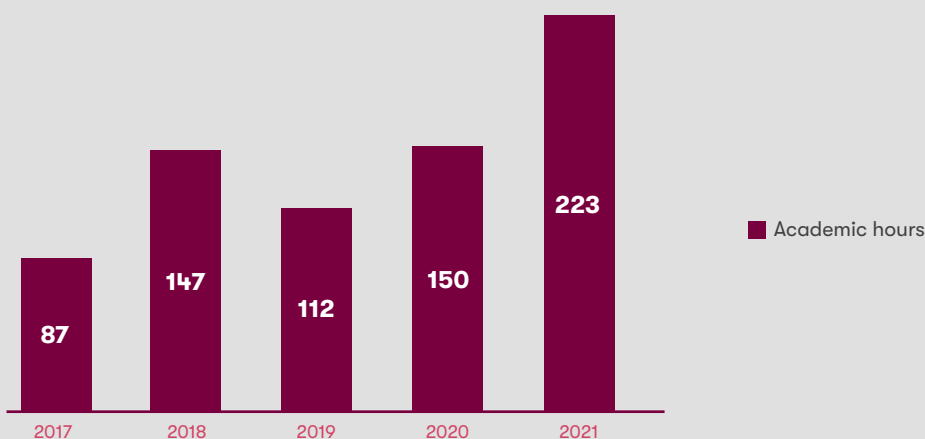
**Distance lectures** prepared for the integration week were delivered on 2 and 3 of September. Studies and Research Support Division has delivered **4** lectures (**3** in Lithuanian language and **1** in English). Students could watch live translation on *Youtube* platform or attend lectures in person. During the lectures VU Library services were presented to students, they could ask questions in person or through *live chat*. In the lecture delivered in English language students were active – they asked many questions regarding Library services and resources. Mixed lecture format was tested for the first time. Videos of translations are available through *Youtube* platform; number of views: on 2 September the video in English was viewed **3,444** times, on 3 September – **1,484** times.



## Information literacy trainings

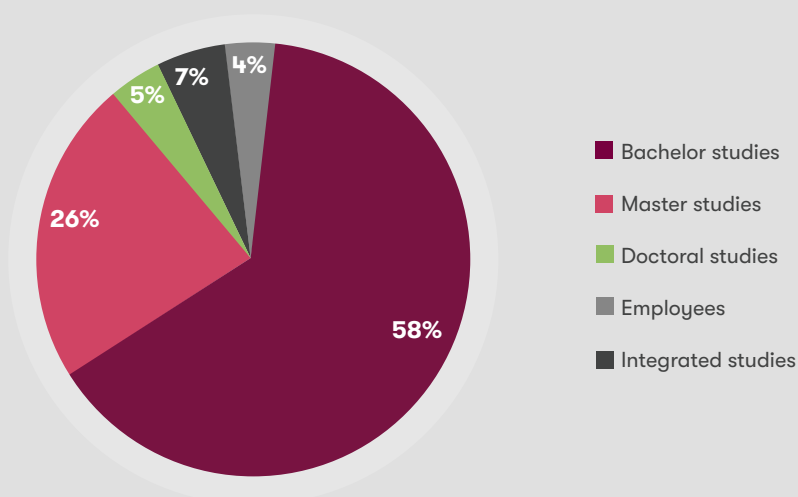
VU Library organizes information literacy trainings for VU students and employees. The key topics of trainings are the following: search for scholarly information, scholarly information search systems, ethic use of information, citation, copyright and bibliographic description, and tools for management of scholarly information. In 2021, **223** academic hours of information literacy trainings were provided for **2,568** members of VU community (students of various study levels, employees). A consistent increase in the annual number of academic hours can be seen since 2019. It is believed that this was influenced by both the purposeful communication of trainings and the changed study environment due to the pandemic, which more actively involves electronic tools, including information resources.

### Information literacy trainings: increase in academic hours (2017–2021)



The distribution of the training audience according to study levels and student/employee status remains stable, directly proportional to the composition of the community. Most of all, 59 per cent of trainings, were prepared for Bachelor students, 7 per cent for students of integrated studies (the major part for students of Law and Medicine study programmes); the second largest group was Master students, that is 25 per cent of all participants; doctoral students comprised 5 per cent, trainings for employees comprised 4 per cent of all participants. The increase in the number of trainings and the positive feedback received after the trainings show that the Library is capable of applying and providing relevant training materials not only to Bachelor students, but also to researchers and scientists.

### Information literacy trainings according to audience targeted



## Open trainings “Scholarly Information Search for Study Papers”

A training “Scholarly Information Search for Study Papers” where all interested members of the VU community were invited to participate was organized in November 2021 so that to provide opportunities for all students who wish to participate in information literacy trainings held by the Library. Three different topics according to the fields of science were offered to attendees: “Scholarly Information Search for Study Papers in the Field of Social Sciences and Humanities”, “Scholarly Information Search for Study Papers in the Field of Natural and Technology Sciences”, “Scholarly Information Search for Study Papers in the Field of Medical and Health Sciences”. During the trainings, students were acquainted with scholarly information search systems, resources and databases that are relevant to their study subject, besides that, their competences and skills related to the search of scholarly information, critical thinking and academic ethics were being enhanced.

All trainings were carried out remotely on MS Teams. **533** students participated in November and December trainings. As the trainings received positive feedback, this format will be developed and practiced in the future.



# SCIENCE AND CULTURE HERITAGE



## Accumulation and preservation of heritage collections

31 December 2021, the **Manuscripts Division** had in its holdings **339** archival units of different amount, which contain **346,886** various types of documents. Reserve stock of the Manuscripts Division contains 4,613 items (**20** out of them are newly received, 4 were transferred from the Information Resources Management Division and 16 authors' donations).

Twenty six archival units that are kept at the Manuscripts Division have been supplemented with groups of documents or individual documents. Not a single archival unit has been formed in 2021. The collection of **Graphic Arts Cabinet** contains **95,540** items. In 2021, the collection has been supplemented with **368** creations by **7** artists (unknown artist, Józef Oziembłowski, J. Franck, P. de Jode, Vladas Drėma, Valerija Dichavičienė and Stasys Aukštuolis).

The **Rare Books** holdings consists of **167,916** old and rare books from the 15th to the 20th century. In 2021, the collection has been supplemented with 77 documents (supplemented collections were the following: Lithuanian books, medicine, the 18th century books, *cimelia* and assisting collection).

In 2021, **3** manuscript documents from auctions (a letter of Mykolas Romeris and two certificates of Stephan Bathory University), 20 photos related to Vilnius city and the university as well as 5 objects of different nature (lithography, 2 copper engravings, 2 xylographies).

In 2021, objects of the following divisions: Cabinet of Graphic Arts (5 objects), Manuscripts Division (29 objects), Rare Books Division (24 objects) were borrowed by 9 memory institutions, long-standing partners of Vilnius University Library: MO Museum, Dukes' Palace, Lithuanian National Museum, Church Heritage Museum, National Art Gallery, recently established Vilnius Museum. The Samogitian Art Museum (Plungė) and A. Baranauskas and A. Vienuolis-Žukauskas Memorial Museum borrowed documents of the Library for the first time and took interest in documents related to their country that are kept in the Library.

In 2021, a hand-written document – the grammar “*Trumpa kalbamokslė liežuvio lietuviško*” by Kazimieras Kristupas Daukša (1795-1865) – kept in the Manuscripts Division's Marija and Jurgis Šlapelis archival unit (F119-516) has been registered in the UNESCO Memory of the World's Lithuanian list by the number 77.



Prof Rimvydas  
Laužikas,  
Irena Krivienė



Dr Inga Liepaitė

## Preservation of heritage collections

In 2021, **73,667** pages of the 8th category have been preserved/restored, while **787** document preservation cases of various formats and complexity have been made during this period. Throughout 2021, **121** book bindings have been restored/preserved and **23** new book bindings have been created.

In 2021, chemical and microbiological tests performed in 2020 were carried out in several directions. Testing of documents kept at VU Library storage and in the reading rooms, as well as testing of the storage and working premises was carried out on the regular basis. Testing of documents before restoration/preservation (acidity of material, ink tests, examining of the composition of glue, examining of lignin in paper fibres, morphological examinations). Testing of donated documents before placing them in the storage was carried out as well.

Due to the severe pandemic situation, other long-standing tests of VU Library heritage collections were not carried out in 2021.

## Digitisation

In 2021, **2,297** objects, comprised of **125,282** images have been digitised, while VU scholarly journals (29 objects containing 5,400 digital pages) have been digitised as well. Twelfth thousand one hundred and twenty two digital copies were made for users, whereas **679** digital copies were made of works under restoration.

In 2021, the major part of images were restored from the following archival units or collections:

- F3 (Manuscript treatise and scholarly works) – 80 objects, 24,874 images;
- Joachim Lelewel Book Collection (rare books) – 32 objects, 13,777 images;
- F8 (The Karpiai family hand-written documents) – 660 objects, 12,430 images.

Alongside with regular digitising of manuscripts, rare documents and the collection of VU scholarly periodicals, in response to the needs of VU community, digital content for the project (the implementation of which VU Library started at the end of 2018) financed by the EU European Regional Development Fund "The Development of Virtual Cultural Space that Meets the Needs of Society" was being created intensively.

The following digital documents are accessible in 2021:

- in VU Library Digital Collections at <https://kolekcijos.biblioteka.vu.lt/en> – **15,821** objects comprised of **1,064,948** images;
- in Virtual Cultural Heritage Systems (VEPS) at <https://www.epaveldas.lt/> – **1,082** cultural heritage objects;
- on Google Art & Culture platform at <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/vilnius-university-library> **184** images presented in the virtual exhibitions.

## New milestone: from now on VU Library Digital Collections have *Public Domain* mark

This year the Library prepared quite a gift as it gave users a permission to use digital collections without restrictions. That means that cultural digital objects that are available through the Library were given the mark *Public domain* that is they became publicly accessible and freely available to the public and their usage is not restricted by copyright.

By taking this action, the Library is following the example of the Western world. It might be that the document bearing the mark of *Public domain* might inspire the world of art and research, provide a joy of discovery for school students, teachers and creators, researchers, university students and to all those who value scholarly and cultural heritage. At the same time, the free access to the digital documents might open the way for new ideas and possibilities as it will allow to not only freely browse and study the digital treasury but also use it freely for creative, educational, commercial and other activities.



## Scholarly research and dissemination

The most significant event in 2021 has been the successful completion of the project “Lithuania in Vilnius University Library” – ten last traveling exhibitions were held between June and September and a publication on the project was prepared (published in the beginning of 2022 with publishing date of 2021) with the substantial help of the staff working in the heritage divisions.

A five-part virtual exhibition “Tales of Decorated Paper” on a historical decorated paper was also arranged in 2021. Five Tuesdays in a row the exhibition, the aim of which was to show documents kept in the holdings of VU Library, the decorated paper embellishing them, the specificity and production of such a paper, and which was held on the “Google Arts and Culture” platform, was presented to VU community and the public. The exhibition attracted a lot of interest from both the public and VU community.

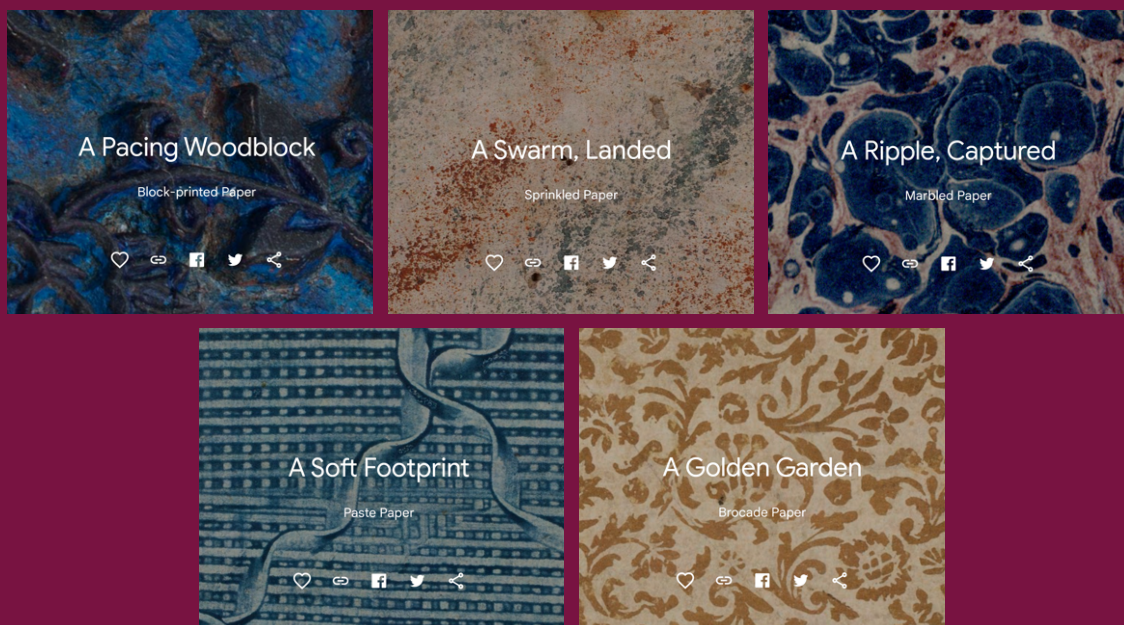
The other two exhibitions, namely “Jan Karol Chodkiewicz: Impavidus pro patria mori – Fearless to Die for the Homeland” held in the White Hall (23 September 2021 – February 2022) and “Between Mathematics and the University: A Centenary for Jonas Kubilius” prepared in collaboration with the Faculty of History and Vilnius University Museum and held in Franciszek Smuglewicz Hall (opened on 1 October 2021) have also attracted much attention.

### Google Arts & Culture – new five-part virtual exhibition of VU Library “Tales of Decorated Paper”

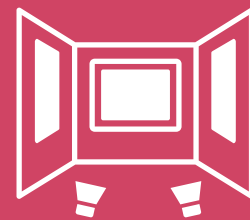
The five-part tale invited to explore examples of block-printed, sprinkled, marbled, paste and brocade paper, to admire exquisite patterns and ingenuity of early book creators and decorators, to appreciate the subtlety of fine crafts and the art of decoration. Inspired by the stylistics of Oriental cultures, it combines both abstract geometrical and natural motifs. In our times such paper is made by only a few artisans, while examples of the paper made by the old masters can be seen mostly only in museum and library collections.

Different sorts of historical decorated paper were presented every week thus for more than a month every Tuesday viewers were presented with five new and spectacular stories.

#### Dive in “Tales of Decorated Paper”



# VILNIUS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY: VISIBLE AND HIGHLY VALUED

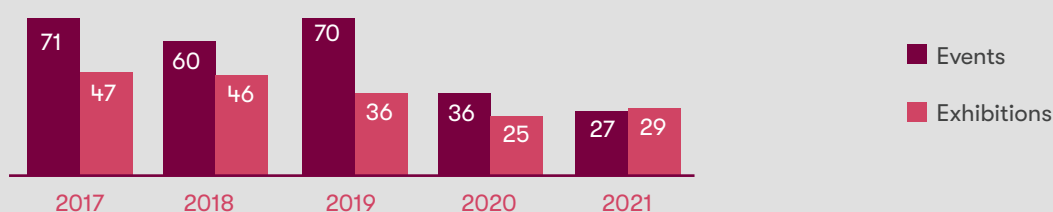


## Outstanding exhibitions and events

The Library presents cultural heritage documents that are kept in its holdings, invites to discuss on the issues of culture and education and encourages to get to know more on the university life through various events and exhibitions that are open to the public. In 2021, **676** participants attended events organized by the Library. For comparison, in 2019 4,400 participants attended the Library events. The table below shows the general trend of the decrease in the number of events and exhibitions in 2020–2021, which was mainly influenced by the situation of the global COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting restrictions on public events and gatherings.

More than thousand documents (**1.017**) were shown to the public, some of them were presented in the virtual space. On the whole, in 2021 the Library has held **27** events and **29** exhibitions (in total **54** public events and exhibitions).

### Number of events and exhibitions for the years 2017–2021



In 2021, exhibitions and their openings as well as other events were held in collaboration with the Institute of Psychology of the Faculty of Philosophy, the Faculty of History, the Faculty of Philology, the Faculty of Communication, Vilnius University Museum and the Zoological Museum of Vilnius University.

### A story about Vilnius University Library in “Vilnius Stories”

Vilnius University launched entertaining and amusing cycle of video stories “Vilnius Stories” which presented the public with the life of Vilnius City in the period of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the distinguished personalities and events of the city. Among the stories, there was an animated one about Vilnius University Library.



## The most outstanding events and exhibitions of 2021

### ***“Impavidus pro patria mori – Fearless to Die for the Homeland”***

An exhibition dedicated to the Grand Hetman of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, a brilliant warlord, alumnus of Vilnius University was arranged exactly 400 years after the death of the military commander. As many as several his victories were included into the history of military tactics, lectures were being delivered about that to future military commanders, due to these victories Jan Karol Chodkiewicz was well-known and respected military commander in Europe. As restoration of Franciszek Smuglewicz was delayed, the exhibition was on display in the White Hall.

The exhibition showed printed and hand-written documents associated with Chodkiewicz’s lineage, places where he lived and studied and his family. A part of the commander’s personal library that has survived and is kept in VU Library (13 personal books), that bear ownership inscriptions written by Jan Karol Chodkiewicz and his notes in the margins, was on display (all 13 books) on the opening day of the exhibition.

An important part of the exhibition was documents related to Chodkiewicz’s military activities, panegyrics glorifying his outstanding victories, showing plans of battles, weaponry of the time, fortification facilities. The last part of the exhibition is dedicated to the Battle of Khotyn during which the grand hetman of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania had died on 24 September 1621 exhausted by long endless campaigns and chronic diseases.

Viewers of the exhibition could read extracts from an impassioned speech of the hetman to his soldiers before the battle, funeral sermons featuring Chodkiewicz’s virtues and victories, and a book written by Adam Naruszewicz in 1781 on Jan Karol Chodkiewicz’s life and the history of wars, the beginning of which gives a slightly modified quotation from the Roman poet Quintus Horatius Flaccus, describing very aptly the life of Jan Karol Chodkiewicz – “Impavidus pro patria mori” (“Fearless to Die for the Homeland”). The exhibition will be on display until February 2022.

During the launch of the exhibition, Associated Professor Genutė Kirkienė and Dr Kęstutis Kilinskas from the Faculty of History participated in the discussion about the grand hetman of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

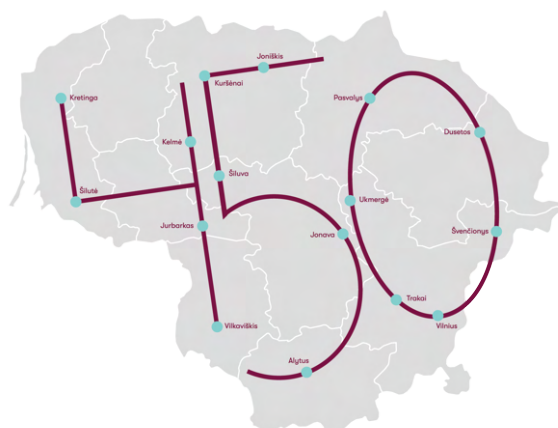




## Lithuania in Vilnius University Library

The project was started in 2015, while marking the 445th anniversary of the establishment of VU Library, whereas Lithuania that year declared the year of ethnographic regions. Thus, the idea of the project was produced – while marking the jubilee of VU Library to visit all regions of Lithuania and present there that part of the cultural heritage of the Library – manuscripts, books, cartography, graphic art, old photography – that is closest related to the history of the visited region.

On the occasion of the 450th jubilee of VU Library, the project “Lithuania and Vilnius University Library” was to expand the scope. Due to the pandemic, in the jubilee year 2020, out of 15 planned exhibitions only 5 were organized, while the remaining 10 movable exhibitions were organized and moved to the year 2021. The following cities were visited in 2021: Alytus, Jonava, Joniškis, Jurbarkas, Kelmė, Kretinga, Pasvalys, Raseiniai, Šiauliai and Vilkaiviškis.



## Catechisms by Martynas Mažvydas and Mikalojus Daukša on virtual display in Joachim Lelewel Hall

In 2021, Vilnius University celebrated its 442nd birthday while staying in quarantine. It has become a tradition to show to the public the original copy of "Catechism" by Martynas Mažvydas on the occasion. This year was no exception -- not only the first Lithuanian book, but also another document, the copy of "Catechism" by Mikalojaus Daukša, a unique piece of the Lithuanian writing, was shown to the curious people who were thirsty for cultural events.

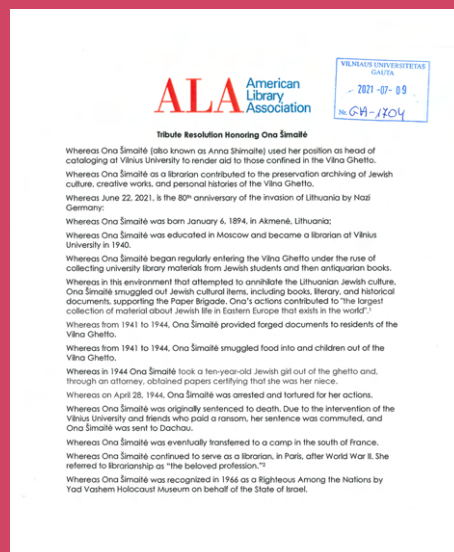


These rarities were displayed in one of the most spectacular spaces of the Library – in Joachim Lelewel Hall with the possibility to virtually walk around the hall and see all the impressive things in here.

## Acknowledgements to Ona Šimaitė by the American Library Association

The American Library Association (ALA) issued a resolution honouring the librarian of Vilnius University Library and the Righteous Among the Nations Ona Šimaitė (1894–1970). In an official document ALA expressed respect and gratitude to Ona Šimaitė for “her dedication, courage and achievements to the “beloved profession” of librarianship, the preservation of archives, protection of history and serving as beacon of humanity in the midst of barbarism” as well as for the example she set to librarians and archivists across the world.

While working at Vilnius University Library, Ona Šimaitė was a real liaison person of the ghetto, as she helped to hide those who escaped ghetto, looked for hiding places for children, brought weapons, ammunition and letters to the ghetto and from there she should bring Jewish cultural heritage to hide. Every day she would risk her life while making her best to help others. She was arrested and tortured, but remained strong. Ona Šimaitė was one of the first Lithuanians to receive the Righteous Among the Nations award (in 1966).



## Project activities

Every year the Library carries out or contributes to carrying out international, national projects financed by the EU, the University infrastructure development, or small-scale cultural projects. The year 2021 was not exceptional and rich with creative and progressive ideas that have been implemented or just started to be implemented while trying to manoeuvre in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Started in 2019, the EODOPEN project, which is aiming at providing access to unreachable works in digital form throughout the entire Europe, while at the same time dealing adequately with copyrights clearance issues has been continuing in 2021. With the help of this project, until the year 2023, 15 libraries will strive to open up 15 thousand documents and literary creations of the 20th–21st century to European netizens. In 2021, the platform of VU Library's Digital Collections was expanded, thus making it easier for users to work with pdf files (an option to download documents and search for particular text in the document was installed). In 2021, while implementing EODOPEN project, 200 objects (32,897 digital pages) were digitised. Three most popular objects in the EODopen Collection in 2021 were the following:

- **Kučinskienė, Zita Aušrelė. Klinikinės biochemijos ir laboratorinės diagnostikos pagrindai**
- **Lietuvių pavardžių žodynas. A–K**
- **Lietuvių pavardžių žodynas. L–Ž**

The other successfully ongoing national digitisation project focusing on digitisation activities is **"The Development of Virtual Cultural Space that Meets the Needs of Society"**. The activities of this project were completed on 30 June 2021 after the completion of all planned tasks. The remaining part of documents (1,400 objects) was digitised, all objects – 6,034 and their metadata – that were digitised during the project were delivered to ePaveldas system.

The national project "eMODB.LT: Opening of Databases for Lithuania", which is funded by the EU and continues for more than ten years, allowing the Library to subscribe to databases was completed this year. The project was extended from 1 April 2021 to 31 December 2021 thus ensuring the subscription to 20 electronic databases and providing access to the key resources of scholarly information for academics, researchers and students.

The Library continued with a project **"MOBILaIT: Opening Learning Opportunities for People with Reading Disabilities"**, which aims at making services accessible to people who cannot read texts in ordinary formats. In 2021, while carrying out the project, 1,200 copies of books published in Lithuania bearing 600 titles on the most advanced and relevant topics for studies and self-education were delivered to the Library.

In 2021, the Library continued with a project **"Inventorying of VU Library Heritage Collections for Drawing Transfer Documents to VU Asset Accounting"**. During the year, 20,902 publications were inventoried (19th century collection and other publications).

While aiming at carrying out the research and presenting to the public dissertations that were printed by the University Press in 1579–1773 and are kept at VU Library; to create their digital collection supplied with exhaustive metadata alongside with digital images of selected documents, annotations and an advanced search option, VU Library runs the project **"The Research of the Old Vilnius University's (1579–1773) Dissertations and the Creation of the Database (VUDis)"**.

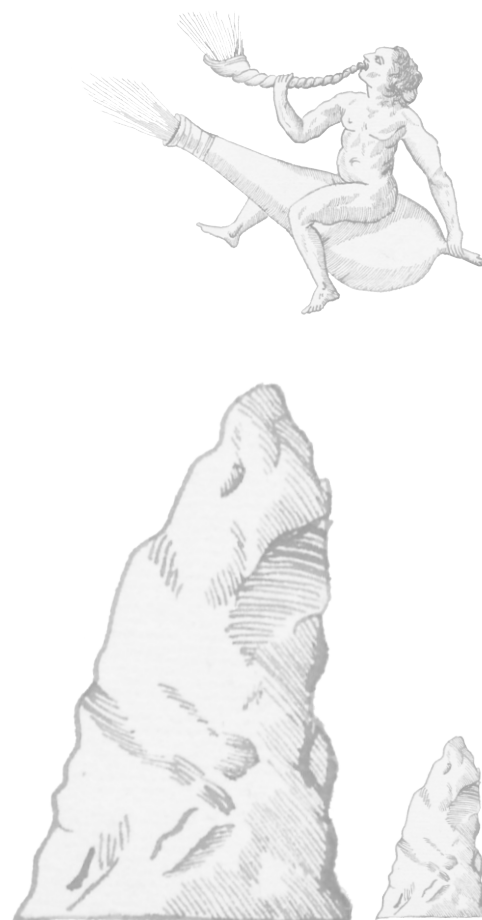
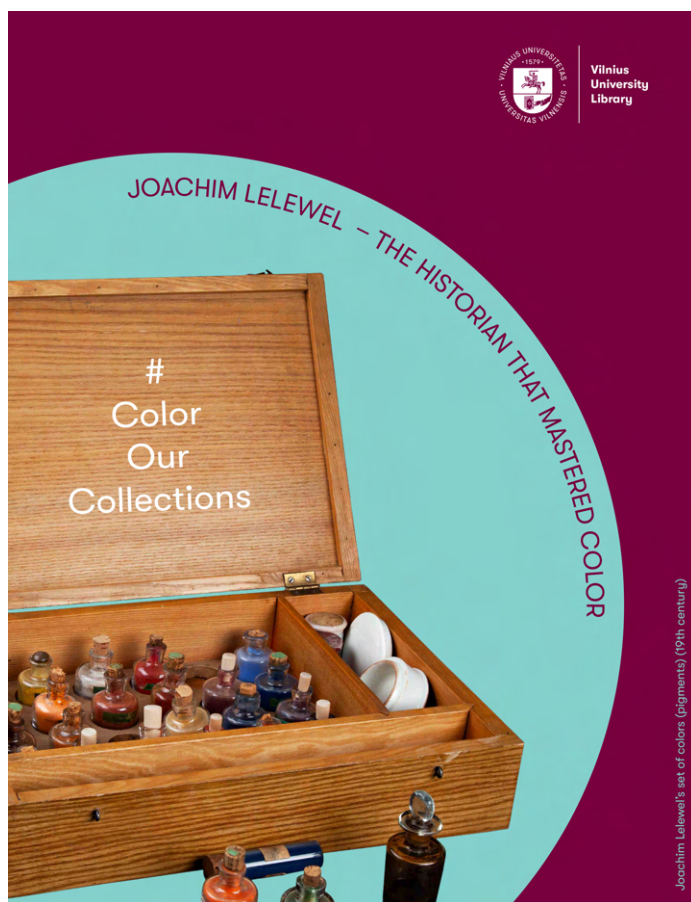
In 2021, while carrying out this project, 37 objects (1,833 digital pages) were digitised, a thorough analysis of the research works was performed and a report “The Research of the Old Vilnius University's (1579–1773) Dissertations and the Creation of the Database” was drawn up while preparing textual part of the research and delivered during the international research conference *Theatrum libri*.

In 2021, the funding allocated by the Lithuanian Council for Culture gave a possibility to implement the ongoing project “**Lithuania in Vilnius University Library**” with the help of which 10 movable exhibitions were held in different Lithuanian regions.

## VU Library has become involved in the New York Academy of Medicine Library’s initiative inviting to add colours to collections!

It is the sixth year that the New York Academy of Medicine Library has been carrying out a book colouring initiative #ColorOurCollections, inviting to present book collections by colouring them. The idea attracted more than a hundred museums, archives, libraries, various cultural institutions including VU Library. For the implementation of the initiative, the Library chose one of its most significant collections – the collection of the historian Joachim Lelewel (1786–1861). It contains old cartography, valuable book collection and the researcher’s documentary heritage.

The library’s colouring book consists of short stories about Lelewel and images from his exclusive collection. Besides that, the book has an unsolved riddle at the end!



## Expert activities

Library employees participate in various activities of local and international organizations, carry out joint projects, and cooperate in the implementation of various ideas. VU Library has its own representatives in: the Certification Commission of Restorers of Movable Cultural Property of the Republic of Lithuania, the National Committee of the UNESCO Memory of the World Program, in the Association of Classics, the Editorial Board for the Preparation of the National Bibliography, Lithuanian Association of Academic Library Directors, Lithuanian Librarians' Association, Committee of Technical Experts of the Standardization Department, Working Group for the Creation of a National Digitisation Monitoring System, Alliance of Scientific Data Research, Commission of Book Art Experts, the Editorial Board of the journal "Information Sciences", Lithuanian Communication Association, Literature Council under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, Vilnius Bookbinding Guild and other organizations and groups.

## Members of international organizations

Vilnius University Library is a member of the following international organizations:

- Association of European Research Libraries (LIBER)
- Consortium of European Research Libraries (CERL)
- Bibliotheca Baltica (BB)
- Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR)

Vilnius University Library maintains ties with the Jagiellonian University, University of Tartu and University of Latvia, Goethe-Institut, and *Google Culture Institute*.

## Special guests

Many representatives of foreign countries visit the University every year. In 2021, Vilnius University Library was visited by:

- Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Spain Pedro Sánchez and Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania Ingrida Šimonytė
- Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland Zbigniew Rau
- Princess of Denmark Mary Elizabeth
- Ambassador of Mongolia Barkhaso Dorjo
- Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary László Kövér
- President of the Republic of Latvia Egilis Levitas and President of Republic of Estonia Alar Karis





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Annual report prepared according to the department provided activity reports by:

Irena **Krivienė**,

Dr Marija **Prokopčik**, Jonė **Šulcaitė-Brollo**,

Gitana **Naudužienė**, Ieva **Talaikienė**, Brigita **Zorkienė**

Compiler: Ramunė **Gedvilaitė**

Copy editor: Eglė **Kirilauskaitė**

Translator: Kristina **Gudavičienė**

Designer: Lina **Dumbravaitė**



**Vilnius  
University  
Library**