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ANELÈ DROMANTAITĖ

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**LESSONS FROM LITHUANIA'S 2013 PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
EUROPEAN UNION: INFORMING PREPARATION FOR 2027 THROUGH THE
TRANSFER OF EXPERIENCE**

MASTER'S THESIS

Supervisor: Prof. Gediminas Vitkus

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MASTER'S THESIS FLYLEAF

Conclusions of the tutor of the Master's thesis (concerning the public defence):

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(name, surname)

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Anelė Dromantaitė

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Summary: This thesis examines how experience from Lithuania's 2013 Presidency of the Council of the EU is used in preparation for 2027. It analyses 25 documents and interviews with 14 participants. The findings show selective, uneven, and layered continuity. Organisational memory was distributed across records, routines, networks, and experienced officials, but shaped preparation only when actively retrieved and linked to current tasks. The 2013 model remains the main domestic foundation, while lessons from recent Presidencies update it for technological, security, and institutional changes. Most changes indicate single-loop learning; redistribution of responsibility is a provisional double-loop case. The study shows that continuity depends on access, interpretation, and bridge actors, not retention alone.

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Introduction

When Lithuania takes over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2027, thirteen and a half years will have passed since its first Presidency in the second half of 2013. This interval poses a specific problem: after a long period, Lithuania has to start preparing for the Presidency again. The experience gained during the first Presidency may remain in documents, routines, professional relationships and the knowledge of individual officials, but its continued existence does not mean that it will be retrieved or used in the next preparation cycle. The central question is therefore not simply what Lithuania learned in 2013, but whether particular lessons remained available and became meaningful in preparation for 2027. The institutional character of the Presidency makes this question really important for further analysis. For six months, the presiding member state plans and chairs most meetings of the Council and its preparatory bodies, helps maintain the continuity of legislative work, brokers compromises between member states, and represents the Council in negotiations with other EU institutions.¹ This places considerable coordinating responsibility on the national administration and requires intensified cooperation between ministries, the Permanent Representation, political institutions, and EU-level actors. Although the Presidency may provide opportunities to influence the timing and emphasis of the Council's work, the presiding state is also expected to act as an honest broker rather than simply promote its national preferences. Beyond these institutional responsibilities, the Presidency also brings increased European and international attention to the presiding state, raising the importance of how its administrative competence, diplomatic conduct, and coordinating capacity are perceived. It may affect not only the state's influence within the EU, but also its wider reputation and image. The Presidency is significant for this thesis not only as a political role, but also as a temporary period of intensive administrative mobilisation during which knowledge, skills and professional networks are developed. This makes it relevant to both political science and organisational and management studies: the former helps explain the Presidency's political and coordinating functions, while the latter directs attention to how this temporary mobilisation is managed and what happens to the resulting knowledge after the Presidency ends. Lithuania's return to the role in 2027 makes it possible to examine whether that experience was retained and reactivated during a new preparation cycle thirteen and a half years later.

Lithuania's position as a small EU member state provides an additional context for examining what happens to this experience. Small-state scholarship identifies size-related

¹ General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, "The Presidency of the Council of the EU," last reviewed 7 August 2026 (accessed 12 August 2026). <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/presidency-council-eu/>

constraints such as more limited pools of personnel, specialised expertise and bargaining resources. It also shows, however, that small states differ considerably in their ability to respond to these constraints and may compensate through prioritisation, specialised knowledge, effective domestic coordination, persuasion and coalition-building.² This thesis does not assume that Lithuania has inadequate administrative capacity simply because it is a small state. The perspective of a small state raises an empirical question: whether Presidency-related knowledge is concentrated between a relatively limited number of officials and, if so, whether close professional networks facilitate its transfer or make continuity particularly vulnerable to personnel turnover. Studies of rotating Presidencies commonly examine agenda-setting, mediation, performance or immediate effects on national administrations, while organisational memory and policy transfer scholarship provides concepts for analysing how knowledge is retained and transferred across time and settings. These strands have rarely been combined to trace particular lessons between two national Presidency cycles separated by a long interval. Grumbinaitė comes closest to this research problem by showing that officials' skills, professional contacts and some working practices could remain after temporary Presidency structures had been dismantled; her research does not, however, follow Lithuania through to active preparation for 2027 or reconstruct how surviving knowledge entered current decisions.³ This thesis takes that later process as its object of analysis.

Against this background, the thesis asks: **How is knowledge generated during Lithuania's 2013 Presidency of the Council of the European Union retained, retrieved, transferred, and adapted in preparation for the 2027 Presidency, and to what extent is it incorporated into current preparatory arrangements?** To answer this question, the study identifies the principal administrative and strategic lessons articulated after 2013, examines where and in what forms Presidency-related knowledge was retained, traces the actors and formal and informal mechanisms involved in its retrieval and transfer, and analyses how earlier practices have been retained, modified, combined with more recent experience or rejected in the changed institutional and political context. This research uses a hybrid deductive and inductive qualitative content analysis of legal acts, audit, and evaluation reports, institutional reports, and preparation documents, complemented by semi-structured interviews with personnel involved in the 2013 Presidency, the preparation for 2027, or both cycles. The design distinguishes planned measures from adopted

² Diana Panke, "Small States in the European Union: Structural Disadvantages in EU Policy-Making and Counter-Strategies," *Journal of European Public Policy* 17, no. 6 (2010): 799-817, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2010.486980>.

³ Ieva Grumbinaitė, "Bringing the European Union Closer to the Member States? The Impact of the Rotating EU Council Presidency on Small Member States," in *Small States in EU Policy-Making: Strategies, Challenges, Opportunities*, ed. Anna-Lena Högenauer and Matúš Mišík (Abingdon: Routledge, 2024), 64-67, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003380641-5>

arrangements, reported implementation from demonstrated effects and formal similarity from traceable transfer. Rather than assuming that earlier lessons informed preparation for 2027, the thesis treats the question of whether, how, and to what extent they did so as an empirical question.

1. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical basis of this research deliberately combines perspectives from two areas of the social sciences: political science and organisational and management studies. This interdisciplinary approach is necessary because the thesis's object is simultaneously a political process within EU governance and an administrative process within the Lithuanian state. The analytical framework is organised around organisational memory, knowledge transfer and organisational learning. Organisational memory theory helps to identify where knowledge may be retained and how it is retrieved; knowledge transfer theory helps to explain how it moves between sources and recipients; organisational learning theory assesses whether that knowledge changes organisational understanding or action. Policy Transfer Theory is applied more narrowly to classify how earlier practices are selected, combined, adapted or rejected in a changed context. It is used as a framework for administrative lesson-drawing rather than to imply that a substantive public policy is being transferred unchanged between national systems. The framework rests on two principal theoretical pillars: Organisational Learning Theory, associated with Chris Argyris and Donald Schön⁴, and Policy Transfer Theory, developed by David P. Dolowitz and David Marsh⁵. Organisational Learning Theory provides the main lens for analysing change within the institutions responsible for Lithuania's Council Presidency. It was selected because it offers a precise way to distinguish between limited adjustments to established practices and deeper reconsideration of the assumptions, responsibilities and coordination models that guide preparation. This is especially relevant to the thesis because the central question is not only whether experience from 2013 still exists, but whether its use changes how institutions prepare for 2027.

Policy Transfer Theory provides the complementary political science perspective. The framework developed by Dolowitz and Marsh makes it possible to examine why lessons are sought, who participates in their transfer, what is transferred, which sources are used, and whether knowledge is copied, emulated, combined, adapted or rejected. It explains the selection and contextual adaptation of lessons once they become available to current actors. Organisational

⁴ Chris Argyris and Donald A. Schön, *Organizational Learning: A Theory of Action Perspective* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1978).

⁵ David P. Dolowitz and David Marsh, "Learning from Abroad: The Role of Policy Transfer in Contemporary Policy-Making," *Governance* 13, no. 1 (2000): 5-23.

memory and knowledge transfer scholarship supplements these two theories by identifying where Presidency knowledge may be retained and the formal and informal mechanisms through which it moves between the 2013 and 2027 teams. Small state administrative capacity and the temporary nature of a Council Presidency are treated as contextual conditions that might shape the process. These elements provide a basis for explaining the sequence from the production of experience in 2013 through its retention, retrieval, and transfer to its adaptation and incorporation into preparation for 2027.

1.1. Organisational Learning Theory

The theoretical basis of Organisational learning provides the principal internal lens for examining whether experience generated during Lithuania's 2013 Presidency influences institutional understanding and practice in preparation for 2027. Argyris and Schön conceptualise organisational learning in terms of detecting and correcting errors, when an organisation changes its actions while retaining the governing values, objectives and assumptions that structure those actions, learning remains single-loop.⁶ Double-loop learning occurs when inquiry also questions and modifies the underlying governing variables. Organisational learning is not identical to the accumulation of individual expertise: individual learning becomes organisationally significant only when it is reflected in the shared understandings and arrangements through which an organisation acts.⁷ This distinction enables the analysis to evaluate the depth of learning rather than merely counting transferred lessons.

Knowledge transfer is not equivalent to organisational learning, Huber defines organisational learning as a change in the range of an organisation's potential behaviours resulting from its processing of information; immediate performance improvement or an already observed behavioural outcome is therefore not required. For this thesis, however, organisational learning is noted where the evidence demonstrates that received knowledge changed an organisational decision, understanding, procedure, routine or governing assumption.⁸ This distinction is important because the thesis can identify changes in preparation before assessing the 2027 Presidency's performance. A former official may communicate a lesson without the receiving organisation changing its understanding or practice. In this thesis, organisational learning is coded only when current actors interpret the knowledge and alter a decision, procedure, routine or governing

⁶ Argyris and Schön, *Organizational Learning*, 2-3, 16-20.

⁷ Argyris and Schön, *Organizational Learning*, 2-3, 16-20.

⁸ George P. Huber, "Organizational Learning: The Contributing Processes and the Literatures," *Organization Science* 2, no. 1 (1991): 88-115.

assumption. This permits the analysis of learning during preparation without claiming that the eventual performance of the 2027 Presidency is already known.

A key distinction must be made between individual and organisational learning. While officials involved in 2013 may have gained lasting personal expertise, this knowledge might not be retained by the state administration if it remains private or is lost upon their departure. That is why true transfer and learning are possible only when it is integrated into standard procedures, staffing choices, coordination frameworks, digital technologies, or designated roles, and the knowledge becomes organisationally significant only when it is made available through shared understandings. Personal recollection is a possible repository of memory, and communication is a form of transfer, but neither shows institutionalisation by itself. Simply remembering information without applying it is just memory; sharing information without organisational changes is just a transfer without lasting institutionalisation. The relevant measure of continuity should depend on how well knowledge is utilised and retained despite staff changes. Single-loop learning describes correction within existing objectives and assumptions; double-loop learning requires evidence that the governing assumptions, authority structures or goals were reconsidered.⁹ These labels will be applied only where an observable organisational change is demonstrated.

Organisational Learning Theory examines how organisations acquire, retain, and transfer knowledge over time, and it offers insights into how governmental and diplomatic institutions have preserved the information and knowledge, and how they are communicated to new teams years later. Walsh and Ungson define organisational memory through the processes of acquisition, retention, and retrieval.¹⁰ Experience is integrated into memory during organisational activities, stored in various repositories, and can later be accessed for making decisions. Their model highlights several potential storage sites: individuals, organisational culture, routines or transformations, structures, physical setups, and external archives.¹¹ This plural understanding of memory is analytically important. A document archive is only one form of retention and cannot be taken as proof that an organisation remembers and uses the knowledge. On the other hand, the absence of a centralised database does not necessarily mean that memory has disappeared if former officials remain accessible or if earlier procedures have been absorbed into ordinary work. Argote and Fahrenkopf similarly emphasise that organisational knowledge is embedded in members, tasks,

⁹ Argyris and Schön, *Organizational Learning*, 2-3, 16-20.

¹⁰ James P. Walsh and Gerardo R. Ungson, "Organizational Memory," *Academy of Management Review* 16, no. 1 (1991): 57-91, <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1991.4278992>.

¹¹ Walsh and Ungson, "Organizational Memory," 57-91.

tools and the networks connecting them.¹² The analysis must therefore locate knowledge before assessing its continuity. Huber's model of organisational learning further distinguishes between knowledge acquisition, information distribution, interpretation, and organisational memory.¹³ The stages of Huber's model indicate that just retaining the material is not enough. The retrieval is an active process that requires awareness, access, responsibility, and interpretive skills. Evidence of memory includes stored information and its citation in current plans, its use in training, its discussion in working group sessions, or its activation through consultations with former participants.

The reverse process is organisational forgetting, it refers to the loss of knowledge within organisations. De Holan and Phillips demonstrate that knowledge can disappear from organisations or become unavailable for use; this forgetting can result from personnel changes, dispersed archives, changing responsibilities, shifting roles, weak documentation, loss of access to digital systems, or failure to record tacit and politically sensitive experience and information.¹⁴ Forgetting is not always harmful: some practices may need to be deliberately abandoned because the institutional, technological or geopolitical environment has changed, such rejection may itself indicate critical learning. Accidental loss, by contrast, occurs when potentially useful knowledge cannot be located, accessed or activated. The key challenge is to distinguish between accidental knowledge loss and the purposeful unlearning of practices now considered outdated or inappropriate. Knowledge transfer occurs when the experience of one organisational unit affects another.¹⁵ This definition directs attention to the source, recipient and observable influence of a transfer, while later research identifies personnel mobility, networks, routines, tools, organisational design and active search as possible mechanisms.¹⁶ The empirical task is not merely to ask whether Lithuania has lessons from 2013, but to identify by whom or what they were retained, who required them for 2027, and through which formal or informal channels they affected current preparation.

Formal mechanisms include post-Presidency evaluations, written handovers, manuals, databases, correspondence, structured training, staffing plans, mentoring programs, and formally established working groups. These tools help to make knowledge visible, reproducible, and less

¹² Linda Argote and Erin Fahrenkopf, "Knowledge Transfer in Organizations: The Roles of Members, Tasks, Tools, and Networks," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 136 (2016): 146-59, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2016.08.003>.

¹³ Huber, "Organizational Learning," 88-115.

¹⁴ Pablo Martin de Holan and Nelson Phillips, "Remembrance of Things Past? The Dynamics of Organizational Forgetting," *Management Science* 50, no. 11 (2004): 1603-13, 1605-06, <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.1040.0273>.

¹⁵ Linda Argote and Paul Ingram, "Knowledge Transfer: A Basis for Competitive Advantage in Firms," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 82, no. 1 (2000): 151-52, <https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.2000.2893>.

¹⁶ Argote and Fahrenkopf, "Knowledge Transfer in Organizations," 146-59.

dependent on individual availability. Informal mechanisms involve direct consultation with former employees, personal notes, professional networks, peer advice and learning from active participation in current EU initiatives. Informal exchanges are particularly vital for tacit knowledge that cannot be fully documented. The two mechanisms cannot be seen as interchangeable. Formal records provide broad access but may lack context, failures, and practical details. And vice versa, informal networks transmit valuable experience but are vulnerable if they rely on only a few individuals. Hardt's analysis of institutional memory in an international organisation emphasises the importance of designing effective learning structures and recognising the role of people in maintaining and retrieving knowledge, especially during staff turnover.¹⁷ Sustainable continuity is more achievable when formal documentation and personal knowledge transfer support each other: written records document what happened, while experienced employees help current staff understand why it mattered and whether it still applies. Transfer may also be difficult within the same state administration, Szulanski describes knowledge transfer as potentially “sticky” because the causal basis of a practice may be ambiguous, the recipient may lack the capacity to absorb it, or the relationship between source and recipient may be weak.¹⁸ For this thesis, relevant barriers include fragmented institutional ownership, limited time, uncertainty about who should initiate contact, reluctance to document mistakes, generational differences among professionals, and the assumption that experience from 2013 is either self-evident and valuable or entirely obsolete. Evidence of a mechanism should go beyond its formal existence and demonstrate that a source, a recipient, and an actual act of communication or use can be identified.

1.2. Policy Transfer Theory

The principal objects of transfer in this thesis are administrative arrangements rather than substantive policy priorities. Policy priorities cannot simply be carried across a thirteen and a half year interval because they are also shaped by the current EU agenda, the Trio programme and the geopolitical context. Policy Transfer Theory, developed by David P. Dolowitz and David Marsh, explores how policies, practices, and ideas are transferred across different settings, why actors seek lessons, who participates in transfer, what is transferred, the origins of knowledge, how much transfer occurs, the constraints involved, and the potential for failure.¹⁹ This theory identifies main factors that influence successful transfer, including the compatibility of contexts, the willingness of

¹⁷ Heidi Hardt, “How NATO Remembers: Explaining Institutional Memory in NATO Crisis Management,” *European Security* 26, no. 1 (2017): 120-48, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2016.1263944>.

¹⁸ Gabriel Szulanski, “Exploring Internal Stickiness: Impediments to the Transfer of Best Practice within the Firm,” *Strategic Management Journal* 17, special issue (1996): 27-43, <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250171105>.

¹⁹ Dolowitz and Marsh, “Learning from Abroad,” 5, 8-17.

actors, and the availability of institutional support; their framework encompasses policies, administrative structures, institutions, and ideas.²⁰ Although this research does not involve a straightforward transfer between two national political systems, this framework helps classify how current actors manage Presidency-related practices. In the context of Lithuania's EU Council Presidency, this theory helps analyse how strategies and practices from 2013 are being adapted to 2027, in light of changes in political, institutional, and geopolitical conditions. It is also used as a tool for intertemporal administrative lesson-drawing and to understand the additional knowledge Lithuania gains from other member states and EU institutions.

The main focus of transfer is not the substantive policy agenda from 2013, it is understandable that some priorities cannot simply be adopted thirteen and a half years later. Instead, transferable objects include administrative arrangements, coordination methods, training formats, staffing principles, negotiation routines, communication practices, and lessons learned about what to avoid repeating. Relevant transfer agents encompass former 2013 officials, current civil servants, diplomats, central coordinators, trainers, political leaders, the General Secretariat of the Council, the current Presidency trio, and officials from more recent national Presidencies. Dolowitz and Marsh distinguish degrees of transfer, including copying, emulation, combination and inspiration.²¹ This thesis supplements these categories with deliberate rejection as an additional empirical outcome, understood as a reasoned decision not to transfer an earlier practice. Deliberate rejection is not one of Dolowitz and Marsh's original degrees of transfer. Negative lessons are treated separately as a type of knowledge that may be transferred: they concern earlier practices, arrangements or responses that actors conclude should not be repeated.²² Direct copying means reproducing practice with minimal change, emulation retains the underlying principle while modifying the form, combination or hybridisation combines experience with knowledge from more recent examples; inspiration occurs when a past example stimulates a new solution rather than providing a model; rejection occurs when actors explicitly decide that a lesson is obsolete, unsuitable or contradicted by later experience. Adaptation is crucial for this research because temporal continuity does not guarantee contextual continuity. Policy transfer research highlights the dangers of uninformed, incomplete, or unsuitable transfers.²³ These risks include relying on an inaccurate or partial understanding of 2013, removing practices from their supportive conditions, or applying lessons to contexts where they no longer fit. Therefore, the framework views critical rejection as potentially a

²⁰ Dolowitz and Marsh, "Learning from Abroad," 12, 17.

²¹ Dolowitz and Marsh, "Learning from Abroad," 13.

²² Dolowitz and Marsh, "Learning from Abroad," 12.

²³ Dolowitz and Marsh, "Learning from Abroad," 17.

sign of learning, not necessarily evidence of forgetting. In the context of Lithuania's EU Council Presidency, this theory helps analyse how strategies and practices from 2013 are being adapted to 2027, in light of changes in political, institutional, and geopolitical conditions.

1.3. Integrated Analytical Framework

Together, Policy Transfer Theory and Organisational Learning Theory provide an integrated framework for analysing continuity between Lithuania's 2013 and 2027 Presidencies of the Council of the European Union. The two theories address distinct yet interconnected aspects of the research problem. Policy Transfer Theory, developed by Dolowitz and Marsh, helps identify what knowledge is transferred, who participates in the transfer, which sources of experience are used, and how lessons are selected and adapted. Organisational Learning Theory, particularly the work of Argyris and Schön, enables examination of whether transferred experience changes organisational practices and becomes embedded within institutions. Policy Transfer Theory explains the selection and contextual adaptation of lessons, while Organisational Learning Theory explains their interpretation, application and institutionalisation.

This research broadly defines policy transfer as the application of knowledge about policies, institutional arrangements, practices, and administrative structures from one context to another. While Policy Transfer Theory is often used to examine exchanges between countries or political systems, it can also be used to analyse transfers over time. Lithuania's preparations for the 2027 Presidency create a new institutional and political environment where knowledge from 2013 can be revisited, reevaluated, and utilised again. The transfer target here is not a single policy but a set of lessons related to the Presidency, covering areas like interinstitutional coordination, staffing, training, agenda management, negotiations, communication, logistics, and crisis response.

Organisational Learning Theory complements this perspective by distinguishing between the transfer of information and organisational learning. The existence of a report, manual or former Presidency official does not, by itself, demonstrate that an institution has learned from previous experience. Learning occurs only when acquired knowledge influences organisational understanding or action. Argyris and Schön's distinction between single-loop and double-loop learning is used to assess the depth of this change. Single-loop learning occurs when institutions use previous experience to improve existing procedures without questioning their underlying assumptions. Double-loop learning occurs when experience leads institutions to reconsider the assumptions, structures or objectives on which their preparations are based. The framework allows

the research to examine not only whether Lithuania is repeating or refining practices used in 2013, but also whether the earlier experience has contributed to more fundamental changes in how the Presidency is understood and organised.

The integrated model conceptualises institutional continuity as a multi-stage process rather than a binary condition in which institutional memory is either present or absent. Experience generated during the 2013 Presidency must first be recognised and articulated as a potential lesson. It must then be retained in an organisational repository, such as individuals, documents, databases, routines, institutional structures, or professional networks. Retained knowledge must subsequently be retrieved and communicated to actors involved in preparing for 2027. Finally, it must be assessed against the current context, adapted where necessary, and incorporated into organisational practice. The process examined in this research can be summarised as follows: **2013 experience → lesson identification → retention → retrieval and transfer → contextual assessment and adaptation → incorporation into 2027 preparation → institutionalisation.**

The framework investigates the extent of institutionalised continuity and how knowledge of the 2013 Presidency has been used in Lithuania's preparations for 2027, and treats continuity as a graduated process. This can be anything from complete loss of knowledge to being stored but not accessible or used, to being retrieved and shared without influencing preparation, to being applied in specific situations, to becoming embedded in routines, training, and structures that operate independently of individual officials. Institutionalisation indicates a greater degree of continuity than either personal memory or a one-time use of a lesson by a former participant in the Presidency. Because the 2027 Presidency has not yet taken place, the thesis assesses only whether knowledge has become embedded in the current preparation process; it does not claim that the resulting practices will remain durable after 2027.

Failures or interruptions can happen at any point in this process. A lesson might never be clearly expressed, especially if it involves failures or politically sensitive issues. Although it might be documented, access could be challenging. Knowledge held by individuals can also be lost due to staff turnover, retirements, or transfers between organisations. A lesson could be shared with the current 2027 team but then rejected, or it might be accepted informally by officials but not integrated into practical institutional procedures. On the other hand, discarding a 2013 practice does not necessarily mean the organisation has forgotten or failed to transfer knowledge. This might be a conscious decision to unlearn if the previous approach is no longer suitable for the current situation.

Thus, the framework distinguishes between the passive loss of knowledge and the intentional choice to discontinue outdated practices.

Contextual assessment is important because lessons do not transfer between identical Presidencies. Changes in the EU institutional environment, political priorities, technologies, working practices and geopolitical circumstances may reduce the relevance of particular aspects of the 2013 experience. Policy Transfer Theory is used to determine whether a lesson is copied directly, emulated with modifications, combined with knowledge from other sources, used only as inspiration, or consciously rejected. This enables an assessment of whether Lithuania's institutions treat the 2013 experience as a fixed model to be reproduced or as one source of knowledge among several others, including more recent Council Presidencies, the General Secretariat of the Council, and Lithuania's trio of Presidency partners. Lithuania's position as a small state is treated not as a third theoretical framework but as a contextual condition that might shape each stage of the learning and transfer process. Small-state scholarship associates limited administrative size with constraints in personnel and specialised expertise, while also showing that close coordination, prioritisation and professional networks can help compensate for such constraints.²⁴ In this thesis, these characteristics are therefore treated as possible conditions affecting knowledge concentration, informal transfer and vulnerability to personnel turnover rather than as assumptions about Lithuania's administrative capacity. Their relevance is examined empirically in the analysis.

The integrated framework is applied by tracing concrete lessons through the complete process. For each lesson identified in documents or interviews, the analysis asks: what experience from 2013 is considered relevant; where and in what form was this knowledge retained; who retrieved and communicated it; through which formal or informal mechanism was it transferred; how was its relevance to 2027 evaluated; and what, if anything, changed in current preparation as a result? Formal mechanisms may include evaluation reports, manuals, databases, training programmes, simulations and institutional procedures, while informal mechanisms may include personal networks, mentoring, professional mobility and consultations with former officials.

This approach prevents marking just the existence of institutional memory as its effective use. Evidence that knowledge has survived will be distinguished from evidence that it has been retrieved, transferred, adapted and incorporated into preparation. The framework thereby connects the content of lessons from 2013 with the mechanisms through which they reach the 2027

²⁴ Diana Panke, *Small States in the European Union: Coping with Structural Disadvantages* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); Baldur Thorhallsson, *The Role of Small States in the European Union* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).

Presidency team and the extent to which they result in organisational learning. It provides the basis for identifying both effective practices for institutional continuity and gaps where relevant knowledge may be lost, remain dependent on particular individuals, or fail to influence institutional preparation.

Table 1. Operationalisation of the main analytical concepts

Concept	Observable evidence in this study	Evidence that is not sufficient by itself
Lesson articulation	Evaluation finding, audit conclusion, after-action recommendation or explicit administrative lesson	A favourable public statement about the Presidency
Retention	Identifiable person, report, archive, database, routine, role or network in which knowledge remained	The historical production of a document without evidence that it remained accessible
Retrieval	A current actor locates, cites, requests or recalls earlier knowledge	Similar wording or a similar structure in 2013 and 2027
Transfer	An identifiable source communicates knowledge to a recipient through a formal or informal mechanism	Attendance at training or a study visit without evidence of what affected a decision
Adaptation	Evidence that an earlier model was modified, combined with newer experience or rejected for a stated contextual reason	A difference between the two periods with no explanation
Application	A transferred lesson changes a current plan, decision, procedure, staffing arrangement or practice	A proposal that has not been adopted or acted upon
Organisational learning	A change in organisational understanding, routine, structure or governing assumption	Knowledge sharing with no observable organisational consequence
Institutionalisation	A practice is embedded in roles, rules, routines, training or structures beyond a single individual or episode	One-off use, formal rhetoric or continued dependence on one experienced official
Forgetting	Useful knowledge is unavailable because awareness, access, responsibility or retention has failed	Deliberate rejection of an obsolete practice

Source: compiled by the author.

These criteria are applied together with evidence status codes that distinguish among plans, implementation, assessed effects, recommendations, and public or political claims.

2. Literature Review

The existing literature provides a foundation for understanding the dynamics of the Council Presidency, knowledge transfer processes, and small-state behaviour in the EU. Reviewing this scholarship allows the thesis to identify how these strands intersect in the context of Lithuania's preparation for the 2027 EU Council Presidency.

2.1. Small States in the EU

The first part of this literature analysis focuses on the role of small states in the EU, specifically examining Lithuania's experience during the Presidency of the Council of the EU. Small-state scholarship identifies limited personnel, expertise and bargaining resources as recurring structural constraints, while also showing that small administrations can compensate through prioritisation, specialist knowledge, informal coordination, persuasion and coalition-building.²⁵ Thorhallsson emphasises the structural disadvantages of small states, including limited administrative resources and expertise, while also showing how they may compensate through coalition-building, mediation and strategic use of institutional opportunities.²⁶ Panke complements this perspective by outlining specific strategies small states use to influence EU policymaking, including forming coalitions with like-minded member states, leveraging procedural rules within EU institutions, and framing issues in ways that resonate broadly across member states.²⁷ Together, these studies suggest that small-state influence is conditional on administrative preparation and the effective deployment of limited resources rather than on state size alone. For a Presidency, these features create dual expectations: close networks and short communication lines may facilitate rapid coordination, but concentration of expertise in a small number of officials may make institutional memory really vulnerable to turnover.

Other scholars further refined understanding of how small states exercise influence within the European Union. While structural constraints continue to shape their behaviour, research increasingly emphasises the strategic use of institutional opportunities. Vaznonytė demonstrates that rotating Council Presidencies retain agenda-setting influence, although this influence is primarily exercised through prioritising among existing policy issues rather than introducing entirely new

²⁵ Baldur Thorhallsson, *The Role of Small States in the European Union* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).; Diana Panke, *Small States in the European Union: Coping with Structural Disadvantages* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).

²⁶ Thorhallsson, B. (2000). *The Role of Small States in the European Union*. Routledge.

²⁷ Panke, D. (2010). *Small States in the European Union: Coping with Structural Disadvantages*. Farnham: Ashgate.

agendas.²⁸ Similarly, content analysis of Cyprus and Malta confirms that most Presidency priorities echo pre-existing EU documents; only a small share are truly unique national items.²⁹ That suggests that the influence of small states is often exercised through selective emphasis, framing, and coalition-building rather than through fundamental agenda transformation.

The experience of smaller member states also demonstrates that structural constraints do not eliminate opportunities for political agency. A case study of Slovakia's 2016 Presidency in external relations illustrates how coordination, institutional positioning and strategic adaptation can create room for agenda influence despite limited material resources.³⁰ Recent comparative work on rotating Presidencies further shows that small-state influence is exercised within strong institutional and agenda constraints, which makes coordination and selective prioritisation more important than the introduction of wholly new EU priorities.³¹ This academic literature supports the argument that small states can demonstrate and use their influence within the EU when they successfully combine administrative preparation, diplomatic coordination, and strategic agenda management. This framework provides valuable insights into how Lithuania's diplomatic approach during its 2013 Presidency may have used such techniques to navigate challenges and achieve consensus among diverse stakeholders.

2.2. Administrative Effects and Legacies of Council Presidencies

Grumbinaitė's research is particularly relevant because it examines how holding the Council Presidency affects national administrations rather than focusing solely on performance at the EU level. Drawing on expert interviews in small member states, including Lithuania, she treats administrative capacity as a combination of organisational structures and resources, institutional memory, coordination arrangements, officials' skills, professional networks and attitudes towards EU decision-making. Her work connects research on small states with the organisational-learning perspective applied in this thesis.³² Her comparative findings show that first-time Presidency holders generally began preparations earlier and relied on temporary coordination structures,

²⁸ Austė Vazonytė, "The Rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU—Still an Agenda-Setter?" *European Union Politics* 21, no. 3 (2020): 497-518, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116520916557>.

²⁹ Mark Harwood, "The Continuing Significance of the Council of the EU Presidency for Small States: Agenda Setting or Painting-by-Numbers?" *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 33, no. 3 (2025): 719-33, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2024.2411633>.

³⁰ Jozef Bátora, "Reinvigorating the Rotating Presidency: Slovakia and Agenda-Setting in the EU's External Relations," *Global Affairs* 3, no. 3 (2017): 251-63, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23340460.2017.1410721>.

³¹ Ieva Grumbinaitė, *The Rotating European Union Council Presidency and Small Member States: Small States, Big Challenge* (London: Routledge, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003290599>.

³² Ieva Grumbinaitė, "Turning 'Them' into 'We': The Impact of the Rotating European Union Council Presidency on the Member States" (PhD diss., European University Institute, 2020), 10, 38-39.

additional personnel, and centralised training. All researched administrations used a Brussels-based model, yet previous Presidency experience did not eliminate the need to rebuild capacity for a new cycle. Institutional memory could reduce uncertainty and make procedures more familiar, but it did not determine Presidency performance. Preparation continued to depend on the contemporary political and administrative context, the personnel available and the practical organisation of coordination.³³

Drawing on interviews with Lithuanian civil servants and diplomats conducted in 2016, Grumbinaitė provides a medium-term view of the administrative legacy of Lithuania's 2013 Presidency.³⁴ The temporary Presidency Coordination Department and most additional staffing arrangements were dismantled, but experience survived in officials' knowledge of EU processes and negotiation, professional contacts, informal interministerial networks and some working routines. Former attachés returned to ministries, LINESIS remained in use, and regular video calls between the Permanent Representation and ministries continued. This legacy was therefore primarily personal and sociological rather than strongly structural. It was also vulnerable: limited systematic effort was made to retain temporary personnel or preserve the networks created during the Presidency.³⁵ Grumbinaitė further argues that the long interval between Presidencies reduces the practical relevance of domestic institutional memory and increases the value of learning from more recent Presidency holders. Her findings demonstrate retention several years after 2013, but they do not establish whether that knowledge was later retrieved and used in preparation for 2027. Her conclusion that institutional memory is "useful but not necessary" is treated in this thesis as a proposition to be examined rather than an assumption.³⁶ The analysis asks whether knowledge from 2013 merely remained available or was actively retrieved, adapted and incorporated into preparation for 2027.

2.3. Lessons from Lithuania's 2013 EU Council Presidency

In academic literature several studies provide detailed analyses of Lithuania's 2013 Presidency. Lithuanian authors Jurkynas and Daukšaitė provide an insightful analysis of Lithuania's achievements, especially its leadership in advancing the Eastern Partnership agenda; they assess the Presidency as well executed, emphasising early preparation, administrative capacity, cooperation

³³ Grumbinaitė, "Turning 'Them' into 'We'," 64-68.

³⁴ Ieva Grumbinaitė, "Narystės egzaminas: Lietuvos pirmininkavimas Europos Sąjungos Tarybai," in Lietuvos narystės Europos Sąjungoje dvidešimtmetis: pokyčiai ir perspektyvos, ed. Gediminas Vítkus (Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2024), 20, 26, 28-30, <https://doi.org/10.15388/LT-naryste-ES.2024.1>

³⁵ Grumbinaitė, Turning "Them" into "We", 74, 77-78, 83, 86-91.

³⁶ Grumbinaitė, "Narystės egzaminas," 30.

with EU institutions and Lithuania's ability to combine the inherited EU agenda with selected national priorities.³⁷ Their work illustrates the importance of prioritising diplomatic objectives and leveraging Lithuania's unique geopolitical position. Vilpišauskas examines the Presidency against difficult negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework and the geopolitical disruption surrounding the Eastern Partnership Summit. His analysis presents Lithuania's performance as the product of preparation, administrative capacity and adaptation to a demanding inherited EU agenda.³⁸ For this thesis, the study identifies coordination, negotiation management and contextual adaptation as possible sources of experience, but does not demonstrate how that experience was subsequently retained or transferred. Šešelgytė shifts the focus to Lithuania's contributions to EU security and defence policy, she highlights the Presidency's ability to draw attention to Eastern European security challenges, particularly given Russia's influence in the region. Her analysis demonstrates how Lithuania used its presidency to align national priorities with broader EU objectives, emphasising the importance of clear communication and agenda alignment.³⁹ These studies collectively provide a comprehensive view of Lithuania's 2013 presidency and its success, but they do not examine the mechanisms by which these lessons are preserved and carried over into the 2027 preparations.

2.4. Knowledge Transfer in Diplomatic Contexts

Research conducted in other public and international organisations provides a comparative basis for analysing the Lithuanian case. These organisations are not equivalent to the temporary interinstitutional arrangement created for a Council Presidency. Nevertheless, they face comparable problems: knowledge is distributed across organisational units, personnel change over time, politically or professionally sensitive experience may remain undocumented, and formal knowledge-management systems coexist with interpersonal forms of exchange. The relevance of this literature lies in the mechanisms it identifies rather than in treating the organisations themselves as directly comparable.

Research on public organisations demonstrates that knowledge sharing depends on both organisational relationships and formal structures. Analysing cooperation between departments

³⁷ Mindaugas Jurkynas and Justina Daukšaitė, "A Feather in Its Cap? The Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2013," *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review* 31 (2014): 11-36.

³⁸ Ramūnas Vilpišauskas, "Lithuania's EU Council Presidency: Negotiating Finances, Dealing with Geopolitics," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 52, annual review (2014): 99-108, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12164>.

³⁹ Margarita Šešelgytė, "The Lithuanian Presidency of the EU Council and Common Security and Defense Policy: Opportunities and Challenges," *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review* 10, no. 1 (2012): 87-119, <https://doi.org/10.2478/v10243-012-0014-3>.

across more than 90 public-sector organisations, Willem and Buelens identify lateral coordination and trust as important conditions for interdepartmental knowledge sharing.⁴⁰ Harvey's study of intergenerational knowledge transfer distinguishes a one-directional source and recipient model from a model of mutual exchange and shows that organisational conditions encouraging motivation, participation and interaction can support the transfer of both explicit and tacit knowledge.⁴¹ Stone directs attention to the individuals and networks that act as transfer agents across organisational boundaries, while later research emphasises that policy transfer involves not only the circulation of knowledge but also its interpretation and translation by participating actors.⁴² These studies justify examining reports, procedures, databases, and training programmes, together with mentoring, consultation, professional mobility, and informal networks. Studies of humanitarian and international security organisations further sharpen the distinction between the formal preservation of knowledge and its practical availability. Caballero-Anthony, Cook and Chen show that humanitarian organisations use both formal knowledge-management systems and interpersonal practices, but that fragmentation and dependence on informal knowledge can weaken organisational continuity.⁴³ Hardt's research on NATO demonstrates that the existence of a lessons-learned centre and database did not ensure that politically sensitive experience was consistently recorded, retrieved or used. Formal processes could create professional and reputational concerns, while practitioners frequently relied on interpersonal communication and trusted professional relationships.⁴⁴ These findings are relevant to the Lithuanian case because Presidency-related knowledge may similarly exist in formal repositories without being known, trusted or activated by current officials.

Transfer is therefore neither automatic nor necessarily beneficial. Szulanski describes internal knowledge transfer as "sticky" when the causal basis of a practice is ambiguous, recipients lack absorptive capacity, or the relationship between the source and recipient is difficult.⁴⁵ Policy-transfer research similarly warns that transfer may be incomplete, uninformed or

⁴⁰ Annick Willem and Marc Buelens, "Knowledge Sharing in Public Sector Organizations: The Effect of Organizational Characteristics on Interdepartmental Knowledge Sharing," *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 17, no. 4 (2007): 581-606, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mul021>

⁴¹ Jean-François Harvey, "Managing Organizational Memory with Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer," *Journal of Knowledge Management* 16, no. 3 (2012): 400-417, 400-401, <https://doi.org/10.1108/13673271211238733>

⁴² Diane Stone, "Transfer Agents and Global Networks in the 'Transnationalization' of Policy," *Journal of European Public Policy* 11, no. 3 (2004): 545-566, 545-548, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501760410001694291>; Diane Stone, Osmany Porto de Oliveira, and Leslie A. Pal, "Transnational Policy Transfer: The Circulation of Ideas, Power and Development Models," *Policy and Society* 39, no. 1 (2020): 1-18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14494035.2019.1619325>

⁴³ Mely Caballero-Anthony, Alistair D. B. Cook, and Christopher Chen, "Knowledge Management and Humanitarian Organisations in the Asia-Pacific: Practices, Challenges, and Future Pathways," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 53 (2021): 102007, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2020.102007>

⁴⁴ Hardt, "How NATO Remembers," 120-126.

⁴⁵ Szulanski, "Exploring Internal Stickiness," 27-28, 37-38.

inappropriate when a practice is detached from the institutional conditions that supported it.⁴⁶ In the Lithuanian case, the analytical task is consequently not only to identify what was remembered from 2013, but also to establish who retrieved that knowledge, through which documents or relationships it travelled, how its relevance to the changed context was assessed and whether it influenced a current preparatory arrangement.

2.5. Research Gap

Taken together, the literature explains small-state constraints and strategies, the administrative effects of Council Presidencies and the mechanisms through which organisations retain and transfer knowledge. These strands have rarely been integrated into a process-based account of how experience moves between two national Presidency cycles separated by a long interval. The analysis of academic literature identifies a clear gap: existing studies provide valuable insights into small-state behaviour, presidency dynamics; they fail to integrate these elements into a cohesive framework for understanding the transfer of experience between Presidencies. The gap exists at the intersection of these fields: the transfer of institutional memory and experience across presidencies, particularly for small states. Grumbinaitė comes closest to the problem examined here because she traces administrative legacies beyond the immediate post-Presidency period and shows that skills and networks may outlast temporary structures. She does not, however, follow Lithuania through the full interval to the active preparation for 2027 or reconstruct how earlier experience is reactivated in that later cycle.

This research addresses this gap by focusing on Lithuania's case and taking a closer look at the administrative staff and their experience, combined with documents related to the evaluation and preparation for the Presidency. The existing studies collectively provide a comprehensive view of Lithuania's 2013 presidency, emphasising different dimensions of its success. However, they do not examine the mechanisms by which these lessons are preserved and carried over into the 2027 preparations. This thesis asks where the knowledge identified after 2013 remained, who retrieved it for 2027, through which documents and relationships it travelled, how it was combined with lessons from more recent Presidencies and whether it produced observable changes in current preparation. By reconstructing this process, the thesis contributes to research on small-state Council Presidencies, examining earlier administrative experience may shape a later preparation cycle, while not treating state size or previous Presidency experience as sufficient explanations of administrative capacity. It also contributes to the practical understanding of Council Presidency

⁴⁶ Dolowitz and Marsh, "Learning from Abroad," 17.

preparation by identifying the formal and informal mechanisms through which experience is retained and mobilised, as well as the points at which continuity may depend on particular individuals, documents or organisational arrangements.

The broader question underlying the Lithuanian case is under what conditions a small administration can convert experience generated during a temporary and intensive task into organisational capacity available for a later cycle. The analytical proposition of the thesis is: after a long interval between Presidency cycles, continuity is likely to be selective rather than comprehensive, and retained knowledge will influence new preparation only when it is actively retrieved and connected to current organisational roles, routines and decisions. Where knowledge remains dispersed across individuals or archives without bridge actors or formal retrieval mechanisms, continuity will remain vulnerable to personnel turnover. Earlier domestic experience is also expected to be combined with knowledge from more recent Presidencies rather than reproduced by direct copying.

3. Methodology

This research employs a qualitative retrospective longitudinal case-study design to examine the transfer of experience from Lithuania's 2013 Presidency of the Council of the European Union to its preparation for the 2027 Presidency. It combines qualitative content analysis of documentary material with semi-structured interviews. The two forms of evidence are used to reconstruct how identifiable lessons and practices generated or articulated in 2013 were retained, retrieved, communicated, adapted and potentially incorporated into preparation for 2027. The case examined is Lithuania's experience across the 2013 and 2027 Presidency cycles. The unit of analysis is the trajectory of an identifiable administrative lesson or practice from its generation or articulation in 2013 through possible retention, retrieval, transfer, adaptation and incorporation into preparation for 2027. The institutional setting is the distributed network of ministries, coordinating bodies, the Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the European Union, the Seimas and other actors involved in Presidency preparation. Because this arrangement crosses organisational boundaries, institutional memory is not treated as belonging to one ministry or organisation alone.

A longitudinal case-study design is appropriate because the study traces processes across two temporally separated Presidency cycles and examines them within their administrative and institutional context. Previous research on organisational learning, knowledge management, and policy adaptation in international organisations has similarly relied on qualitative approaches to

capture both formal structures and informal practices that shape the transfer of knowledge over time.⁴⁷ Combining documentary analysis with interviews makes it possible to compare formal records of retention and transfer with participants' accounts of retrieval, interpretation and practical use.

3.1. Qualitative Content Analysis

This study employs qualitative content analysis of documentary material within a qualitative case-study design. Following Schreier's approach to qualitative content analysis, the material is organised and interpreted through a coding frame that enables the systematic comparison of evidence across documents.⁴⁸ The study uses a hybrid deductive and inductive coding strategy. Initial categories are derived from Organisational Learning Theory, organisational memory research and Policy Transfer Theory. These categories address the articulation, retention, retrieval, transfer, adaptation, application and institutionalisation of lessons, as well as organisational forgetting and, where evidenced, deliberate unlearning. During the analysis, additional subcodes are added and existing categories refined when recurring empirical patterns are not adequately captured by the theory-derived framework.

The documentary sample was developed in two stages. The document analysis was understood as a systematic process of identifying, selecting, appraising and synthesising documentary material.⁴⁹ First, an exploratory web-based search was conducted using Presidency-related search terms and combinations referring to Lithuania, 2013, 2027, preparation, implementation, reports and evaluation. Relevant search results were followed to official institutional websites, repositories and linked documents, while references contained in retrieved legal acts, administrative reports, audits and evaluations were used to identify further material. This stage produced a broad preliminary source pool encompassing legal and administrative documents, institutional reports, commissioned analyses, academic publications and contextual public communications. Second, the preliminary pool was screened during coding to distinguish documents that could support the empirical analysis from those useful primarily for contextualisation. A document was included in the core analytical corpus when it: 1) had an identifiable producer, date and institutional context; 2) directly concerned the preparation, implementation or evaluation of Lithuania's 2013 Presidency or preparation for the 2027

⁴⁷ Caballero-Anthony, Cook, and Chen, "Knowledge Management and Humanitarian Organisations," 102007.

⁴⁸ Margrit Schreier, *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice* (London: SAGE, 2012).

⁴⁹ Glenn A. Bowen, "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method," *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009): 27-40, <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>

Presidency; 3) provided substantive evidence relevant to at least one stage of the analytical framework, including lesson articulation, retention, retrieval, transfer, adaptation, rejection, formal incorporation or initial implementation; 4) made a distinct or corroborative contribution to tracing an identifiable lesson trajectory. Document identification continued during the interview stage, four additional documents were added after the interview participants drew attention to sources that had not been located in the initial search. These documents were assessed according to the same criteria. Materials that provided relevant background but did not permit the tracing of a lesson or transfer mechanism were retained only for contextual use. The documentary cut-off date was 20 August 2026.

The document selection resulted in a retained documentary set of 25 documents: 10 relating to the 2013 Presidency cycle and 15 relating to the preparation for 2027. 20 of them were substantively coded, while five were retained for contextual purposes. The complete inventory presented in Appendix 1 records each document's producer, date, source type, analytical status and function within the study. Inclusion in the documentary set did not imply equal evidentiary weight. Legal acts were treated as authoritative evidence of formally adopted responsibilities, structures and decisions. Administrative plans, programmes and activity reports were used to identify intended arrangements, procedures and officially reported implementation. Audits, evaluations, and commissioned analytical studies provided systematic assessments of preparation and articulated lessons, but their conclusions were interpreted within their specific evidentiary scopes. Contextual communications, press releases and public assessments were not used as direct evidence that organisational learning or transfer had occurred. Claims concerning access, retrieval, informal transmission and the influence of earlier experience on current decisions were checked with interview evidence.

The unit of coding was one analytically meaningful claim or passage. Each coded segment was recorded together with its source and location, evidence status, organisational-memory stage, formal or informal mechanism, transfer type, learning depth, contextual conditions, evidential strength and relevant counter-evidence. Evidence status distinguishes between proposed measures, formally adopted arrangements, implemented activities, assessed effects, recommendations and public or political claims. Accordingly, a plan or recommendation is treated as evidence of intended action rather than implementation. An institutional activity report can demonstrate that an activity was reported as delivered or that a target was reported as met, but it does not transparently show the quality, practical use or effects of that activity. Similarly, the existence of comparable arrangements in 2013 and 2027 is not coded as evidence of transfer unless an identifiable source, actor,

mechanism or retrieval episode connects them. The documentary analysis proceeded in two temporal stages. First, the 2013 corpus was analysed as the 2013 baseline of the study. Documents were analysed to identify administrative arrangements and practices, experience generated during preparation and implementation, explicitly articulated lessons, problems and recommendations, and the repositories in which relevant knowledge could potentially have been retained after the Presidency. At this stage, the analysis did not assume that the identified lessons survived or were later used. The resulting lesson trajectories formed the baseline against which the 2027 material was examined. Second, the 2027 documentary corpus was analysed for evidence that particular elements of the 2013 experience had been retrieved, selected, adapted, rejected, formally incorporated or initially implemented. The two periods were then linked only where an identifiable source, actor, document, mechanism or explicit reference supported the connection. This procedure enabled the study to distinguish knowledge generated and retained after 2013 from evidence of its subsequent retrieval and use in preparation for 2027. The documentary findings were compared with the interview evidence to assess convergence, inconsistency and aspects of organisational memory that could not be reconstructed from formal records alone. This triangulation enabled the examination of formally documented mechanisms, including training programmes, reports, databases and procedural arrangements, alongside informal forms of knowledge transfer, such as professional networks, mentoring and tacit knowledge.

The 2013 documentary corpus also includes the five-volume official report published after the Presidency in 2014. Four volumes prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cover planning and organisation, implementation of the Presidency programme, meetings and communication, while a fifth volume prepared by the Seimas covers the parliamentary dimension.⁵⁰ These volumes are analysed both for their substantive content and for their function as potential repositories of organisational memory. The first level of analysis identifies the structures, procedures, responsibilities, tools and experience documented after 2013. The second level examines what kinds of knowledge were captured, where the report directs future users to supporting documents and whether the corpus could make operational experience accessible beyond the officials who participated personally. Because the report volumes were prepared by institutions responsible for organising and implementing the Presidency, they are treated as official organisational

⁵⁰ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. liepos 1 d.-gruodžio 31 d.: Planavimas ir organizavimas* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2014); Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Programos įgyvendinimas* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2014); Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Susitikimai* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2014); Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Komunikacija* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2014); Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, *Parlamentinis matmuo* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, 2014).

self-documentation and not as independent evaluation. They provide strong evidence of formal structures, dates, assigned responsibilities, documented procedures and contemporaneously reported outputs. Claims concerning success, effectiveness, national image or causal impact are checked with audit reports, the BGI Consulting evaluation, academic research and interview evidence. The existence of the report is treated as evidence of retention and codification, but not by itself as evidence of later retrieval or use.

3.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews complemented the documentary analysis by capturing how current and former participants understood the retention, retrieval and use of Presidency-related knowledge. They were used to identify informal consultation, tacit knowledge, practical adaptation and barriers to transfer that were unlikely to be fully visible in official documents. Interviews also helped establish whether formally preserved documents, procedures and organisational arrangements were known, accessible and used by officials preparing for 2027.

The development of the semi-structured interview guide was informed by Kallio et al.'s framework.⁵¹ Its content was derived from the research question, the theoretical framework and the preliminary documentary analysis. A common thematic structure covered participants' roles in Presidency preparation, their access to and retrieval of the 2013 experience, encountered formal and informal transfer mechanisms, adaptation and application, institutionalisation and coordination, experienced barriers to continuity and the prospective retention of experience after 2027. Role-specific versions of the guide retained these shared themes while adding prompts tailored to each participant's institutional position, responsibilities and area of expertise. Most interviews took a conversational form: the wording and order of questions were adapted to the development of the discussion, and a planned question was not repeated when the participant had already addressed it while answering an earlier question. Follow-up prompts were used to request concrete examples, clarify mechanisms and explore relevant issues raised by participants but not anticipated in the original guide. As Kvale and Brinkmann note, semi-structured interviews are particularly effective for exploring complex processes and uncovering new dimensions of understanding.⁵² Questions that were not relevant to a participant's experience or role were not pursued, while specialised topics were examined in greater depth with participants that had direct expertise in those areas.

⁵¹ Hanna Kallio, Anna-Maija Pietilä, Martin Johnson, and Mari Kangasniemi, "Systematic Methodological Review: Developing a Framework for a Qualitative Semi-Structured Interview Guide," *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 72, no. 12 (2016): 2954-2965, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.13031>

⁵² Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann, *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2009).

Minor adjustments to prompts were made during interviews, but the common thematic structure remained consistent. Comparability was maintained at the level of analytical themes and not through an identical sequence of questions, and was reinforced by applying the same coding framework across all transcripts.

Participants were selected based on their involvement in one or more stages of the experience transfer process. The selection combined temporal and functional criteria and was supplemented by snowball referrals where relevant knowledge holders were not visible in open organisational structures. The final sample comprised fourteen respondents interviewed in twelve sessions between 10 and 26 of August 2026. Two respondents represented the Ministry of Foreign Affairs European Union department, three respondents represented the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Presidency for the Council of the EU Group, three represented the Permanent Representation in Brussels, five represented the Lithuanian Parliament at administrative or political level, and one represented an external implementation organisation. Seven respondents had participated in the 2013 Presidency and were involved in preparation for 2027, the remaining respondents contributed current participant or newcomer perspectives. The temporal scope was deliberate: data was collected during active preparation, when transfer mechanisms and emerging arrangements could be examined, and participants remained accessible, rather than only during the intensive Presidency period or retrospectively after decision reasoning and unsuccessful alternatives might already have become more difficult to reconstruct.

Participants were selected using purposeful sampling, which involves identifying participants with relevant knowledge or experience of the phenomenon under investigation.⁵³ Selection was guided by participants' temporal and functional relevance to the research and their ability to provide firsthand evidence about the experience-transfer process. Temporal coverage included participants whose perspective derived primarily from involvement in the 2013 Presidency, current officials without direct experience of 2013 and bridge actors who participated in the earlier Presidency and were also involved in preparation for 2027. These positions provided retrospective, newcomer and continuity perspectives on the retention and transfer of experience. Candidates were mapped across the principal areas of Presidency preparation: central coordination, Lithuania's Permanent Representation to the European Union, personnel preparation and training, the parliamentary dimension, the organisation of meetings, events, logistics and communication.

⁵³ Lawrence A. Palinkas et al., "Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research," *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research* 42 (2015): 533-544, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>

Recruitment also sought both political and administrative perspectives and actors working at different levels of implementation, enabling formal decisions and institutional arrangements to be compared with their practical operation. The initial candidate pool was assembled using publicly available information about institutional responsibilities and existing institutional and professional contacts. As data collection progressed, subsequent invitations focused on temporal perspectives and functional areas that were not yet sufficiently represented. Recommendations from participants and institutional contacts were also used to identify relevant knowledge holders whose roles were less visible in formal organisational structures. However, referral did not automatically result in inclusion: recommended individuals were assessed according to the same temporal and functional criteria as the initial candidates. An indicative target of approximately 12-15 participants was used for planning rather than as a fixed numerical threshold. The final sample comprised 14 participants interviewed in 12 sessions, including two joint interviews with two participants each. Participants in the joint interviews were treated as separate respondents during coding, although agreement expressed within the same interview was not treated as fully independent corroboration. The adequacy of the sample is assessed through information power: the relevance and specificity of participants' experience, coverage of the principal functions and temporal perspectives, the quality of the interview material and the extent to which additional interviews generated materially new evidence.⁵⁴ Recruitment was concluded once the principal categories were represented and the material was sufficiently detailed to address the research question. The study does not claim that every possible institutional perspective was exhausted, because not all invited participants responded and access partly followed institutional and professional networks, the sample may underrepresent less visible perspectives. It was designed to provide analytically relevant coverage rather than statistical or proportional representation of all institutions participating in Presidency preparation.

This research adheres to ethical research principles by ensuring informed consent, participant anonymity, and the secure handling of data. All participants have received information about the research, the use of their data, and provided informed consent before each interview. Interviews were audio-recorded only with permission and were conducted in the Lithuanian language. Recordings were transcribed using automatic transcription built into online meeting platforms and transcription software, after that, the transcripts were manually reviewed and corrected against the recordings. Participants were assigned identifiers, and identifying details were

⁵⁴ Kirsti Malterud, Volkert Dirk Siersma, and Ann Dorrit Guassora, "Sample Size in Qualitative Interview Studies: Guided by Information Power," *Qualitative Health Research* 26, no. 13 (2016): 1753-1760, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732315617444>

removed or generalised where their inclusion could enable recognition. Institutional roles were reported only at a level necessary for interpreting the evidence and sufficiently broad to protect participants' identities, unless explicit attribution has been agreed. Quotations were selected to illustrate recurring findings, contrasting interpretations or relevant counter-evidence. Verbal fillers, false starts and obvious repetitions were removed where necessary for readability, but the substantive meaning of participants' statements was not altered. Quotations originally provided in Lithuanian were translated into English by the author. Where potentially identifying details were omitted or generalised, this was done without changing the analytical meaning of the passage.

3.3. Data Analysis

Documentary material was analysed using qualitative content analysis, while interview transcripts were analysed thematically using the same theory-informed coding framework. Both forms of analysis followed a hybrid deductive-inductive strategy. The deductive categories were derived from the integrated analytical framework and included lesson content, retention location, retrieval, transfer agents, formal and informal transfer mechanisms, adaptation, organisational learning, institutionalisation, barriers and forgetting, and small-state contextual conditions. Inductive subcodes were added when recurring empirical patterns were not adequately captured by these categories. Each analytically meaningful passage was linked to a source locator and classified according to its evidence status. Counterevidence, alternative explanations and missing links in the transfer process were recorded explicitly. Coding was conducted in a structured Microsoft Excel workbook containing separate source records, coded extracts, lesson and trajectory fields. The final interview dataset contained 357 coded meaning units and 23 primary codes; the final coding framework, including operational definitions and decision rules, is presented in Appendix 4. Counts were used as a navigation aid rather than as measures of prevalence or importance.

The documentary and interview findings were compared in lesson and trajectory matrices. For each concrete lesson, the matrices recorded the relevant 2013 experience, where and in what form the resulting knowledge was retained, how it was retrieved, who communicated it, which formal or informal mechanism enabled its transfer, how its relevance was assessed, whether it was adapted or rejected and whether it produced an observable change in preparation for 2027. The matrices also recorded evidence of institutionalisation, barriers, counter-evidence and missing links. Coordination, staffing, training, agenda management, communication, parliamentary preparation and meeting organisation were treated as different types of lesson content rather than as separate stages of knowledge transfer. Evidential strength was assessed as follows: strong evidence consisted

of a concrete transfer or application episode supported by a primary document or more than one independent account; moderate evidence consisted of one detailed interview account with indirect documentary support; limited evidence consisted of a general recollection, rhetorical reference or unsupported institutional claim. These categories assess support for a claim, not the prestige of the source.

Single-loop and double-loop labels were assigned only where an observable organisational change is demonstrated. Formal selection of a model is coded as retrieval or planned application; adoption of a legal or administrative measure is coded as formal implementation; practical use is coded as application; and institutionalisation requires evidence that the practice is embedded in roles, rules or routines beyond a single person or episode. This procedure prevents a stored document, a repeated structure, or an announced plan from being treated as completed organisational learning. Documentary and interview evidence were compared to identify convergence, inconsistency and gaps between formal arrangements and reported practice. Official documents may demonstrate that a mechanism, responsibility or procedure formally exists, while interviews can establish whether it is known, accessible and used. This enabled the study to distinguish between the formal preservation of knowledge and its practical contribution to organisational learning.

The research has a few limitations. First, retrospective accounts of the 2013 Presidency may be affected by selective recall and by participants' subsequent professional experiences. Second, interviewees may present their institutions or the ongoing preparation process in a favourable manner. Third, purposive and snowball recruitment may cluster participants within connected professional networks and underrepresent less visible or more critical perspectives. Fourth, preparation for the 2027 Presidency was still ongoing at the time of data collection. The study can assess preparation, transfer mechanisms and emerging application, but not the performance of the 2027 Presidency or its longer-term administrative effects. Recruitment was facilitated in part by the researcher's professional proximity to Lithuanian political and administrative institutions. This supported access to relevant participants but could also influence the composition of the sample and interpretation of institutionally sensitive accounts. To mitigate these limitations, interview claims were compared with documentary evidence, the same coding framework was applied consistently across sources, and contradictory or negative evidence was retained in the analysis.

4. Lessons and Organisational Learning from Lithuania's 2013 Presidency of the Council of the EU

This chapter analyses Lithuania's 2013 Presidency as the point of origin of the knowledge whose continuity is examined in this study. It identifies the organisational arrangements, practices and problems documented during and after the Presidency, as well as the people, routines, structures and records through which this experience could have been retained. Evidence concerning the subsequent retrieval, transfer, adaptation and emerging application of these lessons in preparation for 2027 is examined separately in a further chapter. This distinction separates knowledge generated in 2013 from later claims about its continuity and use.

4.1. Context and Priorities of the 2013 Presidency

Lithuania's 2013 Presidency of the Council of the European Union was the country's first experience of holding the rotating Presidency since joining the EU in 2004. It was not just an institutional responsibility, it was a test for Lithuania, its administrative, diplomatic and political capacity. The Presidency took place from 1 July to 31 December 2013 and formed part of the Ireland, Lithuania, Greece Trio Presidency. This meant that Lithuania's agenda was not developed in isolation, but within the broader framework of continuity among the Trio Presidency and the EU's existing legislative and political agenda.⁵⁵ The Presidency was happening in the post-Lisbon institutional context, for Lithuania, this meant that influence depended less on formal leadership and more on effective preparation, coordination, and the ability to act as a broker. Scholars argue that Lithuania's Presidency should be understood as a test of small-state performance within the EU institutional setting, where success depended on the ability to manage negotiations, ensure continuity, and maintain credibility among other member states.⁵⁶ The political and economic context of the 2013 Presidency was shaped by the aftermath of the financial and economic crisis and the need to complete important legislative files before the 2014 European Parliament elections. Lithuania also faced practical difficulties; it entered the Presidency with a small administration and no previous experience of managing the six-month Presidency, while also facing significant time pressure due to the approaching end of the European Parliament's legislative term.⁵⁷ These conditions made preparation, prioritisation, and coordination especially important. For a small state,

⁵⁵ Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *For a Credible, Growing and Open Europe: Programme of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 1 July to 31 December 2013* (2013).

⁵⁶ Jurkynas and Daukšaitė, "A Feather in Its Cap?" (2014).

⁵⁷ Sonia Piedrafita and Vilde Renman, "Exceeding Expectations, Lithuania Moves the Trio Presidency Forward," CEPS Commentary, January 22, 2014, <https://www.ceps.eu/ceps-publications/exceeding-expectations-lithuania-moves-trio-presidency-forward/>.

the Presidency required a temporary expansion of administrative and diplomatic capacity, as well as the ability to act as an effective broker between member states and EU institutions.

The official programme was organised under the slogan “For a Credible, Growing and Open Europe”, its priorities included economic governance, the MFF implementation, the internal market, energy, external relations and Eastern partnership.⁵⁸ The importance of this context lies less in the individual policy outcomes than in the administrative demands they created. Lithuania's priorities, constraints, and management practices provide the basis for analysing which lessons could be preserved, transferred, and adapted in preparation for Lithuania's 2027 Presidency. Lithuania had to coordinate a broad legislative agenda, manage institutional relationships and mobilise additional diplomatic and administrative capacity. These conditions generated the organisational experience whose retention and later use is examined in this research.

4.2. Scholarly Assessments of Lithuania's 2013 Presidency

Assessments of Lithuania's 2013 Presidency are generally positive, although the literature also points to important limits and tensions. The existing literature does not treat its success as automatic or purely symbolic, Lithuania's performance is usually linked to preparation, administrative effort, prioritisation, and the ability to work within the existing EU agenda. This distinction is important, it suggests that the 2013 Presidency can be analysed not only as a political event, but also as a source of institutional experience and transferable lessons. Piedrafitá and Renman describe Lithuania's maiden Presidency as having exceeded expectations, particularly given its modest administrative capacities, lack of previous Presidency experience, and the compressed timetable leading up to the 2014 European Parliament elections. They note that 137 legal acts were adopted during the six months, including complex and politically sensitive files.⁵⁹ At the same time, their assessment is not uncritically celebratory: they also point out that the overall success of the Presidency was somewhat weakened by the haste with which some agreements were negotiated.⁶⁰ Jurkynas and Daukšaitė also assess Lithuania's Presidency as well-executed, but their contribution is especially useful because they approach the Presidency through a more systematic evaluation framework. Using a modified contingency-management perspective, they analyse the relationship between the demands placed on the Presidency and Lithuania's ability to supply the necessary administrative, political, and diplomatic capacity.⁶¹ In this sense, the Presidency's

⁵⁸Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *For a Credible, Growing and Open Europe*, 2013.

⁵⁹ Piedrafitá and Renman, “Exceeding Expectations.”, 2014.

⁶⁰ Piedrafitá and Renman, “Exceeding Expectations.”

⁶¹ Jurkynas and Daukšaitė, “A Feather in Its Cap?”, 2014.

effectiveness can be understood as the result of adaptation to constraints rather than as the absence of them. Vilpišauskas places particular emphasis on the dual challenge of negotiating financial issues while dealing with geopolitical developments.⁶² This assessment is important because it shows that the Presidency's experience was not limited to one policy field. It included both technically complex negotiations, such as budgetary and economic governance issues, and politically sensitive questions linked to the EU's neighbourhood. The transferable experience from 2013 is likely to include not only policy-specific knowledge, but also broader lessons on coordination, prioritisation, negotiation management, and working under time pressure. Šešelgytė's analysis of Lithuania's Presidency through the Common Security and Defence Policy emphasises that the rotating Presidency's formal role was constrained by the post-Lisbon institutional framework.⁶³ This suggests that Lithuania's ability to shape outcomes depended on indirect forms of influence, such as agenda visibility, coordination, and political emphasis. Overall, the academic literature presents Lithuania's 2013 Presidency as effective, but not because it alone largely transformed the EU agenda. For this thesis, these assessments are important because they help identify the types of experience that may be transferable to 2027: not ready-made policy solutions, but lessons on preparation, coordination, priority selection, negotiation management, and the adaptation of national expertise to EU institutional settings.

4.3. Lessons Identified in Administrative, Audit and Evaluation Documents

Academic assessments identify areas in which Lithuania's Presidency performed well and the constraints it faced. The official and administrative documentary record makes it possible to ask a different question: how knowledge relevant to the Presidency was acquired, generated and articulated, and where it may have been retained after 2013. The documents examined here differ in purpose and evidential value. The official Presidency programme and institutional activity reports record intended arrangements and institutional self-assessment. The National Audit Office reports assess preparation, coordination, expenditure and compliance, but do not evaluate the political content of the Presidency. The evaluation commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and conducted by BGI Consulting examines competence development, organisational practices and perceived effects through surveys and interviews. The Seimas report provides a detailed, institution-specific record of parliamentary preparation and implementation. Because these sources have different perspectives and biases, the analysis gives the greatest weight to findings that recur across multiple types of sources and retains contradictory evidence, rather than treating the official

⁶² Vilpišauskas, "Lithuania's EU Council Presidency," 2014, 99-108.

⁶³ Šešelgytė, "Lithuanian Presidency of the EU Council," 2012, 87-119.

record as a single success narrative. The documents can establish the source side of the learning process: what Lithuania did, what participants and evaluators identified as useful or problematic, and which records, routines and networks existed after the Presidency. They cannot by themselves establish that the same knowledge was retrieved and used in preparation for 2027. The analysis below distinguishes lesson acquisition, learning through implementation, lesson articulation and possible repositories of organisational memory from later retrieval, adaptation and institutionalisation.

4.3.1. Preparation as Knowledge Acquisition and Anticipatory Learning

Preparation for the Presidency was organised as a multi-year, whole government process rather than as a set of isolated activities immediately before July 2013. The 2012 National Audit Office report records that the Government approved preparatory guidelines in 2010 and that these were subsequently elaborated in an interinstitutional action plan prepared in 2011. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was assigned the central coordination role, while the Government Commission on European Union Affairs contributed to political and administrative oversight. The arrangements also included a list of Presidency functions and responsible personnel, plans to expand the Permanent Representation, centralised and decentralised training, logistical and communication strategies, and the use of information systems for managing the process.⁶⁴ In organisational-learning terms, these measures represented anticipatory knowledge acquisition: institutions attempted to identify the capabilities and coordination arrangements that would be required before Lithuania had direct experience of holding the Council Presidency.

Preparation also included a mechanism intended to protect continuity across political change. In October 2011, all political parties represented in the Seimas agreed that the Presidency was a national task that should not be disrupted by electoral competition or a change of government. The agreement linked the preparation undertaken by the 2008-2012 Seimas and Government with implementation by the institutions formed after the 2012 parliamentary election. It also committed political actors to maintaining the interinstitutional plan, coordinating positions and involving social and economic partners.⁶⁵ This agreement did not itself preserve operational knowledge, but it created a political condition under which administrative plans, personnel preparation and

⁶⁴ Lietuvos Respublikos valstybės kontrolė [National Audit Office of Lithuania]. (2012). *Kaip rengiamasi pirmininkauti ES Tarybai* [How preparations are being made for the Presidency of the Council of the EU] (Valstybinio audito ataskaita Nr. VA-P-40-2-4), 3-5, 37-39.

⁶⁵ Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas [Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania]. (2014). *Lietuvos Respublikos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. antrąjį pusmetį parlamentinio matmens ataskaita* [Report on the parliamentary dimension of Lithuania's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2013], 9-10.

institutional responsibilities could continue across the electoral transition. It is evidence of continuity embedded in a formal political arrangement rather than only in individual office-holders. The preparation process was not linear. The 2012 audit identified seven material risks, including incomplete inclusion of Presidency-related activities and costs in the interinstitutional plan, weaknesses in financial reporting, possible underuse of Trio burden-sharing, delays in capacity-building projects and unresolved logistical issues.⁶⁶ The 2015 follow-up report records that the Government subsequently revised the interinstitutional plan, added measures, addressed infrastructure and reporting arrangements, and that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs introduced risk-management measures for projects and further coordinated the division of work with the Trio partners.⁶⁷ This provides observable evidence that external feedback led to corrections in the preparatory arrangements. Because the overall objectives and basic governance model remained unchanged, the adjustment is consistent with single-loop learning: an existing process was corrected without evidence that its underlying assumptions were reconsidered.

In 2013 Lithuania also acquired knowledge from external sources, because the country did not have its own experience. Consultations with other Presidency holders, contacts with EU institutions, secondments, study visits and other forms of direct observation served as channels through which external experience entered the Lithuanian preparation process.⁶⁸ The parliamentary record is particularly concrete; Seimas Chancellery staff visited the Swedish Riksdag, the Polish Sejm and Senate, the Danish Folketing, and the European Parliament; reports from these visits were subsequently presented to colleagues and posted on the Seimas intranet.⁶⁹ Training addressed EU decision-making, negotiation, languages, public speaking, protocol, document preparation and work in a multicultural environment. These activities demonstrate organised knowledge acquisition and the existence of potential transfer channels. They do not establish which external practice affected a Lithuanian decision or whether the acquired knowledge was copied, adapted, combined or rejected.

⁶⁶ Lietuvos Respublikos valstybės kontrolė [National Audit Office of Lithuania]. (2012). *Kaip rengiamasi pirmininkauti ES Tarybai* [How preparations are being made for the Presidency of the Council of the EU] (Valstybinio audito ataskaita Nr. VA-P-40-2-4), 5-6.

⁶⁷ Lietuvos Respublikos valstybės kontrolė [National Audit Office of Lithuania]. (2015). *Lietuvos Respublikos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 metais tarpinstitucinio 2013-2014 metų veiklos plano įgyvendinimo vertinimas* [Assessment of the implementation of the 2013-2014 interinstitutional action plan for Lithuania's 2013 Presidency of the Council of the European Union] (Valstybinio audito ataskaita Nr. FA-P-40-8-2), 7.

⁶⁸ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. liepos 1 d.–gruodžio 31 d.: Planavimas ir organizavimas (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2014), 12–13.

⁶⁹ Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas [Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania]. (2014). *Lietuvos Respublikos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. antrąjį pusmetį parlamentinio matmens ataskaita* [Report on the parliamentary dimension of Lithuania's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2013], 34-36.

4.3.2. Learning through Implementation

The post-Presidency evaluation indicates that the most important learning did not arise solely from preparation. BGI Consulting found that participation in the Presidency produced significant competence gains and that most interviewed Lithuanian officials attributed a greater share of those gains to performing Presidency tasks than to preparatory activities. Fourteen of the sixteen interviewees considered practical performance of Presidency tasks to have contributed more strongly to competence development than preparatory activities; the remaining two assigned the two elements equal importance.⁷⁰ The report associated the stronger contribution of practice with exceptional access to information, intensive involvement in EU decision-making and opportunities to develop skills that could not be fully reproduced through classroom training or simulations. This finding makes tacit knowledge central to the analysis. Judgement about when to propose a compromise, how to interpret the positions of other actors, how much flexibility a chair can use and how to manage negotiations under time pressure is partly generated through action and cannot be entirely codified in advance.

Several organisational arrangements enabled this learning through implementation. The Presidency's operational centre was placed in Lithuania's Permanent Representation in Brussels. The advance-mandate model provided Lithuanian representatives with a broad mandate and defined the limits of negotiating flexibility before the Presidency began. The Seimas report documents the model, while the BGI evaluation connects it with faster, more flexible and more coherent decision-making.⁷¹ The arrangement is analytically significant not simply because it was judged effective, but because it redistributed discretion and embedded a particular understanding of how the state should coordinate under the exceptional time pressure of a Council Presidency. Horizontal coordination also relied on a network of institutional coordinators and project-based teams composed of officials from different institutions. The coordinator network operated as a "one-stop" structure in which each ministry had a designated contact responsible for receiving and distributing Presidency-related information. Participants evaluated the network positively because it facilitated rapid information exchange, coordination of positions on horizontal questions, allocation of

⁷⁰ BGI Consulting, *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai poveikio vertinimas: galutinė ataskaita* [Evaluation of the Impact of Lithuania's Presidency of the Council of the European Union: Final Report], prepared for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, November 17, 2014, 57.

⁷¹ Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas [Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania]. (2014). *Lietuvos Respublikos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. antrąjį pusmetį parlamentinio matmens ataskaita* [Report on the parliamentary dimension of Lithuania's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2013], 7-8; BGI Consulting. (2014). *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai poveikio vertinimas: Galutinė ataskaita* [Assessment of the impact of Lithuania's Presidency of the Council of the European Union: Final report]. Report prepared for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania 145, 148.

responsibilities and the sharing of solutions to operational problems. Its comparatively informal and result-oriented character reduced bureaucratic delay, while cross-institutional project teams combined the expertise needed for specific tasks.⁷² These practices show that the Presidency generated organisational knowledge not only in individuals but also in routines, roles and relationships connecting institutions.

Informal contacts were equally important. The BGI evaluation links successful negotiation and later representation to closer professional relationships with officials in other member states and EU institutions, improved access to information and a better understanding of EU processes.⁷³ From the perspective of organisational memory, these networks are both an asset and a vulnerability. They allow a small administration to compensate for limited formal capacity through trust, rapid communication and access to experienced individuals. At the same time, knowledge retained mainly in personal relationships may become unavailable when officials change positions, leave public service or are not connected to the 2027 team. The evaluation also prevents an overly positive interpretation of competence development. It identified repeated or late training, insufficient provision for officials working in Brussels and, most importantly, inadequate differentiation according to officials' prior experience and their Presidency functions. It also found continuing weaknesses in some negotiation, legal-language, public-speaking and reporting competences.⁷⁴ The lesson was therefore not simply that more training was needed. The more specific lesson was that formal preparation should be differentiated by existing competence and role, and should be combined with practical exposure, mentoring and opportunities to apply knowledge. This is a more transferable conclusion than the general claim that training contributed to the success of the Presidency.

4.3.3. The Five-Volume Presidency Report as a Codified Organisational-Memory Repository

The most extensive documentary repository created after the 2013 Presidency is the five-volume official report published in 2014. Four volumes prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs document planning and organisation, implementation of the Presidency programme, meetings and communication, while a separate Seimas volume records the parliamentary

⁷² BGI Consulting, *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo poveikio vertinimas*, 2014, 52-55, 148.

⁷³ BGI Consulting, *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo poveikio vertinimas*, 2014, 145-148.

⁷⁴ BGI Consulting, *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo poveikio vertinimas*, 2014, 146-147..

dimension.⁷⁵ They contain organisational charts, descriptions of responsibilities and workflows, personnel and training data, meeting calendars, responsibility matrices, procedural guidance and reproductions of original planning documents. Its intended repository function is also stated in the preface to the programme-implementation volume, which presents the report as a detailed source of information for professionals working with EU affairs and for the public.⁷⁶

The planning and organisation volume is particularly important because it documents how Lithuania acquired knowledge before its first Presidency. Its section entitled “Patirties perėmimas” identifies three principal mechanisms: bilateral and multilateral consultations with states that had held or were preparing to hold the Presidency, the secondment of national experts to a presiding state and the monitoring and analysis of Presidency practice through public sources and diplomatic reporting.⁷⁷ Lithuanian officials consulted representatives from numerous earlier Presidency holders, while national experts were successively delegated to presiding states and EU institutions. The report nevertheless emphasises that national differences in geography, administrative resources, economic conditions and previous Presidency experience required officials to assess what was applicable to Lithuania and what should be avoided. Knowledge acquisition before 2013 was already selective and adaptive rather than a process of direct copying. The same volume describes the administrative structure through which the acquired knowledge was implemented. It records the coordinator network, the temporary Presidency department, the division of responsibilities between Vilnius and the Permanent Representation, the inventory of Presidency functions and responsible personnel, the centralised training project and the reasoning behind the Brussels-based Presidency model.⁷⁸ The personnel inventory connected individual officials with functions, locations, training groups and working structures. The training project involved 1,903 officials, 515 training events and twelve specialised programmes, while its evaluation combined participant questionnaires, knowledge testing and follow-up questions concerning the use of acquired knowledge.⁷⁹ The report also reproduces the practical Presidency guide and guidance concerning relations with the European

⁷⁵ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. liepos 1 d.-gruodžio 31 d.: Planavimas ir organizavimas* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2014); Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Programos įgyvendinimas* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2014); Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Susitikimai* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2014); Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Komunikacija* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, 2014); Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, *Parlamentinis matmuo* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, 2014).

⁷⁶ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Programos įgyvendinimas*, 3.

⁷⁷ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Planavimas ir organizavimas*, 12-13.

⁷⁸ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Planavimas ir organizavimas*, 28-31, 60-65.

⁷⁹ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Planavimas ir organizavimas*, 41-59, 56-59.

Parliament. It consequently preserves not only a description of the organisational model but also some of the instruments through which that model was communicated to participants.

The meetings and communication volumes describe more detailed operational knowledge. The meetings volume records the classification and planning of events, the division of responsibility among the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sectoral institutions and service providers, logistical requirements and the procedures used for expert-level meetings.⁸⁰ Its responsibility matrix required the relevant institution to submit a report after a meeting, demonstrating that post-event documentation formed part of the operational process. The communication volume similarly records the structure connecting the Permanent Representation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and sectoral institutions, the use of coordinator meetings, daily Vilnius and Brussels consultations, common “lines to take” and the “Panda” information network.⁸¹ Its appendices reproduce communication principles, an implementation plan, interinstitutional guidelines, website guidance, formal orders, calendars and project selection criteria. These appendices make the volume closer to an institutional archive than a conventional public-relations publication.

The parliamentary volume shows that reporting was not confined to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Seimas recorded its political and administrative preparation, organisational structure, staffing, training, event management and communication arrangements. It also documents a recurring post-event review practice: after individual events, participants discussed their experience and formulated comments and proposals for subsequent events.⁸² Reports from study visits to other national parliaments and the European Parliament were placed on the Seimas intranet, creating an additional institutional repository. The volume demonstrates both knowledge acquisition from previous Presidency holders and an attempt to circulate that knowledge within the Seimas administration.

The programme-implementation volume performs a different function. It records the development of the Trio and national programmes, the use of negotiating descriptions and the substantive handling of 428 legislative and non-legislative files.⁸³ It is less informative about organisational memory mechanisms than the planning volume, but it preserves the policy content and negotiating workload within which administrative experience was generated. In terms of organisational memory theory, the five-volume corpus demonstrates extensive codification and

⁸⁰ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Susitikimai*, 6-9, 156-163.

⁸¹ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Komunikacija*, 12-15, 102-210.

⁸² Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, *Parlamentinis matmuo*, 18, 29-31, 74-77.

⁸³ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija, *Programos įgyvendinimas*, 8-15; 152-175.

retention in formal repositories. However, codification should not be equated with organisational remembering. A detailed report may remain unused, become difficult to locate or lose relevance as institutions, technologies and political conditions change. Moreover, the volumes were produced by institutions responsible for the Presidency and frequently present implementation through a success-oriented narrative. They provide strong evidence of what was formally arranged and recorded, but positive assessments of effectiveness require comparison with audit, evaluation and interview evidence.

The corpus therefore establishes that a substantial potential memory repository existed by 2014. The question for the 2027 cycle is whether current actors knew that the repository existed, could access it, selected particular parts of it and translated them into current arrangements. References to these reports in current interviews are consequently important not merely as confirmation of their existence but as possible evidence of retrieval. Their analytical significance depends on whether participants can identify which volume or information they used, how they obtained it, why it was considered relevant and whether it affected a current decision.

4.3.4. Other Repositories and the Medium-Term Retention of Experience

Organisational memory was not, however, located only in that formal corpus. The remaining evidence points to repositories in experienced officials, professional relationships, recurring coordination practices, information systems and institution-specific archives. The analytical question is whether the documentary repository and these human and relational repositories remained connected or progressively became separated as officials changed positions and temporary Presidency structures were dismantled.

The 2014 BGI evaluation performed an important articulation function by translating participant experience and survey findings into explicit conclusions and recommendations. Among the practices identified for continued or wider use were broader mandates and greater discretion for officials, continuous and differentiated competence development, project-based management, horizontal interinstitutional cooperation, greater use of information and communication technologies, standardised document preparation, support for professional networking and better career pathways for officials with EU experience. The report also recommended developing guidance based on good interinstitutional practices and maintaining the exchange of experience across institutions.⁸⁴ They show what evaluators considered worth preserving, although their

⁸⁴ BGI Consulting, *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo poveikio vertinimas*, 2014, 152-154.

publication does not establish that they were subsequently implemented. There is some evidence of immediate post-Presidency continuity. The BGI evaluation found that institutions which had worked closely together during the Presidency continued comparatively intensive cooperation afterwards, supported by relationships and practices developed in 2013.⁸⁵ This suggests a short-term effect on ordinary administrative behaviour. It cannot, however, establish continuity over the fourteen-year interval to 2027. Immediate persistence should not be equated with long-term institutionalisation.

Grumbinaitė's later interviews extend this short-term baseline. In Lithuania, the temporary Presidency Coordination Department was dismantled, and officials dispersed to other positions, but personal interministerial networks remained, and lists of temporary staff were retained. Around half of the temporary contracts discussed in the Lithuanian case served as a route into the administration, while regular staff turnover remained comparatively low. Officials also reported that knowledge of EU institutions, negotiation skills, professional contacts, LINESIS and interministerial working relationships continued after the Presidency. An estimated 80-90 per cent of attachés returning from Brussels continued working in ministries, and video-conferencing between Vilnius and the Permanent Representation also remained in use.⁸⁶ This evidence suggests uneven retention. Knowledge embedded in experienced personnel, professional relationships and some working routines was more durable than the temporary organisational structure created for the Presidency. At the same time, Grumbinaitė found little central effort to retain all temporary personnel or systematically maintain the networks that had been created. The resulting administrative gains were therefore vulnerable to gradual decay even when many individuals remained in public service.⁸⁷ Because these findings rely mainly on participant accounts collected only several years after the Presidency, they strengthen the medium-term continuity claim but do not establish availability or use in the 2027 cycle.

The direction of transfer must also be distinguished. The Seimas report includes a section entitled "transfer of experience", but much of the evidence concerns Lithuania explaining its preparatory arrangements to foreign ambassadors and parliamentary delegations, including representatives from Latvia, Moldova and Georgia.⁸⁸ This is evidence that Lithuania was able to articulate and disseminate aspects of its experience to the outside world. It is not evidence that those

⁸⁵ BGI Consulting, *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo poveikio vertinimas*, 2014, 148.

⁸⁶ Grumbinaitė, "Turning 'Them' into 'We'," 2020, 74, 77-78, 83.

⁸⁷ Grumbinaitė, "Turning 'Them' into 'We'," 2020, 86-91.

⁸⁸ Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas [Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania], Lietuvos Respublikos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. antrąjį pusmetį parlamentinio matmens ataskaita [Report on the parliamentary dimension of Lithuania's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2013] (2014), 37-39.

lessons remained accessible inside Lithuanian institutions or were later retrieved for 2027. Similarly, a report stored in an archive is a potential repository of memory, not proof that the organisation actively remembers its contents.

4.3.5. Documentary Limits, Counter-Evidence and the Continuity Problem

The audit evidence qualifies the positive account of coordination. The 2015 National Audit Office report concluded that implemented activities and expenditure broadly corresponded to the interinstitutional plan, but it also identified important limitations. Some Presidency-related activities and expenditure were not included in the plan or reported to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; some institutions planned and implemented measures outside central coordination. The plan's measures were formulated too broadly to show the specific actions and projects being undertaken. It also omitted the contribution of private and other non-state actors, preventing a complete account of the Presidency's total cost, while procurement and expenditure problems demonstrated weaknesses in implementation and control.⁸⁹ These findings do not negate effective political or negotiating performance. They show instead that a formal coordination instrument did not provide complete organisational visibility and that the existence of a plan cannot be treated as evidence that all relevant activity or knowledge was centrally captured.

The post-Presidency evaluation itself expressed uncertainty about durability. Participants supported preserving and applying several practices more widely, but assessed their long-term sustainability sceptically. Limited mobility within the civil service and features of administrative culture were identified as obstacles to using the human capital developed during the Presidency. The evaluation also found that not every new instrument performed equally well; for example, the information system used to distribute legislative information was assessed as providing comparatively limited added value.⁹⁰ A successful Presidency could therefore coexist with weak conditions for retaining and reusing what had been learned. This distinction marks the limit of what the 2013 corpus can establish. The documents identify experience, articulated lessons, possible repositories and some short-term organisational effects. They do not establish whether current officials remained aware of these resources, retained access to relevant systems, consulted former participants or used 2013 experience when making decisions for 2027. The current preparation documents analysed in Chapter 6 provide evidence that selected elements of the 2013 model were formally recalled and incorporated into present planning, and that some measures have moved into

⁸⁹ National Audit Office of Lithuania, *Tarpinstitucinio veiklos plano įgyvendinimo vertinimas*, 2015, 4-5, 8-11.

⁹⁰ BGI Consulting, *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo poveikio vertinimas*, 2014, 146-48.

initial implementation. They remain much less informative about who retrieved the experience, through which documents or relationships it was transmitted, why particular elements were selected and how the arrangements operate in practice. Those questions require the combined analysis of current records and interviews.

4.4. The 2013 Baseline for Tracing Continuity in Preparation for 2027

The documentary analysis identifies six lesson trajectories that should structure the later comparison with 2027. The table does not claim that these lessons survived. It specifies what was established in 2013, where the relevant knowledge may have been retained and what evidence is required to demonstrate continuity or change. The 2013 baseline includes not only formally documented lessons and immediate post-Presidency outcomes, but also evidence that some knowledge remained embedded in experienced officials, professional relationships and working routines several years later.⁹¹ The central question for the analysis of preparation for 2027 is not whether every trace of the 2013 Presidency disappeared, but which surviving people, relationships, systems or documents were subsequently retrieved and used in current decisions.

Table 2. 2013 Lesson trajectories and Evidentiary questions for tracing continuity in preparation for 2027

Lesson trajectory	What the 2013 evidence establishes	Possible repository	Question to test for 2027
Early and politically protected preparation	Multi-year planning, central coordination, risk assessment and a cross-party continuity agreement	Plans, formal responsibilities, political agreement and experienced officials	Did preparation begin with comparable continuity safeguards, and was the 2013 arrangement consciously used or redesigned?
Brussels-centred coordination and advance mandates	The Permanent Representation served as the operational centre and officials received defined negotiating flexibility	Mandate procedures, negotiating descriptions, Permanent Representation staff and routines	Was this model retained, modified or rejected, by whom and for what contextual reason?
Coordinator networks and project teams	Horizontal, comparatively informal structures supported rapid information exchange and problem-solving	Professional networks, coordinator roles and project-management routines	Was the earlier network reactivated, rebuilt or replaced, and did it carry any identifiable 2013 knowledge?

⁹¹ Ieva Grumbinaitė, “Bringing the European Union Closer to the Member States? The Impact of the Rotating EU Council Presidency on Small Member States,” 64-67.

Training combined with learning by doing	Formal preparation improved competence, but practical Presidency work generated especially important tacit knowledge	Former participants, training materials, simulations, mentoring and professional networks	Which experienced officials are involved in 2027, and how is knowledge being transferred to staff without 2013 experience?
Codified reports, operational documents and digital systems	The five-volume report preserved structures, procedures, training arrangements, responsibility matrices, statistics and original guidance; meeting and study-visit reports created additional institutional records	Report volumes and appendices, institutional archives and intranets, LINESIS, practical guides, templates and experienced officials able to interpret them	Were the reports and related records known, accessible and consulted; who introduced them to the current team; which parts informed current decisions; and which elements were rejected or updated?
Planning visibility and accountability	The interinstitutional plan coordinated much activity but did not capture all measures, costs or implementation problems	Audit reports, revised planning rules, financial and procurement procedures	Did the critical findings from 2012 and 2015 produce observable changes in the 2027 planning and control architecture?

Source: compiled by the author on the basis of the 2013 documentary corpus.

These trajectories define the research question by connecting substantive lessons with stages of organisational memory. A similar practice that appears in 2027 should not automatically be coded as a transfer from 2013. Evidence of continuity requires an identifiable source, recipient and retrieval or communication mechanism, together with an observable decision or change. Conversely, the deliberate rejection of a 2013 practice may demonstrate learning if current actors can explain why it no longer fits the institutional, technological or geopolitical context. The absence of awareness, access, or responsibility would instead indicate a possible break in organisational memory.

5. Tracing Organisational Memory in Preparation for the 2027 Presidency

This part of the research established that Lithuania's 2013 Presidency generated substantial individual and organisational knowledge. This knowledge was potentially retained in former participants, professional networks, coordination routines, institutional structures, reports, information systems and other documentary repositories. The 2013 evidence alone, however, could not demonstrate whether these resources remained accessible or were subsequently used. Documents produced during the current preparatory cycle enable the movement from the source

side of organisational memory knowledge generated and potentially retained after 2013 to its possible retrieval, transfer, and application in preparation for 2027.

The current documentary corpus includes the 2023 preparation Guidelines⁹²; Government Resolution No. 39 of 10 January 2024 and its Action Plan^{93,94}; the 2024 STRATA study commissioned to inform preparation for 2027⁹⁵; the ministerial order establishing and subsequently updating the Presidency coordinator network⁹⁶; the centralised training programme⁹⁷; primary records concerning expansion of the Permanent Representation⁹⁸; the MFA's report on activities implemented in 2025⁹⁹; strategic-foresight and Trio-programming documents; the business-partnership initiative¹⁰⁰; and the Seimas parliamentary-event calendar¹⁰¹. These sources

⁹² Government of the Republic of Lithuania, *Lietuvos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 metais gairės* [Guidelines for Lithuania's Preparation for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2027], considered at the Government meeting of 3 May 2023, Protocol No. 14, item 2, paras. 6, 8.3.1, 8.4.4 and 8.5.1 (accessed 9 August 2026). <https://lrv.lt/media/viesa/saugykla/2023/8/QIkvkI3BYU.pdf>

⁹³ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Resolution No. 39 of 10 January 2024, *Dėl Lietuvos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 metais veiksmų plano patvirtinimo* [On the Approval of the Action Plan for Lithuania's Preparation for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2027], TAR, 12 January 2024, No. 2024-00453, annex (accessed 9 August 2026).

<https://e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/3214f3f0b12e11eea5a28c81c82193a8>

⁹⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, *Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės nutarimo projekto* [On the Draft Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania], explanatory memorandum accompanying the 2027 Preparation Action Plan, registered by the Office of the Government on 8 December 2023, No. G-110842, p. 1 (accessed 9 August 2026). <https://lrv.lt/media/viesa/saugykla/2024/1/QhaBharXxbk.pdf>

⁹⁵ STRATA, *Europos Sąjungos strateginės aplinkos, raidos tendencijų, teisėkūros ir politikos prioritetų prognozavimas, Lietuvai rengiantis pirmininkauti ES Tarybai 2027 m.* (Vilnius: Vyriausybės strateginės analizės centras, 2024), 67-70, 88-92.

⁹⁶ Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, Order No. V-192 of 13 June 2023, *Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 m. koordinatorių tinklo sudarymo* [On the Establishment of the Coordinator Network for Lithuania's Preparation for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2027], preamble and para. 1, TAR, 13 June 2023, No. 2023-11756 (accessed 9 August 2026).

<https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/b1d1987009e811eeb489c7d891071d0a>

⁹⁷ Viešojo valdymo agentūra, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, and Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the European Union, *Lietuvos valstybės institucijų darbuotojų, vykdydiančių su pirmininkavimu Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 m. susijusias funkcijas, atnaujinta mokymų programa 2025-2026 metams* [Updated Training Programme for Employees of Lithuanian State Institutions Performing Functions Related to the 2027 Presidency of the Council of the European Union] (2025), 3-4 (accessed 9 August 2026).

<https://vva.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1744622180/2015/Atnaujinta%20pirmininkavimo%20mokym%C5%B3%20programa%202025-2026%20m..pdf>

⁹⁸ Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, "Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės nutarimo projekto teikimo išvados gauti" [On Submitting the Draft Government Resolution for Opinions], 2025, pp. 25-26 of the consolidated government file (document 1-2) (accessed 9 August 2026).

https://lrv.lt/media/viesa/saugykla/2025/3/WtVaerw4p_Y.pdf

⁹⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, *2025 metų veiklos ataskaita* [2025 Annual Activity Report] (Vilnius, 13 March 2026), 16, <https://www.urm.lt/ministerija/veikla/veiklos-ataskaita/171>

¹⁰⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, "Užsienio reikalų ministerija kviečia verslą tapti Lietuvos pirmininkavimo ES Tarybai 2027 m. partneriais" [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Invites Businesses to Become Partners of Lithuania's 2027 Presidency of the EU Council], updated 11 November 2025 (accessed 9 August 2026). <https://www.urm.lt/uzsienio-reikalu-ministerija-kviecia-versla-tapti-lietuvas-pirmininkavimo-es-tarybai-2027-m.-partneriais/2260>

¹⁰¹ Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, "Patvirtintas Lietuvos pirmininkavimo ES Tarybai parlamentiniu matmeniu renginių kalendorius," press release, 3 June 2026, https://www.lrs.lt/sip/portal.show?p_k=1&p_r=38444&p_t=295167

differ in evidential status. The Guidelines and Action Plan outline measures and responsibilities, while legal and administrative orders document the formal adoption of specific arrangements. The STRATA study provides evidence of an institutional episode of source retrieval and lesson synthesis. The training programme specifies differentiated preparation measures, while training implementation records and the MFA activity report provide administrative evidence that some activities were delivered and that certain staffing targets were reported as met. None of these sources independently demonstrates whether the measures produced effective organisational learning or durable changes in practice. Political statements and references to the success of the 2013 Presidency remain evidence of public or institutional memory narratives, but they do not by themselves demonstrate that operational knowledge was retrieved and applied.

Implementation had also become visible beyond the central MFA planning framework. In July 2026, the Ministry of Agriculture reported that Lithuanian officials used the informal meeting of EU fisheries ministers and bilateral meetings with representatives of the European Parliament and the European Commission to present Lithuania's preparations and discuss files likely to arise during its Presidency.¹⁰² In the parliamentary workstream, the Seimas European Affairs Committee reported that it was coordinating preparations, receiving briefings from the MFA and the Permanent Representation, and applying strategic-relevance and added-value criteria to proposals for additional parliamentary events.¹⁰³ These sources establish sectoral consultation and parliamentary coordination, but neither identifies a particular 2013 document or an individual or transfer episode behind the arrangements. A further limitation arises from the timing of the analysis. Because the 2027 Presidency has not yet taken place, the documents can be used to evaluate preparation, lesson selection and emerging transfer mechanisms, but not the eventual performance of the Presidency or the long-term institutionalisation of the practices concerned. Accordingly, the analysis distinguishes between planned continuity, partial implementation and observable application. It also avoids treating the reappearance of a similar arrangement as evidence of transfer unless the source explicitly identifies the 2013 Presidency or another traceable knowledge source.

The documentary evidence now supports that Lithuania has not simply referred to 2013 in general terms. The STRATA study explicitly retrieves the BGI evaluation, Grumbinaitė's research and other analyses of the 2013 Presidency, combines them with four recent Presidency cases and

¹⁰² Lietuvos Respublikos žemės ūkio ministerija, "Lietuva tęsia pasirengimą pirmininkavimui ES Tarybai" [Lithuania Continues Preparations for the Presidency of the EU Council], 30 July 2026, (accessed 5 August 2026). <https://zum.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/lietuva-tesia-pasirengima-pirmininkavimui-es-tarybai-xfvf/>

¹⁰³ Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo kanceliarija, "Seimo Europos reikalų komitetas: siekiama veiksmingo Lietuvos pirmininkavimo ES Tarybai," press release, 16 October 2025, 2-3, (accessed August 9, 2026). https://www.lrs.lt/sip/portal.show?p_r=35403&p_k=1&p_t=292898&p_kade_id=10

uses this material to formulate recommendations for 2027. The updated training programme then shows formal application of an experience-sensitive design, while the MFA report records initial staffing and delivery measures. The evidence shows named-source retrieval, formal recommendation and initial implementation of selected measures; it does not yet establish that every implemented measure resulted from the retrieved sources. It remains weaker on causal link, informal transmission, day-to-day operation, effects and durable institutionalisation. The strongest evidence therefore concerns formal lesson selection and planned emulation. Formal continuity is clearest where the 2023 Guidelines and the 2024 Action Plan explicitly identify the 2013 organisational model as a source for current design. The coordinator network has been formally constituted, expansion of the Permanent Representation has begun in particular sectors, a differentiated training programme is being implemented, and the business-partnership model has been reactivated. At the same time, current planning combines Lithuanian experience with the practices of more recent Presidencies, the Council General Secretariat's input, and analysis of a changed strategic environment. Evidence remains much weaker regarding the specific people, records, and interactions through which the 2013 knowledge was retrieved and communicated.

5.1. Formal Selection and Initial Implementation of the 2013 Organisational Model

The clearest documentary evidence of continuity is found in the 2023 Guidelines for Lithuania's Preparation for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2027. The document states that the organisation of preparation for 2027 will be based on the work-organisation model that proved successful during Lithuania's 2013 Presidency.¹⁰⁴ This reference is analytically more significant than the mere presence of similar arrangements in both periods. It identifies the 2013 Presidency as a source of current organisational design and indicates intention to reuse experience from the earlier Presidency.

This general commitment is translated into more specific governance arrangements. The Guidelines provide for a network of Presidency coordinators involving representatives of the ministries, the Seimas Chancellery, the Government Chancellery and the Office of the President. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for establishing and coordinating the network, while the Government Commission on European Union Affairs is given an oversight role.¹⁰⁵ This

¹⁰⁴ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, *Lietuvos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 metais gairės* [Guidelines for Lithuania's Preparation for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2027], considered at the Government meeting of 3 May 2023, Protocol No. 14, item 2, point 6.

¹⁰⁵ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, *Lietuvos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 metais gairės* [Guidelines for Lithuania's Preparation for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2027], considered at the Government meeting of 3 May 2023, Protocol No. 14, item 2, points 8.1.1-8.1.6.

arrangement closely corresponds to the horizontal coordinator network identified in the 2013 evaluation as an effective mechanism for rapid information exchange and interinstitutional problem-solving.

The coordinator network is no longer only a planned arrangement. It was formally constituted by Order No. V-192 of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on 13 June 2023, and its composition was subsequently updated, including through the consolidated version effective from 12 February 2026.¹⁰⁶ The explanatory materials accompanying the Action Plan further state that representatives of 42 institutions and agencies participated through the network in preparing the plan. This evidence establishes formal implementation of the cross-institutional structure and participation in a concrete planning task. It does not establish whether network meetings transmit substantive knowledge from 2013, how informal problem-solving operates or whether the structure produces the same effects observed in the earlier Presidency. Meeting records, role descriptions and concrete knowledge-transfer episodes are still required.

An even more explicit trajectory concerns the role of Lithuania's Permanent Representation to the European Union. The Guidelines state that implementation of the Presidency programme will be coordinated through the Brussels-based model and directly identify the model used in 2013 as suitable for reuse.¹⁰⁷ The 2025 MFA activity report moves this trajectory beyond planning: it reports that 40 Presidency-related MFA posts were established or maintained at the Permanent Representation, meeting the stated target, and that 32 such posts existed at the Ministry itself compared with a target of 26.¹⁰⁸ This is evidence of formal staffing capacity and initial implementation. It does not establish that all posts were occupied for the intended period, what knowledge the post-holders possessed, or whether the Brussels and capital relationship reproduces the practical discretion and information flows of 2013. Primary government records also show that expansion has begun in particular sectors. For example, three temporary energy attaché posts were created for the preparation and Presidency period, two from 1 July 2025 and one from 1 January

¹⁰⁶ Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, Order No. V-192 of 13 June 2023, *Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 m. koordinatorių tinklo sudarymo* [On the Establishment of the Coordinator Network for Lithuania's Preparation for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2027], TAR, 13 June 2023, No. 2023-11756, as amended by Order No. V-34 of 11 February 2026; consolidated version effective 12 February 2026, <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/t/legalAct/c12e173009e811ee9978886e85107ab2/asr>.

¹⁰⁷ Government of the Republic of Lithuania, *Lietuvos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 metais gairės* [Guidelines for Lithuania's Preparation for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2027], considered at the Government meeting of 3 May 2023, Protocol No. 14, item 2, point 8.4.4.

¹⁰⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, *2025 metų veiklos ataskaita* [2025 Annual Activity Report], 13 March 2026, 16.

2026.¹⁰⁹ This is evidence of implementation of a sectoral staffing measure within the wider Brussels-based design, but it should not be generalised as proof that the full staffing model, mandate system or capital-Brussels division of authority has been implemented.

However, the current documents do not show whether the wider advance-mandate arrangements that supported the 2013 Brussels-based model have also been retained. The 2013 model depended not only on the location of personnel but also on the discretion given to negotiators and the division of authority between Vilnius and Brussels. Without current mandate procedures and information-flow arrangements, the evidence supports describing this trajectory as partial implementation or emulation of the earlier model, rather than complete copying. It may represent single-loop learning, because an arrangement considered effective in 2013 is being reused to achieve the same general purpose, but this interpretation must remain provisional until the current operating procedures are examined.

The MFA's 2025 activity report states that all measures scheduled for that year under the Government-approved preparation action plan were implemented. It also reports that specialised training had begun, initial Presidency priority areas had been approved, the first proposals for the Trio programme had been submitted to the Council Secretariat, and preparations were under way for more than 20,000 delegates and media representatives.¹¹⁰ This provides evidence that preparation had moved beyond formal planning into initial implementation. However, it is an aggregated institutional self-report: without the underlying action matrix, completion criteria and output records, it cannot establish the quality or effects of every measure or whole government compliance.

Taken together, the current evidence demonstrates selective continuity through several different mechanisms. The Guidelines explicitly select elements of the 2013 organisational model; the STRATA study documents retrieval and recombination of named lessons; the training programme contains a differentiated design consistent with problems identified in the 2014 evaluation; and the MFA report records initial staffing and delivery. These are meaningful stages in the continuity chain, but they should not all be classified as organisational learning. Formal selection and implementation demonstrate that an arrangement has entered current preparation;

¹⁰⁹ Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės nutarimo projekto teikimo išvados gauti [On Submitting the Draft Government Resolution for Opinions], No. 3-152, 4 February 2025, 24-26 of the consolidated government file.

¹¹⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, 2025 metų veiklos ataskaita [2025 Annual Activity Report] (Vilnius, 13 March 2026), 16, <https://www.urm.lt/ministerija/veikla/veiklos-ataskaita/171>

organisational learning additionally requires evidence that knowledge changed organisational understanding, routines, decisions or governing assumptions. Interviews and internal records remain necessary to establish the actors involved, informal transmission, reasons for selection or rejection, practical effects, failures and the durability of the arrangements.

5.2. Differentiated Training and Emerging Operational Application

Training provides the clearest documentary example of a 2013 lesson corresponding to a current operational design. The BGI evaluation identified repeated or late training, insufficient provision for Brussels-based officials and, most importantly, inadequate differentiation according to participants' prior experience and Presidency functions. Its recommendation was not simply to provide more training, but to align the amount and content of preparation with existing competence, role and location.¹¹¹

The updated training programme for 2025-2026 applies these distinctions to current preparation. Developed jointly by the Public Governance Agency, the MFA Presidency Group and the Permanent Representation, it distinguishes senior decision-makers, approximately 600-650 capital-based officials and approximately 200 staff working at the Permanent Representation. Within the capital-based group, prior participation in the 2013 Presidency and longer experience of representing Lithuania in EU affairs are explicit classification criteria. Experienced prospective chairs and coordinators follow a shorter, skills-oriented programme, whereas less experienced officials receive a more extensive preparation pathway.¹¹² This goes beyond a general commitment to training: previous Presidency or EU-representation experience is being used as an administrative criterion for assigning officials to different preparation pathways. The correspondence with the weakness identified in the BGI evaluation is analytically significant, but it does not demonstrate that the evaluation itself was retrieved by the programme designers or caused this design choice. Establishing that source-to-decision link requires programme-development records or interviews. The programme also combines domestic experience with current external expertise. It provides for up to 100 less-experienced capital-based officials to undertake placements at the Permanent Representation or at EU institutions. Practical simulations and seminars involve the General Secretariat of the Council, experienced EU practitioners and representatives of recent Presidencies.

¹¹¹ BGI Consulting, *Lietuvos pirmininkavimo poveikio vertinimas*, 2014, 152-154.

¹¹² Viešojo valdymo agentūra, Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerijos Pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai grupė, and Lietuvos nuolatinė atstovybė Europos Sąjungoje, *Lietuvos valstybės institucijų darbuotojų, vykdydysiančių su pirmininkavimu Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 m. susijusias funkcijas, atnaujinta mokymų programa 2025-2026 metams* [Updated Training Programme for Employees of Lithuanian State Institutions Performing Functions Related to the 2027 Presidency of the Council of the European Union] (February 2025), 3-4.

Nine e-learning modules cover Presidency procedures and negotiation as well as digital technologies, artificial intelligence, data use and intercultural work.¹¹³ The programme is better understood as hybrid adaptation than as direct copying of the 2013 training model. Official reporting confirms that training moved beyond formal programme design. The MFA's 2025 activity report states that specialised training had begun during the year.¹¹⁴ By 1 October 2025, the Public Governance Agency reported that the first stage had delivered 50 training sessions to 407 participants and issued 1,495 completion certificates.¹¹⁵ These figures demonstrate delivery, but they are administrative outputs rather than evidence of competence gains, practical knowledge use or wider organisational effects. Assessment results, participant reflections and examples of changes in working practice would be required to establish such outcomes. A second example of emerging application is the 2027 business partnership initiative. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' call explicitly recalls that 19 companies supported the 2013 Presidency and invites the business community to participate again under current selection criteria.¹¹⁶ Because the earlier practice is directly identified and a new call has been launched, this is a stronger continuity signal than a merely similar event arrangement. It can be classified as observed reactivation or emulation of a 2013 operational practice. However, the available source does not show where the earlier procedure was stored, who retrieved it or how the 2027 criteria differ from those used in 2013.

Official documents establish the existence of a differentiated training architecture, but they do not demonstrate that preparedness is evenly distributed among administrative and political actors. Commenting to Alfa.lt, Ramūnas Vilpišauskas distinguished between civil servants working on EU affairs, who had been preparing for the Presidency and participating in intensive training, and newer political appointees with less experience of EU decision-making; Ignas Kalpokas similarly identified turnover among ministers, vice-ministers and other political appointees as a possible continuity problem, because incoming office-holders must rapidly acquire knowledge of

¹¹³ Viešojo valdymo agentūra et al., *Atnaujinta mokymų programa 2025-2026 metams*, pp. 13-16 and 23-24.

¹¹⁴ Lietuvos Respublikos užsienio reikalų ministerija [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania], *2025 metų veiklos ataskaita* [2025 Activity Report] (Vilnius, 13 March 2026), 16.

¹¹⁵ Viešojo valdymo agentūra [Public Governance Agency], "Sėkmingai baigtas pirmasis pasirengimo Lietuvos Pirmininkavimui ES Tarybai mokymų etapas" [First Stage of Training for Lithuania's Presidency of the EU Council Successfully Completed], October 1, 2025, <https://vva.lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/sekmingai-baigtas-pirmasis-pasirengimo-lietuvos-pirmininkavimui-es-tarybai-mokymu-etapas-DpB> (accessed August 9, 2026).

¹¹⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, "Užsienio reikalų ministerija kviečia verslą tapti Lietuvos pirmininkavimo ES Tarybai 2027 m. partneriais" [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Invites Businesses to Become Partners of Lithuania's 2027 Presidency of the EU Council], updated 11 November 2025, <https://www.urm.lt/uzsienio-reikalų-ministerija-kviecia-versla-tapti-lietuvos-pirmininkavimo-es-tarybai-2027-m.-partneriais/2260> (accessed August 9, 2026).

both their national portfolios and the corresponding EU-level processes.¹¹⁷ These assessments do not prove that preparation has failed. Rather, they identify an issue that the documentary record cannot resolve: whether and through which mechanisms Presidency-related knowledge is transferred from the permanent administration to incoming political leaders. Public assessments are not uniform, Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė stated that, despite changes in the political teams of the Government, the state administrative apparatus continued to prepare the substantive content of the Presidency effectively.¹¹⁸ Read together, the two articles suggest that continuity within the civil service may coexist with uncertainty concerning the onboarding and absorptive capacity of newly appointed political leaders. Establishing whether this distinction exists in practice requires evidence from interviews, transition briefings and internal training or handover records.

The training and partnership trajectories move the analysis beyond planned continuity. They show that selected earlier experience has entered current preparatory instruments and activities. They do not yet demonstrate the effects of those measures, their dependence on individual bridge actors or whether they will become long-term organisational routines.

5.3. Formal Retrieval and Combination with Recent Presidency Experience

The documentary evidence establishes the formal selection of lessons, the establishment of several preparatory structures, and their initial application in training, staffing, and partnership activities. It is much less capable of reconstructing the social process through which organisational memory operates. The records rarely identify the person who recalled a 2013 lesson, the repository from which it was retrieved, the recipient who required it or the discussion through which it affected a decision.

The 2024 STRATA study supplies the strongest documentary evidence of deliberate knowledge retrieval in the current corpus. It was prepared specifically to inform Lithuania's 2027 Presidency and combines official documents, academic and analytical literature, statistical material, case studies and semi-structured interviews with Lithuanian EU policymakers and members of recent Belgian and Czech Presidency teams.¹¹⁹ Unlike a general political reference to the success of

¹¹⁷ Ramūnas Vilpišauskas and Ignas Kalpokas, comments reported in Augustė Januškaitė, "Laikas iki Lietuvos pirmininkavimo ES Tarybai tirpsta: ekspertai įvertino, ar Lietuva pasiruošusi," *Alfa.lt*, 16 August 2026, <https://www.alfa.lt/aktualijos/politika/laikas-iki-lietuvos-pirmininkavimo-es-tarybai-tirpsta-ekspertai-ivertino-ar-lietuva-pasiruosusi/405580/> (accessed 18 August 2026).

¹¹⁸ Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė, quoted in Edvardas Špokas and Enrika Gecaitė, "Lietuva ruošiasi pirmininkauti ES Tarybai: remontuojamas Seimas, dėliojami prioritetai," *LRT.lt*, 10 August 2026, <https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/lietuvoje/2/3017395/lietuva-ruosiasi-pirmininkauti-es-tarybai-remontuojamas-seimas-deliojami-prioritetai> (accessed 18 August 2026).

¹¹⁹ STRATA, *Europos Sąjungos strateginės aplinkos prognozavimas*, 2024, 2, 9.

2013, the study identifies the sources used in the learning process. Its chapter on Presidency lessons explicitly draws on the BGI evaluation, Grumbinaite's research, Vilpišauskas and other analyses of 2013. It retrieves lessons on early preparation, flexible mandates, the Brussels-based model, LINESIS, political continuity, the honest-broker role and the limits of Trio coordination. It also retains counter-evidence: competence was uneven, formal coordination was not fully institutionalised and some networks weakened after the Presidency.¹²⁰ This shows a clear example of formal retrieval episode and corrects the earlier conclusion that the sources through which 2013 experience reached current preparation could not be identified. The study compares Lithuania's experience with the Czech, Swedish, Spanish and Belgian Presidencies and reinterprets the lessons in light of Lithuania's different position in the EU legislative cycle and a more uncertain geopolitical setting. Its proposals include differentiated advanced training, crisis-diplomacy and leadership exercises, a regularly updated Presidency personnel and contact database, retention incentives, longer-term monitoring, mixed-method evaluation, flexible mandates, stakeholder mapping and foresight exercises.¹²¹ The evidence shows that earlier experience was combined and adapted rather than simply copied.

The documentary analysis left four questions for the interviews. First, there was a need to identify bridge actors and determine whether continuity depended on former participants or institutionalised systems. Second, it needed to identify which 2013 reports, archives, databases, personal notes or routines were actually consulted. Third, it needed to reconstruct the decisions of adaptation and rejection, including unsuccessful retrieval and practices judged outdated. Fourth, it needed to examine how the coordinator network, training programme and Brussels-based model operated in practice, including whether formal structures carried the knowledge and whether current arrangements remained dependent on particular individuals. The provisional documentary finding was that selective continuity can be observed. Particular 2013 arrangements had been explicitly recalled, and some had entered current implementation, but the mechanisms connecting retained knowledge with those choices remained only partly visible. The interview analysis examines if this continuity is organisationally embedded or depends on a limited number of experienced individuals. The study shows retrieval, comparison and formal recommendation. It does not state that every recommendation was accepted, incorporated into a binding decision or implemented. Recommendation implementation records, internal decision documents and interviews are needed to identify which proposals were adopted, modified or rejected and why.

¹²⁰ STRATA, *Europos Sąjungos strateginės aplinkos prognozavimas*, 2024, 67-70.

¹²¹ STRATA, *Europos Sąjungos strateginės aplinkos prognozavimas*, 2024, 69-70, 88-92.

5.4. Documentary Limits and Questions for Interview Evidence

The current documents now identify at least one formal route through which earlier knowledge entered preparation for 2027. The STRATA study names several 2013 sources, brings them together with recent foreign cases and presents recommendations to Lithuanian institutions. The training programme and MFA activity report then show that some related measures exist in formal design or initial implementation. It would be too strong to conclude that the source of current arrangements is generally unknown. The documentary analysis established formal retention, named source retrieval and initial implementation in several areas, but it could not show how these arrangements operated in everyday work. It did not identify which officials consulted particular records, how documents interacted with the memories of former participants, why some precedents were accepted and others rejected, or whether the coordinator network, training system and Brussels-based model were usable in practice. These questions are addressed in the interview analysis that follows.

6. Interview Evidence on the Retention, Transfer and Adaptation of Presidency Experience

The interviews provided the strongest evidence for identifying how lessons from 2013 were retained and used in preparation for Lithuania's second Presidency. Analysis of the documents established that the 2013 organisational model was explicitly selected as a reference for the 2027 preparations, and that several elements of that model have been adopted into the formal implementation. However, the documentary analysis could not reconstruct most of the social and organisational processes that connected past experience to the current decisions. That is why the interviews were used to examine how officials located earlier knowledge, which people and records made it usable, how its relevance was evaluated, and whether it altered current structures or practices. In this respect, the documentary material provides the historical and formal baseline for the analysis, and the interviews show the main source of evidence for how preparation is understood and carried out in practice. They reveal how formal arrangements operate, where they are adapted or supplemented through experience, and where gaps emerge between institutional provisions and everyday administrative realities.

The interview evidence indicates that continuity was selective rather than comprehensive, knowledge from 2013 has survived in reports, archives, practical guides, work templates, institutional routines, memories of former participants and organisational structures. Its influence

depended on whether a current actor could locate it, judge its relevance and connect it to a specific task. The retrieval of the knowledge is uneven and selective, the strongest transfer occurs where written records are connected to bridge actors who can explain their purpose and where current teams have a concrete problem for which earlier experience is relevant. In contrast to that, the material that is merely stored, difficult to locate or detached from the people who created it had a much weaker influence on preparation.

The findings also show that the 2027 preparation is not based on a choice between Lithuanian former experience and newer foreign examples. The two sources perform different functions: the 2013 experience gives a specific Lithuanian baseline for institutional responsibilities, national context, acceptable way of working for the national culture and recurring operational needs. Experience from recent Presidencies and support from the General Secretariat of the Council provide updated information about current technologies, security requirements, and working practices. This results in a pattern best described as selective combination and adaptation rather than direct replication.

6.1. Scope and Analytical Contribution of the Interviews

The final sample comprised fourteen respondents interviewed in twelve sessions during August 2026. It covered Presidency preparation and central coordination within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, diplomatic and administrative work linked to the Permanent Representation, the parliamentary dimension at administrative and political levels, and external implementation. Seven respondents connected the 2013 and 2027 cycles directly, while others showed how earlier knowledge was encountered by people without comparable personal experience of the first Presidency. This combination allowed the analysis to compare retention by bridge actors with retrieval and use by current recipients. The interviews support process reconstruction and comparison across institutional settings, they do not permit statistical generalisation about the Lithuanian administration. Recurrence was treated as corroboration only where accounts came from independent sessions and sufficiently distinct positions. All interviews were conducted in Lithuanian, translated by the author where material was used in English and cited by respondent code. Awareness that a document existed was coded as retention or potential access, not as retrieval, transfer or learning. Stronger classifications were used only when the respondent identified an act of consultation, communication, evaluation, adaptation or application.

Table 3. Overview of interview participants

ID	Institutional setting	Generalised analytical perspective	Connection to the two presidency cycles	Interview details
R1	Ministry of Foreign Affairs - EU Department; newly recruited specialist coordinating national EU positions	New specialist working on national EU-position coordination	2027 participant; no direct 2013 work experience	10 Aug 2026; 36 min; individual
R2	Parliament - European Affairs Committee Office; adviser	Administrative adviser spanning the 2013 and 2027 preparation cycles	Direct involvement in both 2013 and 2027	13 Aug 2026; 32 min; individual remote
R3	Permanent Representation to the EU; diplomat assigned to Council working groups	Diplomat working in Council working groups	2027 participant; no direct 2013 work experience	14 Aug 2026; 42 min; individual remote
R4	Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Presidency Preparation Group; communication team	Communication-team perspective	2027 participant; no direct 2013 work experience	15 Aug 2026; 41 min; individual
R5	External implementation organisation; project manager for Presidency-related events	Project-management perspective on presidency events in Lithuania	2027 external implementation; no direct 2013 work experience	17 Aug 2026; 27 min; individual
R6	Parliament - Member of the Parliament, Deputy Chair of the Committee on European Affairs	Parliamentary oversight and political-priority perspective	Political oversight of 2027; institutional perspective on 2013	18 Aug 2026; 45 min; individual remote
R7	Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Presidency Preparation Group; Planning and Coordination Team	Planning and coordination lead with 2013 training-project experience	2013 training-project experience and 2027 preparation	19 Aug 2026; 51 min; joint with R8
R8	Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Presidency Preparation Group; Meetings Team	Meetings team lead with direct 2013 coordination experience	Direct involvement in both 2013 and 2027	19 Aug 2026; 51 min; joint with R7
R9	Parliament - Office of the Chancellor; adviser and Deputy Coordinator of the parliamentary-dimension preparation group	Chancellery adviser and deputy coordinator for the parliamentary dimension	Direct involvement in both 2013 and 2027	20 Aug 2026; 49 min; individual
R10	Permanent Representation to the EU; member of the administrative meeting-coordination team	Meeting coordination and logistics; no direct 2013 work experience	2027 participant; no direct 2013 work experience	20 Aug 2026; 28 min; individual remote.
R11	Ministry of Foreign Affairs - EU Department; official coordinating selected Council formations, national positions and negotiating briefs	Senior EU-affairs coordinator and negotiation practitioner	Direct involvement in 2013 chairing and in substantive preparation for 2027	24 Aug 2026; 48 min; individual.
R12	Parliament - Information and Communications Department, adviser and Head of the Presidency website and internal-communication team	Communication-team lead	Direct communication involvement in 2013 and decision responsibility for 2027	25 Aug 2026; 52 min; joint with R13.

R13	Parliament - Information and Communications Department, adviser and Deputy Head of the Presidency website and internal-communication team	Communication team deputy and current implementation specialist	Current 2027 participant; no comparable operational role in 2013	25 Aug 2026; 52 min; joint with R12.
R14	Permanent Representation to the EU - Presidency preparation team; senior diplomat coordinating staff training and procedural guidance	Staff-preparation and procedural-guidance perspective	Participated in 2013 in a different function and is involved in preparation for 2027	26 Aug 2026; 54 min; individual remote.

Note. Institutional positions are reported at the level necessary to interpret respondents' evidence. Exact titles and organisational units are generalised where required to preserve anonymity.

6.2. Distributed organisational memory: records, people and unequal access

The interviews confirm that the five volume report written after the 2013 Presidency is one of the most visible formal repositories of the earlier experience, however, its practical status varies substantially across the administrative network. Among respondents from the MFA Presidency group, it is seen that the report is well known and even used daily in the preparation period, R4 received the report volumes as the main introduction to the Presidency work, and has read the communication volume in greater detail. R8 similarly described the books as the first material given to the new members of the meetings team. The same respondents reported returning to the relevant volume to check previous costs, accreditation colours, seating plans and other logistical details (R4; R7; R8). It is worth mentioning that, during the in-person interview, it could be seen that one of the respondents had even personalised the volume of the report that is the most useful for their work, to prevent it from being damaged by constant use. These accounts extend the report trajectory beyond documentary retention: in the core preparation group, specific volumes are retrieved to address onboarding and operational questions. The report corpus is less active outside this core, R5 working in an external implementing organisation, had found and consulted only part of the material on their own initiative, R1 believed that Presidency related records probably existed on shared drives but did not know where to look for them, and did not know about the existence of the report, R3 had encountered the report before moving to the Permanent Representation, but did not receive a standard reading package upon arrival. These differences suggest a proximity effect. Access and guided use are strongest within the units directly responsible for Presidency coordination and weaker where an actor is institutionally or functionally further from that centre. The findings do not mean that the material is unavailable to every peripheral actor, they show that activation depends more heavily on individual initiative. The interviews also distinguish physical or digital survival

from practical accessibility. Public online links to the 2013 report disappeared when the earlier Presidency website was shut down, while internal copies remained available. Only the volume covering the parliamentary dimension could be located through public online sources. External access therefore required consulting a physical copy held by a library. Respondents nevertheless confirmed that the MFA material remained known internally. This is not evidence of institutional forgetting within the MFA, but of a difference between internal retention and public accessibility. An interesting point from R11, who had contributed to the 2013 report, was an explanation that its public purpose limited the operational detail it could contain and that time pressure often made consultation with experienced colleagues more useful than reading documents, R14 likewise considered the report useful but incomplete because it did not capture many everyday problems or the reasons behind decisions.¹²²

R4 described the resulting tension particularly clearly: “We have the report books, so in a sense there is a lot of memory, but finding who worked with whom on a specific issue is very difficult”.¹²³ The respondent had also encountered a large volume of paper records in storage, some of which could have been destroyed after their formal retention periods expired. Formal records-management requirements did not necessarily correspond to the much longer interval over which Presidency experience might remain organisationally useful. R6 offered a more confident political level assessment, describing earlier plans and administrative records as preserved across institutions and available even to employees engaging with Presidency work for the first time. Read alongside R1 and R4, however, this demonstrates why formal and presumed availability should not be equated with practical retrieval. From the political oversight perspective, the documentary record appears to exist and remain available, from the perspective of employees attempting to use it, locating the relevant material and the people needed to interpret it may still be difficult.

The Parliament presents a stronger case of documentary continuity specific to the institution. R2 reported that the parliamentary archive had been deliberately preserved more broadly than legally required and included decisions, correspondence and files from former staff. Both experienced and newer colleagues consulted this material when reconstructing earlier procedures. R9 likewise described the current use of previous invitations, document examples, and timelines, especially to establish when organisational structures, events, and other preparatory steps had been initiated. The parliamentary report is only one component of a wider repository. In this institutional setting, detailed work traces and templates appear to have remained connected to an identifiable

¹²² Interview R11; interview R14.

¹²³ Interview R4.

coordinating function. R12 and R13 mentioned that they consulted the 2013 website, parliamentary report, albums and exhibition catalogues. Their search, however, remained primarily within parliamentary sources, and they learned only after planning the current exhibition that the Government's 2013 communication had also used a straw garden motif. The case suggests that records may survive within separate institutional repositories while the broader national experience remains only partly visible across them.

Within the Permanent Representation, the main repository is more function specific. R3 and R10 referred to an internal Presidency handbook or practical guide covering theoretical, procedural, and logistical questions. The earlier guide had been retained, while a new version was being prepared for 2027. R10 summarised the two principal channels succinctly: "One source is the practical guide; the other is people".¹²⁴ R14 traced the revision process in greater detail, the team retrieved the 2013 guide, preserved its general structure and key thematic blocks, and rewrote the parts affected by changed rules, institutional practices, working methods and technology. The draft was intended to undergo Ministry and interinstitutional review before formal approval. The case provides evidence of retention, retrieval and adaptation, but not yet of completed institutionalisation or effectiveness.¹²⁵ This combination illustrates that organisational memory is distributed across national institutions and occupational functions rather than concentrated in a single central archive.

People constitute the second major repository. Seven respondents, R2, R7, R8, R9, R11, R12 and R14, directly connect the 2013 and 2027 preparation cycles. For most of them, continuity did not mean returning to the same task. They became involved in the second cycle from different functions and, in several cases, from broader or more senior coordinating positions. Their trajectories show that experience was retained not only because individuals remained within the institutional system, but also because their knowledge moved with them as their responsibilities changed. In several cases, their current roles provided a wider view of the preparation process than they had possessed in 2013, although their recollections still reflected the limits of their earlier functions. The value of these bridge actors lies less in recalling every factual detail than in explaining priorities, causal reasoning and the significance of earlier choices. R5, for example, reported that experienced colleagues helped distinguish which operational problems deserved close attention and which were less meaningful. R3 similarly differentiated a written guide containing formal and logistical information from practical advice transmitted through everyday conversation.

¹²⁴ Interview R10.

¹²⁵ Interview R14.

Embodied memory nevertheless has clear limits; respondents who have worked in 2013 repeatedly acknowledged that their earlier roles covered only part of the process and that precise memories had faded. R8 noted that past experience could “even get in the way” when partial recollection was applied after procedures and technologies had changed.¹²⁶ R11 distinguished transferable coordination know-how from deeper committee expertise that requires prolonged participation, and R14 emphasised that changing tools and rules require earlier experience to be reassessed. In addition, R4 mentioned that former participants were dispersed across organisations, were difficult to identify and were not always willing or able to revisit an intensive temporary project. The interviews therefore do not support a romanticised view of experienced officials as complete repositories. Their knowledge is selective, and its value depends on current relevance, availability and the ability to connect it to written evidence.

Documents and personal experience complement each other, but neither is enough on its own. Records are comparatively durable and useful for dates, quantities, templates and formal structures, yet often omit the reasons behind decisions. People can supply those reasons and tacit judgements, but their memories decay and remain vulnerable to mobility or overreliance on a small number of experts. Continuity is strongest when both forms are deliberately linked, as in Seimas archives, the MFA teams use the 2013 report and the Permanent Representation combination of a guide with experienced staff. Usable documentary memory depends not only on the survival of records, but also on whether users can locate them, identify the relevant or authoritative version and interpret them in current institutional conditions.¹²⁷

6.3. Retrieval and Transfer in Practice

The interviews reveal the diversity in how new personnel are introduced to presidency work. R4 and R8 described a direct connection between onboarding and the 2013 report; the volumes are supplemented by structured master files, OneNote records and SharePoint materials that enable a new employee to reconstruct the status of a specific functional area. Earlier recruits then introduce later arrivals in small groups, producing a cascading transfer process. Here, a retained source, a recipient and a concrete act of transmission can all be identified. Other respondents have encountered less systematic processes. R1 had not received a specific introduction to the 2013 experience and knew which colleagues had participated mainly through informal conversation. R5 learned the logic of the Presidency through work and independent research rather than a formal

¹²⁶ Interview R8.

¹²⁷ Interview R11; interview R14.

introduction package. R3 received internal meetings and external training but no single standard set of documents at the Permanent Representation. This variation also exists within otherwise formal training systems: R14 described a tiered programme of introductory, general and specialised training for diplomats and administrative staff, but also noted that late recruitment or deployment could leave employees asking for courses that had already taken place, R13 received general training but developed choices specifically mainly through self-directed research. These cases show that a broad governmental training programme can coexist with uneven onboarding at different teams and functions. Formal training establishes a broad orientation and general understanding, and the connection between new employees' daily tasks and 2013 material depends on local management and availability of relevant repositories. Formal provision therefore does not by itself ensure that the right knowledge reaches a recipient at the point when it becomes usable.

R10 provided an example of how the Permanent Representation had attempted to incorporate personal memory into a formal transfer mechanism. Registration for training asked participants whether they had worked during the 2013 Presidency, and those with prior experience were encouraged to contribute during discussions. This arrangement does more than assume that experienced people will be found informally, it identifies them and creates a setting in which their knowledge can be distributed, they were encouraged to talk and share their experience during informal parts after training, and in this way helped to make contact with people with more experience, which could be really helpful in the further process. The mechanism remains dependent on what individuals remember and choose to share, but it reduces the risk that earlier expertise stays invisible.

The Parliament combines centralised training with transfer through planning and supervision. R9 and the coordinator, who is returning to the position they had in 2013, prepared internal sessions for the administration, presenting both the 2013 experience and the current preparation model. Day to day transmission occurs as experienced coordinators review the activity plans, deadlines and resource assumptions of 18 functional teams. This is analytically significant because the knowledge is incorporated into a recurring planning process rather than communicated only through retrospective stories. In addition, R2 mentions targeted placements with counterparts in other parliaments, which further supports the distinction between broad conceptual instruction and practice specific to the function. R12 and R13 show that internal communication can itself become a transfer mechanism, which connected the perceived weakness of internal information flows in 2013 with the creation of a dedicated communication team, an intranet, shared team spaces and a recurring newsletter contribution process for 2027. This is stronger than a retrospective lesson

alone because responsibility and information sharing routines have been assigned to current structures. The evidence demonstrates emerging institutionalisation during preparation, although the interviews do not establish how consistently all employees use the new channels.

The coordinator network, formally established by Ministerial Order No. V-192 in June 2023 and subsequently amended, includes representatives of the institutions involved in preparation.¹²⁸ Interview evidence shows how this formal structure operates as a transfer channel in practice: respondents described monthly meetings, regular exchanges between the MFA and the Permanent Representation, shared calendars, email groups and cross-institutional planning. The network distributes current guidance, brings emerging problems to the centre and links institutions to specialised knowledge. However, R4 warned that information passed to a coordinator does not always reach all relevant employees within that institution. The existence of a horizontal network does not eliminate vertical transmission gaps.

Informal transfer remains essential for tacit and rapidly changing knowledge, R3 characterised practical “tips and tricks” as something transmitted orally, while R4 described locating former participants through chains of personal contacts. R5 identified the vulnerability created when one person becomes the sole holder of information, and reported using shared mailboxes and assigning more than one employee to an event as safeguards. So it can be seen from these examples that Informal networks can provide fast and highly contextual knowledge, but at the same time they can make the system dependent on personal accessibility.

Direct observation of recent Presidencies is another big and important part of the transfer of experience. Members of staff responsible for specific functions were sent to observe comparable work in other countries that have just held the Presidency. The difference between relaying information and enabling the recipients to see the practice for themselves was emphasised by R7: “we do not carry the knowledge back ourselves; we say you should go and see in practice how everything works there”.¹²⁹ Recurring “Lessons Learned” seminars provide a regular multilateral transfer mechanism through which an outgoing Presidency shares experience with several future Presidency teams. R10 described practical handover notes from successive Presidency teams that circulate as a legacy, each team updates the material and passes it to the next, together with contacts

¹²⁸ Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, Order No. V-192 of 13 June 2023, Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 m. koordinatorių tinklo sudarymo [On the Establishment of the Coordinator Network for Lithuania’s Preparation for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2027], as amended by Order No. V-34 of 11 February 2026, consolidated version effective 12 February 2026, <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/c12e173009e811ee9978886e85107ab2/asr>

¹²⁹ Interview R7.

and procedural guidance. R14 observed training delivered to Danish and Cypriot teams before adapting the arrangements for Lithuania, and also described later Presidency holders approaching the Lithuanian team in turn. These accounts reveal a horizontal EU-level memory chain that complements national retention, although the detail, openness and suitability of what is transferred still vary by source and function. Transfer was most clearly demonstrated when a source, a recipient, and the present task could all be identified. The strongest examples include the reuse of the 2013 negotiating-brief procedure, the reconstruction and updating of the practical guide, the use of earlier reports for specific meeting arrangements, the review of parliamentary plans against earlier timelines, and the conversion of a remembered internal communication gap into a team and recurring workflow. General awareness of the 2013 Presidency is analytically weaker, retrieval becomes meaningful only when knowledge is interpreted and affects a current choice or practice.

6.4. Selection, adaptation and competing precedents

Respondents did not describe the 2013 experience as a fixed blueprint, its relevance varies by function and stage of preparation. Earlier national material was considered especially useful for establishing structures and responsibilities, and for negotiating boundaries and timelines. As implementation became more specific, current legal rules, technologies, and examples from recent Presidencies became more important for certain functions, particularly communication, meetings, and logistics. R4 reported that the 2013 report volumes served as an early checklist but were consulted less frequently once current plans had developed. R10 therefore treated both sources as verification methods, while noting that new foreign examples were often easier to apply to meeting coordination because technology and personnel had changed. R11 treated the newer experience as more relevant to crisis-driven EU decision-making, but the same respondent described direct reuse of the 2013 negotiating-brief procedure. R12 and R13 similarly relied more heavily on recent examples for digital and creative communication while retaining earlier publications and coordination lessons. R14 traced both training and the practical guide from a 2013 starting point through substantial updating.¹³⁰ The relationship is a combination that varies by function, not replacement of domestic memory by a newer source. This supports a layered model of learning rather than dismissing Lithuania's domestic experience from the previous Presidency by more recent external experience.

The parliamentary case offers a clear example of deliberate selection: R9 reported that a project management model had been considered for the 2027 preparation but that the Chancellery

¹³⁰ Interview R14.

ultimately retained the team-based structure used in 2013 because it had worked and suited the horizontal nature of the task. The model was not reproduced unchanged, team composition and names were adjusted to the current structure, some functions were combined or separated, and the permanent core was smaller. As the respondent explained: "this is not a one to one adaptation of the same model, it has been adapted to today's needs and to the current structure of the Chancellery, but the same model was selected".¹³¹ This shows emulation rather than copying, the underlying organisational principle was retained while its form was modified.

The MFA evidence reveals a similar combination of retention and redesign: the three team structure of planning and coordination, meetings, and communication in the Presidency group was reproduced from 2013. Within the meeting team, the arrangement of four coordinators with deputies and horizontal contacts was deliberately copied because it had performed well previously.¹³² At the same time, the distribution of financial and operational responsibility changed, ministries now carry the financial responsibility, and they are responsible for expert-level events, while Litexpo has assumed a larger role in venue related procurement and technical delivery. These changes were not justified merely by the passage of time, respondents linked them to the administrative and logistical burdens experienced in 2013. R11 supplied a direct application case in substantive preparation, the procedure for preparing and approving negotiating briefs was carried from 2013 into the 2027 cycle so that objectives and negotiating limits would be settled before the Presidency, when Lithuania must act as an impartial chair and cannot repeatedly reopen a national position. This is identifiable reuse rather than similarity inferred from the existence of comparable documents: the respondent named the earlier procedure, explained its purpose and described its present application.

Technological and legal developments generate additional adaptation. R4 observed that some procedures had to be created because procurement rules and administrative systems have changed. R9 contrasted the physical interpretation infrastructure required in 2013 with the planned use of remote interpretation for some parliamentary meetings in 2027. R5 identified new security and business-continuity requirements, including drone-related risks and remote works contingencies. These are not cases of failed retrieval, they are examples in which earlier experience is assessed and selectively discontinued because its supporting conditions no longer apply. The practical guide provides the clearest example of adaptation within a single artefact, its 2013 thematic structure was retained because the earlier guide was judged useful, but parts of the content were rewritten to reflect current meeting and interpretation practice, legal requirements, digital tools

¹³¹ Interview R9.

¹³² Interview R8.

and institutional support. The case shows that an artefact can preserve procedural memory without freezing its substantive content. Because the guide was still under review, it should be described as provisional institutionalisation rather than as a completed transfer outcome.

The interviews also expose competition between possible precedents, R5 viewed the more recent NATO Summit in Vilnius as a more relevant operational reference for the venue and security environment, but R8 strongly rejected treating it as an overall model of Presidency logistics, describing the comparison as one between “a sprint and a marathon” because a short, highly concentrated summit differs from six months of repeated meetings.¹³³ This disagreement is analytically valuable. It shows that the relevance of a precedent is not determined by its recency alone. The appropriate source depends on the structure of the task, the NATO Summit for particular security or venue questions without providing a suitable model for the duration, rhythm and distributed workload of a Presidency of the Council of the EU.

The combination of domestic and foreign experience also produces negative learning, respondents used recent examples not only to identify practices worth adopting but also to recognise choices that would not fit Lithuanian working culture or institutional capacity. R10 described comparing the tone and level of prescription in other countries' guidebooks before deciding how the Lithuanian manual should be written. R8 noted that Lithuania had anticipated several calendar constraints that Irish counterparts encountered only during implementation, attributing parts of this advantage to the 2013 memory. Newer source is not inherently superior, it can update, confirm or be corrected by the national experience. The parliamentary communication case also shows learning during the current preparation cycle, R12 and R13 reopened the 2013 website but chose a lighter design and a more selective communication strategy, they also examined recent foreign websites for features that should not be copied. In a separate episode, a parliamentary publication using Presidency colours had to be withdrawn temporarily after the team learned that the visual identity was not yet public. This is evidence of immediate negative learning from a current coordination failure, not proof that the wider communication arrangement has already succeeded.

At the level of substantive priorities, respondents consistently treated the 2027 context as different: war in Europe, the topics of defence, enlargement, hybrid threats and a changed legislative agenda limit the relevance of the 2013 policy programme. The transferable objects are instead administrative structure, planning principles, routines and relational skills. The interview evidence thus supports the thesis restricted use of Policy Transfer Theory, what travels across the two cycles

¹³³ Interview R8.

is mainly organisational practice and knowledge about preparation, not an unchanged national or European policy agenda.

6.5. Incorporation into structures, routines and responsibilities

The strongest evidence of application concerns the organisational architecture, the documentary record showed that the 2023 Guidelines selected the 2013 model, and the interviews identify how this choice was defined and why participants considered it relevant. At the MFA, the dedicated Presidency group and its three teams reproduce the earlier structure. In the Parliament, the coordinator, coordination group and functional teams follow the same basic logic as in 2013. These structures allocate responsibilities to current actors and organise recurring work, so they represent more than a remembered preference or a one-time consultation. The new Parliamentary internal-communication team adds a further case in which a perceived weakness from 2013 was translated into assigned responsibility and recurring information-sharing routines. Several smaller practices also show observable continuity: R2 identified the advanced mandating principle as a mechanism retained from 2013, enabling negotiating limits to be agreed before officials act at EU level. R11 identified the negotiating-brief procedure as a direct carry-over from 2013, while R14 traced the structure of the current practical guide to an explicitly retrieved 2013 predecessor. These cases are particularly valuable because the source and present application can be identified without inferring transfer from formal similarity. R3 described the anticipated use of Sunday briefings when the Brussels meeting schedule leaves no alternative. R5 treated early preparation and the need for greater time reserves as a central lesson from 2013. R9 used earlier timelines to determine when to approve structures and events. These practices largely show single-loop learning: earlier experience improves planning within the same general objectives and authority framework.

The current coordinator network appears to embed transfer within a recurring national routine. Monthly meetings distribute guidance and enable institutional representatives to report progress or problems. The parliament and external partners are linked to the central preparation process, while the Permanent Representation translates decisions and priorities between Vilnius and Brussels. R3 described the representation as a second engine that converts ideas developed in Lithuania into contacts and actions at EU level. R7 likewise portrayed it as a primary partner providing weekly information from the institutions. The Brussels-based model depends not only on staffing in Brussels but on sustained information flows and relationships. A parallel accountability mechanism operates at the political level, R6 described a cycle of European Affairs Committee meetings in which individual ministries presented both their substantive priorities and practical

preparations, including planned events and organisational decisions. The Committee also regularly receives information from the MFA about the overall progress of preparation. These routines add a parliamentary oversight channel to the administrative coordination system and make preparation subject to recurring political scrutiny. They do not, however, establish that every operational mechanism presented to the Committee functions effectively in everyday practice.

Training is another important area of experience transfer, and the interviews confirm movement from design to operation. Respondents had participated in internal and centralised programmes, skills-oriented sessions, stress management training and placements in EU institutions or recent Presidency administrations. R14 showed how the current system combines three layers: elements retained from the 2013 training model, stronger training support now offered by EU institutions, and observation of recent Presidency teams. Prior 2013 experience was used to differentiate participants and encourage peer contribution. Its reach depends on staffing sequence, because employees who arrive late may miss training already delivered. The evidence establishes an operating transfer mechanism, not its effect on eventual Presidency performance.

The clearest evidence of deeper learning concerns the reassignment of responsibility: in 2013, the MFA Presidency group carried a centralised interinstitutional plan and a large share of financial reporting, procurement and verification burdens. For 2027, more responsibility is assigned directly to sectoral institutions, the budget is in the hands of the ministries, while specialised venue tasks are placed with Litexpo. R7 and R8 explicitly connected these decisions to difficulties encountered in 2013. Because the changes reconsider who should hold authority and responsibility, rather than simply improving a procedure within the same arrangement, they provide the strongest provisional case of double-loop learning. Of course, this classification should remain cautious: a different organisational design does not by itself prove double-loop learning, and the interviews do not yet establish whether every relevant decision-maker relied on the same lesson or whether the revised model will work better. What can be demonstrated is a link from source to decision, when experienced participants recalled the burden of the earlier arrangement and used it to justify a redistribution of responsibility. The performance and durability of the new model cannot yet be evaluated at the time of writing.

But it can be seen that institutionalisation is uneven: the organisational structure, coordinator network, training pathways, shared work systems, and practical guides are embedded in current responsibilities. They reduce the dependence on single individuals' recollection, but several mechanisms remain located in temporary Presidency units or depend on a small number of bridge

actors. The interviews at this point cannot show whether these arrangements will survive the dissolution of the project teams after 2027, and no authoritative long-term repository for the combined 2027 record had been agreed. The evidence supports institutionalisation within the preparation process, but not a claim of durable post-Presidency retention.

6.6. Limits to institutional and small state capacity

Limited personnel capacity appears across institutional settings, but respondents did not treat it as an automatic consequence of national size. R6 expressed this position most directly, rejecting state size as an adequate explanation for weak performance and arguing that early preparation and a clear allocation of responsibilities are more decisive. But multiple respondents have reported different problems related to lack of human resources. R7 cautioned that staff lists can exaggerate capacity because the same person may cover several functions. R3 and R4 compared Lithuanian teams with those of similarly sized or smaller countries that had assigned more staff to comparable tasks, in addition to that the R3 mentioned the 6 work days a week model that the Permanent Representation is preparing for. R9 contrasted a two-person parliamentary coordination core in 2027 with five dedicated staff in 2013, and noted that the number of parliamentary events had been reduced. R12 and R13 described a similarly narrow two-person operational core for much of the parliamentary communication work despite broader institutional support, while R14 showed that late staff arrival can also reduce capacity indirectly by disrupting access to planned training. The relevant issue is the relationship between functions, overlap, duration and workload, not the total number of people alone.

On the other hand smaller administrative apparatus can facilitate rapid contact, but it also can concentrate memory, R5 described situations in which one person held most of the relevant information and work slowed when the person was absent. Shared mailboxes, overlapping assignments and small functional groups were used to introduce redundancy. These measures show awareness of the risk, but they also illustrate how easily a temporary high intensity project can become dependent on a limited number of people. Diplomatic rotation, temporary contracts and the dissolution of Presidency teams create a longer term version of the same problem. R1 and R4 found it difficult to identify the holders of particular 2013 knowledge, while R10 meeting coordination functions are explicitly temporary and will no longer be required after the Presidency, without a planned handover, the expertise acquired in such roles could again disperse. R14 extended this finding beyond the availability of former participants, the state invests in employees and assistants who acquire specialised knowledge, contacts and confidence during preparation and

implementation, yet dispersed employing institutions, limited mobility and temporary contracts can allow that capacity to leave the public service immediately afterwards. The relevant question is therefore not only whether a future team can locate a veteran, but whether the present system creates realistic routes for redeployment, career progression and continued use of Presidency-generated competence. Because the 2027 cycle is still ongoing, proposed recruitment or mobility measures cannot yet be considered effective retention.

Political change has a differentiated effect, R1 reported little disruption after the change of government because administrative functions and much of the immediate leadership remained stable. R4 nevertheless treated ministerial turnover as a possible risk. At the political level, R6 explained that although the trio programme constrains the overall agenda, governing parties can still give greater prominence to particular issues or reduce the attention allocated to others. He illustrated this by describing how Social Democratic leaders pressed for social security to be included in the agenda of the COSAC conference. In Parliament, R9 described actual reworking of programmes, speakers and even social or cultural elements after committee chairs changed. These accounts support a distinction between administrative continuity and political reorientation. Permanent staff can preserve procedures, but changes in political office may require renewed legitimisation and adaptation of content. R11 identified a further buffering mechanism: an experienced ambassador, the Brussels team and the Council Secretariat can compensate for newly appointed political office holders, it was not meant to evaluate the preparedness of the current ministers, but it is important to note this as a possible safety net in the face of probable political change. R6 adds the political oversight perspective, from the European Affairs Committee: preparation is monitored through a series of Committee meetings at which the MFA and other ministries present priorities, events and organisational decisions. This produces a comparatively confident assessment that retained plans, experienced staff and the formal three-year preparation cycle have advanced preparation. The administrative interviews qualify that confidence by showing that the existence of records does not guarantee that a new employee can locate or interpret them. Political and administrative evidence should be treated as complementary rather than interchangeable: political actors provide oversight and priority setting, whereas administrative actors reveal how organisational memory operates in daily work.

Employee well-being emerged inductively as a condition of organisational capacity, R3 argued that failing to send a minor email would be less damaging than the psychological or physical collapse of an employee, while respondents across the MFA, Permanent Representation, Parliament and the external partner anticipated a prolonged period of work beyond normal hours. Formal stress

management sessions, training, psychological support, team-building and informal meetings had been introduced in some settings. R11's retrospective account drew attention to the emotional transition after an unusually intense and meaningful period of work. R7 and R8 placed particular emphasis on trust, proactivity and conflict prevention, their immediate answer when asked for the principal lesson from 2013 was the team itself, a recent Irish counterpart offered the same warning about preserving relationships under pressure. The evidence shows that relational and emotional conditions affect whether people can sustain performance, ask for help and share knowledge, and these conditions are a part of administrative capacity. These human conditions also had a motivational side, several respondents described the Presidency not only as an administrative assignment but as a personally meaningful national and European project. R8 noted that some employees had moved from the private sector for lower pay because they saw meaning in the project and later described preparation as a whole state rather than only an MFA responsibility. R11 similarly connected the expected intensity of the six-month period with a strong sense of responsibility and satisfaction, and argued that the Presidency should be explained to society as an expression of what Lithuania does as an EU member. The interviews also contained a comparative self understanding, R2 and R8 described Lithuania as preparing unusually early, while R9 observed that the process may become more routine in states which have held the Presidency many times. R10 likewise identified differences in working and communication cultures, but explained that external practices were selected according to their suitability for the Lithuanian team. These accounts do not establish a fixed or uniquely Lithuanian national culture, they show that the actors interviewed understood Lithuania's second Presidency as an exceptional national project, which encouraged additional commitment but also risked normalising reliance on work beyond usual hours.

Some risks lie outside the reach of internal memory, respondents mentioned procurement disputes, suppliers capacity, reconstruction deadlines, security incidents, disinformation, drone threats and last minute political or participant changes. The value of previous experience in these situations lies less in predicting the exact event than in developing contingency planning, cross-institutional contacts and the ability to improvise. A well-designed internal preparation system can still be constrained by external implementation conditions. Most respondents assessed the current preparation positively, but their evidence concerns preparedness rather than performance. R10 explicitly stated that the mechanism could be evaluated only once room allocation, interpretation and the first operational schedules began to run. This distinction

corresponds to the documentary analysis: completed plans, established teams and training outputs demonstrate implementation.

6.7. Prospective organisational memory after 2027

The interviews show greater awareness of prospective memory than was visible after 2013, several current practices create records during preparation rather than waiting for a final report. R4 had been instructed to maintain a dated sequence of major decisions and tasks; R7 described a platform recording process status, difficulties, delays and successful solutions; R8 referred to master files for each meeting and to OneNote and SharePoint records documenting what had been done and what remained outstanding; R9 anticipated another parliamentary report and emphasised preserving document examples and preparatory timelines, while R10 reported that the updated practical guide and operational statistics were already being prepared. R12 extended this approach to implementation choices, arguing that future records should explain long decision processes, including why an initially planned external solution was abandoned in favour of in-house production. These systems potentially provide a more attentive process trace than a retrospective summary alone, they may make it possible to identify when a problem emerged, which response was chosen and how long a task required. However, accumulation is not the same as organisational memory, unless the material is selected, explained and assigned to a durable repository, a large collection of operational records can reproduce the fragmentation encountered in the 2013 archive. R8 stated the central weakness of the earlier reporting directly: “We recorded the facts, but we did not really record the lessons learned - what should be done differently next time”.¹³⁴ R4 similarly argued that comments about failures may be more valuable than descriptions of success. The common concern is not insufficient documentation in quantitative terms, it is the limited reflexivity of documentation that records outputs without explaining alternatives, causal assumptions, failed approaches or reasons for rejecting a course of action.

For the 2027 experience to become retrievable organisational knowledge, the current work traces will need a post-implementation reflection stage. This would require actors from different functions to distinguish factual records from lessons, identify decisions with long-term relevance, explain what did not work and connect each lesson to the conditions under which it should or should not be reused. R11 recalled that, in her area, the end of the 2013 Presidency was not followed by a structured examination of what had succeeded, what had failed and why. The respondent proposed collecting chair-level reflections shortly after the Presidency, while decisions

¹³⁴ Interview R8.

and unsuccessful alternatives could still be reconstructed. R14 likewise argued for an explicit and non-blaming account of what should be done differently, identifying exhaustion after an intensive Presidency as one reason why operational problems may remain undocumented. Such interpretation is especially important because a later team could otherwise mistake a context specific solution for a general rule. Post-Presidency reflection should record not only the lesson itself, but also the conditions under which it is expected to remain applicable.

The accounts of R4, R7 and R8 point to a possible governance gap, information was already being collected, but the final format, location and long-term ownership of the combined Presidency record had not yet been decided. R8 expected an electronic rather than another printed five-volume report, but the preservation structure had not been decided. R4 likewise did not know how the closing phase or final reporting would be organised. R14 similarly proposed a central and secure repository, but stressed that future users would also need to identify the authoritative version of a document and reconstruct how it had changed. This adds authority and version history to the existing problems of location, access and interpretation. Without an assigned custodian and access rules extending beyond the temporary Presidency Group, the current digital traces may remain vulnerable after project structures dissolve.

Preserving people remains part of the solution but cannot substitute for institutional design. Future teams will benefit if experienced staff remain accessible, but turnover over another long interval is inevitable, there will be very low chances for the people that worked in 2013 and 2027 Presidencies to join the next one. R14 therefore framed personnel retention as an organisational design problem: the state should consider how trained for Presidency employees might be redeployed, offered mobility or enabled to continue using their competence after temporary structures dissolve. This does not require keeping every participant in the same role. A durable arrangement would need to link named functional expertise, written handovers, decision rationales, templates and an accessible repository. The interviews suggest that the most useful legacy would not be a single comprehensive narrative, but a structured combination of common lessons and material for specific functions that can be retrieved according to a future user's task.

6.8. Synthesis of interview findings

The interviews answer the gaps left by the documentary analysis. First, they identify multiple repositories through which the 2013 experience survived: reports, archives, practical guides, templates, and individual memory. Second, they reconstruct transfer mechanisms, including

onboarding, training, coordinator meetings, peer consultation, professional mobility, placements and direct observation of recent Presidencies. Third, they provide links from source to current decisions. Fourth, they reveal adaptation, rejection and implementation problems that are largely absent from formal records. The overall pattern is one of selective and layered continuity. Specific Lithuanian memory is most influential in designing structures, assigning responsibilities, establishing timelines and anticipating recurring national coordination needs. More recent external experience updates operational knowledge under changed technological, institutional and geopolitical conditions. The sources are combined rather than ranked universally; their relative importance depends on the function, the stage of preparation and the similarity of the problem to be solved.

The findings demonstrate a complementary and layered relationship between domestic institutional memory and external learning. The 2013 experience forms the principal foundation specific to Lithuania for preparation for 2027. Experience from more recent Presidencies does not replace or outweigh this foundation; it is used to update it in areas more strongly affected by technological, legal, security, or institutional change. The evidence indicates not a shift from domestic to foreign experience but the selective updating of the 2013 model through external learning. This is compatible with Grumbinaité's argument that institutional memory alone may not be sufficient¹³⁵, while also demonstrating that domestic memory remains the organising basis of current preparation. It nevertheless qualifies the expectation that learning from recent Presidency holders necessarily becomes more important after a long interval: respondents described the two sources as serving different functions rather than one replacing the other. The 2013 reports and officials with direct 2013 experience were deliberately consulted rather than remaining residual background resources.

Organisational learning is visible, but its depth varies; the reuse of successful structures, early planning, targeted training, and procedural refinements mainly indicate single-loop learning. The redistribution of financial and operational responsibility remains the strongest provisional example of double-loop learning because respondents linked difficulties in the 2013 centralised arrangement to a reconsideration of which institutions should hold responsibility in 2027. This classification concerns the depth of organisational change, not the effectiveness of the revised model, which cannot yet be evaluated. The parliamentary internal-communication team and adapted practical guide indicate provisional institutionalisation, while rejection of outdated procedures

¹³⁵ Grumbinaité, Turning “Them” into “We”, 86-91.

reflects critical assessment rather than forgetting. Uneven onboarding, inaccessible records and dependence on particular people nevertheless show that accidental loss persists.

The central answer emerging from the interviews is conditional, Lithuania has not preserved a complete 2013 model and transferred it intact to the 2027 preparation process. It has used the 2013 organisational model as the foundation of the preparation system for 2027, retaining its principal structures and practices while selectively adapting them to current responsibilities, technologies, risks and institutional conditions. These arrangements are already structuring preparation, but transfer remains uneven across institutions. At the same time, the preservation of the 2027 experience through structured reflection, an authoritative repository and continued use of trained personnel has not yet been secured.

Table 4. Triangulated summary of documentary and interview evidence by lesson trajectory

Trajectory	Documentary evidence	Interview evidence	Analytical conclusion
Organisational model	Guidelines explicitly select the 2013 model	R4 and R7 - R9 show reuse, modification and transmission gaps; R11 adds direct reuse of negotiating briefs, R12 and R13 identify a new internal-communication function	Selective emulation, direct procedural reuse and provisional institutionalisation
Reports and archives	Five-volume report demonstrates codified retention; updated practical guide was formally planned	Active MFA use, broader Seimas archives, incomplete public reporting, cross-institutional retrieval gaps	Strong retention but unequal access, difficulties in interpretation and uncertain authority
Training	Differentiated programme and delivery records	R10 and R14 show mobilisation of experienced staff, tiered provision, EU-institution support and adaptation to participant experience; late arrival limits reach	Operating formal transfer mechanism; effects not yet demonstrated
Responsibility allocation	2013 audits identify burdens and visibility problems	R7 and R8 connect previous difficulties to redistribution for 2027	Provisional double-loop interpretation: responsibility was redistributed in response to problems experienced in 2013; effectiveness and durability are not yet observable
Recent Presidencies	STRATA and training formally incorporate recent cases	Observation visits, lessons-learned events and handover notes	External learning updates rather than replaces 2013

Future memory	Limited formal decision on final preservation structure	R4, R7 - R10 describe live records and guides; R11 - R14 add structured reflection, variable lesson durability, version control and personnel retention, while long-term ownership remains undecided	Emerging retention with unresolved reflection, ownership and personnel-retention gaps
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Source: compiled by the author.

7. Discussion

The combined documentary and interview evidence points to selective and layered continuity between Lithuania's 2013 Presidency and preparation for 2027. The 2013 experience has neither been preserved as a complete model that can be reproduced unchanged nor displaced by more recent Presidency experience from other countries. Instead, it remains the specific Lithuanian organising foundation, while newer external experience updates particular practices in response to institutional, technological, security-related, and political change. The documents establish continuity in formal design, whereas the interviews show how earlier knowledge is retrieved, interpreted and used in practice. The preparation for 2027 is therefore better understood as a process of retrieval, selection and adaptation than as either institutional repetition or a new beginning. The findings support the analytical proposition in qualified form, continuity after a long interval was selective and became meaningful when retained knowledge was connected to current responsibilities, concrete tasks and actors capable of interpreting it. Bridge actors were important, but continuity did not depend on individuals alone; reports, guides, training, and recurring coordination routines made knowledge accessible to current recipients. Recent external experience complemented rather than displaced the domestic foundation.

7.1. Institutional memory as distributed and selective continuity

Findings support the view that organisational memory is not located in a single archive or institution. It can be embedded in documents, people, tasks, tools and networks. In the Lithuanian case, traces of the 2013 experience remained in the five volume report, the Parliament archive, practical guides, templates, digital systems, experienced officials and coordination arrangements.¹³⁶ Their presence, however, did not make knowledge equally available throughout the preparation system. The strongest cases of continuity were found where a repository was connected to a current task and to people responsible for explaining or using it. Within the central Presidency teams, parts

¹³⁶ Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. liepos 1 d.-gruodžio 31 d.: Planavimas ir organizavimas (2014); Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Lietuvos Respublikos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. antrąjį pusmetį parlamentinio matmens ataskaita (2014), 34-36.

of the 2013 report were used for onboarding and for checking costs, accreditation arrangements, timelines and logistical details. In the Lithuanian Parliament, archived correspondence, invitations and preparatory timelines were reopened by both experienced and newer employees. By contrast, a newly recruited MFA employee had not received a specific introduction to the 2013 experience and did not know where relevant records were stored, while an external implementation partner located only part of the report through individual initiative, organisational proximity to the centre of preparation did not automatically guarantee retrieval, but assigned responsibility, guided access and a concrete need for the information made retrieval more likely. This shows that retaining knowledge, being able to find it, understanding it and actually using it are different things. The reports preserve facts, formal structures and sequences, but do not always explain why a solution was selected or what alternatives failed. Experienced officials can supply context and tacit judgement, yet their memories are partial and may become less reliable as procedures change. Documentary and embodied memory are therefore complementary but independently insufficient. This is consistent with Grumbinaitė's finding that professional contacts, skills and some administrative practices remained after the temporary 2013 structures were dismantled, the present research extends that finding by identifying how such repositories were activated during preparation for 2027 and where retrieval still failed.¹³⁷ Other interviews show that documentary memory has at least four conditions of usability: location access, authority and interpretability. R14 concern about identifying the last official version demonstrates that retrieval can fail even when a file is technically available. R11 and R14 also show that public reports and internal memory artefacts perform different functions. Public reports provide accountability and a durable official account, but they may omit failed alternatives, decision logic and operational detail. Organisational memory is not improved simply by increasing the volume of documentation. Its value depends on whether later users can establish what a record is, whether it is authoritative and how the conditions surrounding it affect reuse.¹³⁸

7.2. Domestic experience and external learning

The relationship between domestic memory and external learning is not a competition between an old and a newer source. The 2013 experience provided knowledge of Lithuanian institutions, national responsibilities, coordination practices and realistic preparation sequences. Recent Presidency holders, the General Secretariat of the Council and other EU institutions

¹³⁷ Grumbinaitė, *Turning "Them" into "We"*, 86-91.

¹³⁸ Walsh and Ungson, "Organizational Memory," 57-91; Argote and Fahrenkopf, "Knowledge Transfer in Organizations," 2016, 146-59.

provided current procedural knowledge and direct observation of practices developed after 2013. Their relative value depended on the function and the problem. Earlier Lithuanian experience remained highly relevant for organisational structure, negotiating briefs, timelines and recurring logistical needs. Newer sources were more important for digital communication, current security conditions, updated EU procedures and some meeting practices. This helps to expand the expectation that a long interval makes recent experience more important than domestic institutional memory¹³⁹, in this case the two sources performed different and complementary functions.

In the terms of policy transfer theory, the dominant pattern is selective combination and emulation rather than direct copying. The 2013 team model was retained but adjusted to current institutions and available resources. The practical guide kept its earlier thematic structure while its content was rewritten. Earlier parliamentary communication problems contributed to a new internal communication function, while experience of excessive central burdens supported a redistribution of financial and operational responsibility. Direct copying was limited to practices for which the institutional problem remained sufficiently similar, most clearly the negotiating-brief procedure and parts of the meetings coordination structure. Deliberate rejection was also an important outcome: earlier procedures were not used when legal, technological or security conditions had changed, and recent precedents were rejected when the task itself was not comparable. This distinction matters, because the choice not to use can represent critical assessment and unlearning rather than organisational forgetting.¹⁴⁰

Organisational learning is visible in preparation for 2027, but its depth cannot be overstated, most observed changes refine procedures while retaining existing objectives and correspond to single-loop learning. The redistribution of responsibility is the strongest provisional case of double-loop learning because it changes the allocation of authority in response to difficulties experienced in 2013. The practical guide, training system and parliamentary internal communication function show emerging institutionalisation because knowledge has entered current roles and recurring practices. Still, these mechanisms are being used within a temporary preparation system and their durability after 2027 is unknown. The evidence demonstrates learning in preparation, not the effectiveness of the Presidency or the final success of the transferred arrangements.

¹³⁹ Grumbinaitė, “Narystės egzaminas,” 2024, 30.

¹⁴⁰ Dolowitz and Marsh, “Learning from Abroad,” 2000, 5-23.

7.3. Small-state capacity, people and well-being

The findings also refine the small-state explanation: limited administrative size was a recurring condition, but it did not automatically determine capacity. What mattered was how many functions one person covered, when staff arrived, how responsibilities were distributed, how early and how well it was prepared and whether the coordination created usable redundancy. A small administration can facilitate direct contact and rapid problem solving, but it also concentrates knowledge in a limited number of officials. When one person becomes the main holder of contacts or operational information, absence or turnover can interrupt both implementation and memory. This supports the small-state literature which emphasises prioritisation, coordination and strategic use of limited resources, while showing that organisational memory is one part of this capacity problem.¹⁴¹ The seven bridge respondents are important in this respect, most returned to the second cycle in different functions and several held broader coordinating responsibilities than in 2013. Their experience did not remain fixed in an earlier position, it moved through the administration with their careers and could be applied from a wider perspective, at the same time, the same pattern exposes a vulnerability. Personnel mobility can spread knowledge, but retirement, diplomatic rotation, temporary contracts and departure from the public service can also disperse it. The continued availability of trained people should be treated as an organisational design question, not left to the chance that a future team will still know whom to contact.

Staff wellbeing emerged as a related capacity mechanism, not only as a welfare concern, respondents across institutional settings anticipated work beyond normal hours and placed strong emphasis on trust, team cohesion, the confidence to ask questions and the prevention of conflict under pressure. These conditions affect whether the knowledge is shared, whether problems are raised early and whether performance can be sustained over the six-month Presidency. They also affect future memory: exhaustion after an intensive project can reduce willingness to reconstruct failures or prepare another report. For a small administration, losing an experienced employee to burnout or failing to maintain cooperation inside a narrow team has a disproportionate organisational effect. This finding shows that administrative capacity also depends on relationships and employee well-being, not only on formal staffing.

The comparison also reveals a human dimension which is only partly visible in formal records. The 2011 cross-party agreement defined the Presidency as a national task, but the interviews show how this idea is experienced by people involved in preparation. Respondents

¹⁴¹ Thorhallsson, *Role of Small States*; Panke, "Small States in the European Union," (2010), 799-817.

described unusually early planning, work extending beyond normal hours and willingness to accept personal costs because the project was considered meaningful. Some contrasted this intensity with administrations where repeated Presidencies had become a more established routine. These accounts do not establish a fixed or uniquely Lithuanian national working culture, and respondents' generalisations about other countries should be treated as perceptions. They nevertheless indicate a specific for Presidency ethos of responsibility and national ownership among the actors interviewed. This commitment can strengthen small-state capacity by encouraging cooperation, initiative and additional effort, but it can also normalise overwork and make institutional performance dependent on exceptional personal contribution. It is also a condition specific to the Lithuanian context of transfer: procedures and tools can be learned from other Presidencies, while the symbolic importance attached to Lithuania's second Presidency cannot be transferred in the same way. Some respondents also connected this commitment with a wish for wider public understanding and support, presenting the Presidency as a national rather than only administrative project.

7.4. Prospective memory and the limits of current learning

Preparation for 2027 already produces more live records than were visible in the post-2013 material: dated decision sequences, status logs, master files, shared workspaces, revised guides and intended upgraded reporting. This created the possibility of a more detailed process record, but data accumulation does not by itself produce organisational memory. The missing stage is structured reflection, participants need an opportunity shortly after the Presidency to explain what was attempted, what failed, why a choice was made and under which conditions a lesson should remain applicable.¹⁴² A non-blaming format is especially important because official public reports have accountability and representational purposes which can limit the recording of operational failure. The evidence points towards a combined preservation arrangement rather than one comprehensive final report. A durable repository should combine common decisions and guidance with function specific working material, indicate the authoritative version and preserve version history. It should also have a named owner and access rules which continue after temporary units are dissolved. Documentary preservation should be accompanied by short functional handovers, identifiable areas of personal expertise and realistic routes for redeploying employees and assistants in whom the state has invested, these measures would connect prospective memory with personnel policy and reduce the risk that the 2027 experience is dispersed immediately after the project ends. Temporary staff,

¹⁴² Martin de Holan and Phillips, "Remembrance of Things Past?", (2004), 1603-1613, 1605-1606.

assistants and redeployed officials accumulate contacts and tacit knowledge that cannot be fully transferred into a document. Retention does not require preserving the temporary project structure, but it does require routes through which this human capital can be redeployed, recognised and connected to future organisational tasks. The long-term legacy of a Presidency therefore depends on both how memory and personnel are managed.¹⁴³

Several limits remain, the interviews were purposively selected and reconstruct mechanisms across different institutional positions, they do not support statistical generalisation to the whole Lithuanian administration. Respondent accounts also cannot independently prove that every described arrangement has been fully implemented or will produce the intended effect. The documents establish formal adoption and reported activity, but not everyday operation. Most importantly, the 2027 Presidency had not yet occurred at the time of the research, the thesis can identify retrieval, transfer, adaptation and emerging institutionalisation during preparation, but it cannot evaluate Presidency performance or the durability of post-2027 organisational memory. Despite these limits, the case contributes to both Presidency and organisational learning research, it shows how a small state can rebuild capacity for a recurring but temporary EU responsibility through a combination of domestic institutional memory and transnational learning. It also demonstrates that continuity across a long interval depends less on preserving a complete model than on connecting repositories, people and present responsibilities. The practical implication is simple: experience becomes a future organisational resource only when it is interpreted, assigned an owner and kept connected to the people and tasks through which it can be used.

Conclusion

This thesis examines how the lessons and knowledge generated during Lithuania's first Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2013 were preserved, retrieved, transferred and adapted in preparation for the 2027 Presidency. The findings show how and to what extent the knowledge was incorporated into current preparatory arrangements, the study shows substantial but selective continuity between the two Presidency cycles. Knowledge from 2013 has survived and been used again, but it has not been transferred as a single complete model. Its incorporation is strongest in the organisational structure, delegation of responsibilities, preparation timelines, negotiation procedures, training, and repetitive administrative tasks. And the transfer is more uneven, depending on particular institutions, functions heavily affected by evolving technologies, and individuals. The research establishes how earlier knowledge is used in the preparation period,

¹⁴³ Linda Argote and E. Fahrenkopf, "Knowledge Transfer in Organizations," 146-159.

while the effectiveness of its incorporation in current arrangements and their durability after 2027 remain outside its scope.

The 2013 experience remains the specific Lithuanian organising foundation of the current preparation. Experience from other countries that have recently held the Presidency and EU institutions complements this foundation rather than replacing it. And the value and importance of these knowledge sources depend on the function or problem that is addressed. Domestic institutional memory is particularly important for understanding Lithuanian responsibilities, limitations, coordination practices and preparation timelines. More recent external experience is really relevant where technology, security, conditions, EU procedures or communication practices have changed. The relationship between domestic and external learning is better understood as a complementary rather than a hierarchical in which one source becomes more important than the other.

The most important empirical finding describes the difference between the survival of knowledge and its practical usability. The 2013 experience remained distributed across official reports, archives, guides, organisational arrangements, professional networks and people. However, the existence of this knowledge in different forms does not guarantee its retrieval. The previous knowledge became usable when actors could locate, access, interpret and identify its authority in relation to the current conditions and connect it to the current specific responsibilities. The knowledge in documents and people complements each other, records provide trustworthy continuity, and experienced officials provide context, causal reasoning and practical judgement that formal reports have not always preserved. No single form of memory is independently sufficient. The evidence also shows that the incorporation of the 2013 knowledge took several forms: earlier practices were directly reused where the underlying task remained similar, adapted where circumstances had changed, and rejected when they were no longer suitable. The strongest links between source and decision were seen in the organisational design, the revision of the practical guide, the negotiating brief procedure, differentiated training, the redistribution of financial and operational responsibility, and the creation of new teams. These findings demonstrate more than formal similarities, because the respondents identified how earlier experience informed current decisions.

The combined theoretical framework was suitable and useful for distinguishing different stages and types of experience transfer. Organisational memory theory explained where the knowledge was retained and why its survival did not automatically ensure retrieval. Policy transfer

theory made it possible to distinguish copying, emulation, combination, adaptation and deliberate rejection. Organisational learning theory helped to assess whether earlier experience had produced procedural corrections or more fundamental changes. Most identifiable changes are consistent with single-loop learning because they help to refine existing practices while retaining the same general objectives. The redistribution of financial and operational responsibility supports the strongest provisional double-loop interpretation because it revises which institutions hold responsibility in response to problems experienced in 2013. The study identifies a link between the earlier experience and the resulting redesign, but it cannot yet assess the effectiveness or durability of the new allocation. This framework was also a safeguard against automatically treating the existence of documents, similar structures or training activities as evidence of learning. At the same time, the framework has its limitations, the boundaries between transfer, adaptation, application and institutionalisation are not always clear in an ongoing preparation process. Theories can identify plausible mechanisms and different depths of learning, but they cannot independently establish causal influence or the effectiveness of arrangements that have not yet been fully implemented. That is why the analysis required identifiable links between sources, recipients, transfer mechanisms and current decisions. Because of the timing of the research, some claims concerning institutionalisation and double-loop learning remain provisional, where durability and effects cannot yet be observed.

The thesis makes three broader contributions. First, it extends research on Lithuania's 2013 Presidency beyond its immediate effects by tracing how elements of that experience were assembled during the preparation for the next Presidency cycle. Second, it shows that organisational memory across a long interval is not best understood as the preservation of a complete institutional model, it depends on connections between repositories, current responsibilities, and people. Third, this thesis adds a human dimension to the study of small-state capacity: professional mobility can distribute experience across an administration, but turnover, retirement and temporary employment can also disperse it. Trust, team cohesion and staff wellbeing influence whether the knowledge is received, shared and whether intensive work can be sustained. The interview respondents also understood preparation as more than an administrative assignment; they expressed a strong sense of national and European responsibility and a wish to improve and surpass Lithuania's first Presidency quality, even though it was widely regarded as successful. The interview findings indicate a specific Presidency ethos of national ownership among the actors interviewed. This commitment can strengthen a small administration through early preparation, cooperation and initiative, but it may also normalise overwork and make institutional performance dependent on exceptional personal

contribution. The symbolic importance of Lithuania's second presidency is a locally embedded condition of preparation that cannot be transferred from other presidency holders in the same way as procedure or technical tools. The timing of the research is also part of its contribution, studying preparation before the 2027 Presidency made it possible to observe organisational memory while it was retrieved, interpreted and incorporated into current situations and decisions. Participants and temporary coordination structures were still accessible, while many choices remained recent enough for their reasoning to be reconstructed. The same timing made it possible to identify prospective memory gaps before the closing phase, when operational pressure, exhaustion and personnel dispersal may reduce the willingness or ability to document unsuccessful alternatives and practical lessons. Because the research was carried out before the Presidency, its findings may still help institutions decide how to preserve the 2027 experience.

Based on the findings four recommendations are proposed for the institutions that are participating in leading the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2027. 1) Assigning long-term ownership of Presidency memory. Before temporary preparation structures are dissolved, the coordination system led by the MFA should designate a permanent institutional custodian for the combined Presidency records, the custodian should be responsible for preservation, access and later retrieval of the knowledge rather than only collecting files during preparation. 2) Creating an authoritative and distributed by function-organised repository. It should distinguish final versions of documents, preserve version history and maintain access rules after 2027. It should combine central decisions and common guidance with operational material organised by functions. 3) Organising structured post-Presidency reflection. Shortly after the Presidency, participants from different functions and levels should document not only achievements, but also problems, rejected alternatives, causal reasoning and recommendations for future teams. It is important that the process would be non-judgemental and should record the conditions under which each lesson is likely to remain applicable. This material should be complementary to the public reporting, whose accountability and representational purposes may limit discussion of operational failures. 4) Connecting memory preservation with personnel and wellbeing policies. Participating institutions should prepare handovers specific to functions, maintain identifiable areas of expertise and consider how trained employees and assistants can be retained or redeployed after temporary structures end. Early recruitment, access to appropriate training, workload management, psychological support, trust and conflict prevention should also be treated as capacity measures. Commitment to the presidency should not become a substitute for sufficient institutional resources.

The research is subject to several limitations. The purposively selected interviews covered different institutions and functions but cannot be statistically generalised to the whole Lithuanian administration. Respondents' accounts reflect their specific positions and may be affected by retrospective interpretation. Documentary sources establish formal adoption, codified lessons and reported activity, but cannot independently demonstrate everyday implementation. Access to parts of the 2013 documentary legacy was also uneven, particularly outside internal institutional repositories. The principal boundary resulting from this prospective design is that the research cannot assess the performance of the 2027 Presidency, the eventual effects of transferred arrangements or the durability of post-2027 organisational memory.

For further research it would be useful to evaluate the 2027 Presidency after the cycle is finished, comparing planned arrangements and their actual implementation, the research could examine whether transferred practices functioned as expected, what unexpected problems emerged and if the structured reflection and authoritative repository were established. An even later research would be needed to determine whether records remained retrievable and whether temporary knowledge was integrated into daily institutional routines. Another interesting direction would be to analyse the careers of personnel trained for the Presidency. Longitudinal research could examine whether officials and assistants remained within public administration, whether their experience entered later organisational tasks and whether professional mobility distributed or weakened institutional memory. Even further, a comparative research involving other EU member states would be useful, it could test whether the combination of domestic memory and recent external learning identified in Lithuania appears across other recurring Presidencies and whether the strong sense of national responsibility is associated with few Presidencies experience or broader characteristics of small-state administration.

Overall, Lithuania's preparation for 2027 cannot be described as either complete organisational memory retention or institutional forgetting, it is a selective reconstruction of an earlier national experience through documents, people and professional relationships, combined with more recent transnational learning. The long-term legacy of the 2027 Presidency will depend not only on how successfully Lithuania performs its role, but also on whether the knowledge created through that effort remains interpretable, retrievable and connected to future institutional responsibilities.

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Appendix 1. Documentary corpus and analytical status

The appendix presents the 25 documents retained during the screening of the preliminary source pool. The categories correspond to the evidentiary hierarchy explained in the methodology:

A1 - binding legal or administrative acts;

A2 - strategic or programmatic instruments;

B - administrative records and institutional self-documentation;

C - audits, evaluations and commissioned analyses;

D - official communications used for contextual or corroborative purposes.

“Full coding” indicates that the document was coded across its relevant substantive content.

“Selective coding” indicates that only sections directly relevant to the research question and analytical framework were coded. Documents classified as “context” were not used as direct evidence that organisational learning or experience transfer had occurred.

Table A1. Documentary corpus relating to the 2013 Presidency cycle

ID	Date	Producer	Full document title	Category and document type	Analytical status	Principal function in the study
C01	29 March 2012	National Audit Office of Lithuania	<i>Kaip rengiamasi pirmininkauti ES Tarybai</i> (State Audit Report No. VA-P-40-2-4)	C – independent performance audit	Full coding	Establishes the baseline of documented readiness risks, planning problems, coordination arrangements and recommendations before the 2013 Presidency.
C02	2013	Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union	<i>For a Credible, Growing and Open Europe: Programme of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 1 July to 31 December 2013</i>	A2 – official Presidency programme	Selective coding	Identifies the formally declared priorities and governing approach of the 2013 Presidency.
C03	27 February 2014	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>2013 metų veiklos ataskaita</i>	B – official annual activity report	Selective coding	Records reported Presidency outputs, administrative systems and immediate post-Presidency retention intentions.
C04	2014	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. liepos 1 d.–gruodžio 31 d.: Planavimas ir organizavimas</i>	B – official post-Presidency report, volume 1	Full coding	Provides the principal documentary repository concerning planning, organisation, staffing, training and practical working instruments.
C05	2014	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. liepos 1 d.–gruodžio 31 d.: Programos įgyvendinimas</i>	B – official post-Presidency report, volume 2	Selective coding	Records programme implementation, Presidency outputs and policy-level experience.

C06	2014	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. liepos 1 d.–gruodžio 31 d.: Susitikimai</i>	B – official post-Presidency report, volume 3	Selective coding	Records meeting organisation, logistical procedures, divisions of responsibility and post-event reporting.
C07	2014	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. liepos 1 d.–gruodžio 31 d.: Komunikacija</i>	B – official post-Presidency report, volume 4	Selective coding	Records the communication structure, coordination routines, digital instruments and retained communication materials.
C08	10 March 2014	Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Lietuvos Respublikos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 m. antrąjį pusmetį parlamentinio matmens ataskaita</i>	B – official parliamentary report, volume 5	Full coding	Provides evidence concerning parliamentary preparation, staffing, training, institutional visits, internal records and review practices.
C09	17 November 2014	BGI Consulting, commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<i>Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai poveikio vertinimas: Galutinė ataskaita</i>	C – commissioned mixed-method evaluation	Full coding	Assesses competence development, interinstitutional coordination, sustainability concerns and lessons arising from the 2013 Presidency.
C10	27 February 2015	National Audit Office of Lithuania	<i>Lietuvos Respublikos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2013 metais tarpinstitucinio 2013–2014 metų veiklos plano įgyvendinimo vertinimas</i> (State Audit Report No. FA-P-40-8-2)	C – independent implementation audit	Full coding	Provides counter-evidence concerning planning, expenditure, reporting, compliance and implementation of the interinstitutional action plan.

Source: compiled by the author.

Table A2. Documentary corpus relating to preparation for the 2027 Presidency

ID	Date	Producer	Full document title	Category and document type	Analytical status	Principal function in the study
C11	3 May 2023	Government of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Lietuvos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 metais gairės</i> (Government meeting Protocol No. 14, item 2)	A2 - government preparation guidelines	Full coding	Establishes the formal selection of elements of the 2013 organisational and Brussels-based models for preparation for 2027.
C12	13 June 2023; amended 11 February 2026	Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	Order No. V-192, <i>Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 m. koordinatorių tinklo sudarymo</i> , as amended by Order No. V-34	A1 - binding ministerial order	Full coding	Establishes the coordinator network, its formal composition and assigned institutional roles.
C13	10 January 2024	Government of the Republic of Lithuania	Resolution No. 39, <i>Dėl Lietuvos pasirengimo pirmininkauti Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 metais veiksmų plano patvirtinimo</i> , with the annexed Action Plan	A1 - government resolution and Action Plan	Full coding	Establishes binding preparatory measures, responsible institutions, deadlines and principal workstreams.
C14	8 December 2023	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės nutarimo projekto</i> (explanatory memorandum accompanying the 2027 Preparation Action Plan; Government Office registration No. G-110842)	B - explanatory memorandum	Selective coding	Explains the rationale, consultation process and institutional participation underlying the Action Plan.
C15	2024	STRATA	<i>Europos Sąjungos strateginės aplinkos, raidos tendencijų, teisėkūros ir politikos prioritetų prognozavimas, Lietuvai rengiantis pirmininkauti ES Tarybai 2027 m.</i>	C - commissioned analytical and foresight study	Full coding	Provides traceable retrieval of 2013 sources, comparison with more recent Presidencies and recommendations for adaptation.

C16	February 2025	Public Governance Agency; MFA Presidency Group; Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the EU	<i>Lietuvos valstybės institucijų darbuotojų, vykdydiančių su pirmininkavimu Europos Sąjungos Tarybai 2027 m. susijusias funkcijas, atnaujinta mokymų programa 2025–2026 metams</i>	B - official training programme	Full coding	Establishes the differentiated, role- and experience-sensitive design of the training programme.
C17	1 October 2025	Public Governance Agency	<i>Sėkmingai baigtas pirmasis pasirengimo Lietuvos pirmininkavimui ES Tarybai mokymų etapas</i>	D - official implementation communication	Context	Corroborates the reported completion of the first stage of the training programme.
C18	13 March 2026	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>2025 metų veiklos ataskaita</i>	B - official annual activity report	Full coding	Records the Ministry's reported staffing targets and implementation of scheduled preparatory measures during 2025.
C19	4 February 2025	Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Dėl Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės nutarimo projekto teikimo išvados gauti, No. 3-152</i>	B - administrative submission and draft act	Selective coding	Provides a concrete sectoral example of the planned expansion of Lithuania's Permanent Representation through temporary attaché posts.
C20	11 November 2025	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Užsienio reikalų ministerija kviečia verslą tapti Lietuvos pirmininkavimo ES Tarybai 2027 m. partneriais</i>	B - official call for partners	Selective coding	Provides evidence of the explicit reactivation of a partnership practice previously used during the 2013 Presidency.
C21	2 April 2025	Committee on Legal Affairs of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Lietuvos pirmininkavimas ES Tarybai 2027 m. – unikali galimybė įtvirtinti Lietuvos interesus ir prisidėti prie ES ateities formavimo</i>	D - official committee communication	Context	Corroborates the presentation and discussion of the STRATA study in a parliamentary setting.

C22	10 June 2026	Council of the European Union	<i>Tarybos aštuoniolikos mėnesių programa (2026 m. liepos 1 d.–2027 m. gruodžio 31 d.): Airijos, Lietuvos ir Graikijos programos projektas, document 10392/26</i>	A2 - draft Trio programme	Selective coding	Establishes the developing EU agenda and changed strategic context within which earlier Lithuanian experience must be adapted.
C23	4 June 2026	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>K. Budrys Europos Parlamente aptarė Lietuvos pirmininkavimo ES Tarybai prioritetus</i>	D - official communication	Context	Provides contextual evidence of priority articulation and consultation with the European Parliament.
C24	3 June 2026	Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Patvirtintas Lietuvos pirmininkavimo ES Tarybai parlamentiniu matmeniu renginių kalendorius</i>	D - official parliamentary communication	Context	Corroborates the approval of the parliamentary event calendar and the emerging parliamentary preparation framework.
C25	30 July 2026	Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania	<i>Lietuva tęsia pasirengimą pirmininkavimui ES Tarybai</i>	D - official ministry communication	Context	Provides a sectoral illustration of consultations and emerging practical preparation for 2027.

Source: compiled by the author.

Appendix 2. Semi-structured interview guide

The interviews were conducted in Lithuanian. The guide below is an English translation of the common thematic guide used across the interviews. The order and wording of questions were adapted to the participant's role and to the development of the conversation, and questions already answered in an earlier response were not repeated. Role-specific prompts were used only where relevant.

Opening and consent:

- Introduction of the research topic.
- Confirmation that participation is voluntary, that the participant may decline to answer any question or stop the interview, and that the recording will be used only for research purposes.
- Explanation about the anonymity, that the thesis will identify participants by respondent code and will generalise exact titles or organisational units where necessary.
- Request for consent to record the interview.

Common thematic questions:

1. Could you briefly describe your current role and responsibilities in preparation for Lithuania's 2027 Presidency of the Council of the European Union?
2. Were you involved in the 2013 Presidency or its preparation? If so, what was your role? If not, how and when did you first encounter the 2013 experience in your current work?
3. Which lessons, practices, documents or other forms of experience from 2013 are considered relevant to preparation for 2027?
4. Do you know where is knowledge from the 2013 Presidency currently retained?
5. Have you personally searched for, requested, received or used material from 2013? What was easy or difficult to locate and interpret?
6. Which people or organisations have been most important in transferring earlier experience? How was that knowledge communicated?
7. What formal transfer mechanisms have been used?
8. What role has informal communication played, including consultation with former participants, mentoring, peer advice or professional contacts?

9. What has Lithuania learned from more recent Presidencies, EU institutions or comparable events? How does this knowledge relate to the 2013 experience?
10. Can you identify practices from 2013 that were copied directly, modified, combined with newer experience or deliberately rejected? What explains those choices?
11. Can you give a concrete example in which earlier experience affected a current decision, procedure, staffing arrangement, training activity or organisational structure?
12. What barriers have limited continuity or transfer?
13. How do Lithuania's administrative size, staffing patterns, professional culture, team relations and workload affect preparation and the use of earlier experience?
14. Which parts of the 2013 experience are no longer applicable because the political, legal, technological, institutional or security context has changed?
15. What records are being created during preparation for 2027, and who is expected to preserve and maintain them after the Presidency?
16. What should be done after 2027 to ensure that future employees can locate, understand and use the experience generated in this cycle?
17. Is there an important lesson, problem or example that has not been covered?

Role-specific follow-up questions:

Participants involved in 2013: Which practices were considered successful or problematic at the time? Which elements remain relevant, and where might later recollection be incomplete?

Current participants without direct 2013 experience: How were you introduced to Presidency work? Which sources and people were accessible? At what point did earlier experience become useful?

Bridge actors spanning both cycles: How has your role changed between the two cycles? Which knowledge travelled with you, and which earlier assumptions or practices had to be reassessed?

Parliamentary functions: How were parliamentary archives, timelines, committee oversight, internal communication, event preparation and the parliamentary report used or adapted?

External implementation and political oversight: How does access to central records and coordination differ outside the core preparation teams? Which implementation, procurement, security or political factors shape what can be transferred?

Appendix 3. Anonymised interview summaries

The summaries below provide the information necessary to interpret the interview evidence. Exact titles and organisational units are generalised where necessary. All interviews were conducted in Lithuanian, audio-recorded with consent and analysed using the final coding framework presented in Appendix 4.

R1

Interview details: 10 August 2026; individual interview; 36 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EU-affairs administration; newly recruited specialist working on national EU-position coordination.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Participant in preparation for 2027; no direct work experience from the 2013 Presidency.

Topics discussed: Onboarding; awareness and location of 2013 records; access to experienced colleagues; administrative continuity after political change; staffing and knowledge gaps.

Principal analytical contributions

- Had not received a specific introduction to the 2013 experience and did not know about the five-volume report, although Presidency-related records were assumed to exist on shared drives.
- Identified colleagues with 2013 experience mainly through informal conversation, illustrating the difference between the existence of retained knowledge and its practical accessibility to a new recipient.
- Reported limited disruption to administrative work after a change of government because many functions and immediate leadership arrangements remained stable.
- The respondent represents the recipient side of transfer and current administrative practice.

R2

Interview details: 13 August 2026; individual remote interview; 32 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Parliamentary administration, European Affairs Committee Office; adviser with experience spanning both Presidency cycles.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Direct involvement in both the 2013 Presidency and preparation for 2027.

Topics discussed: Parliamentary archives; procedural continuity; mandating arrangements; internal transfer; placements with other parliaments; early preparation and institutional capacity.

Principal analytical contributions

- Reported that the parliamentary archive had been deliberately preserved more broadly than legally required and was consulted by both experienced and newer staff when reconstructing earlier procedures.
- Identified the advanced-mandating principle as a mechanism retained from 2013 for agreeing negotiating limits before officials act at EU level.
- Described targeted placements with counterpart parliaments as a way to obtain specific experience that complements domestic institutional memory.
- Provided a bridge-actor perspective on Lithuania's unusually early preparation and the value of stable coordinating functions.
- The account is strongest for the parliamentary administrative dimension.

R3

Interview details: 14 August 2026; individual remote interview; 42 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Permanent Representation to the European Union; diplomat assigned to Council working groups.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Participant in preparation for 2027; no direct 2013 work experience.

Topics discussed: Introduction to Presidency work; practical guide; Vilnius-Brussels coordination; staffing intensity; recurring working practices; employee well-being.

Principal analytical contributions

- Distinguished the retained practical guide, which contains formal and logistical information, from oral “tips and tricks” transmitted in everyday interaction.
- Had received internal meetings and external training but no single standard package of 2013 materials, demonstrating uneven onboarding even within a central institution.
- Described the Permanent Representation as a second engine that translates decisions made in Lithuania into EU-level contacts and action.
- Linked limited staffing and intensive working patterns to the need for well-being safeguards and noted anticipated continuity in practices such as Sunday briefings when schedules require them.
- The respondent could assess current retrieval and transfer but not personal continuity from 2013. Findings relate primarily to diplomatic and Council-working-group functions during preparation.

R4

Interview details: 15 August 2026; individual interview; 41 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Presidency Preparation Group; communication-team perspective.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Participant in preparation for 2027; no direct 2013 work experience.

Topics discussed: Use of the five-volume report; onboarding; record location and former personnel; coordinator network; communication adaptation; staffing and political turnover; prospective documentation.

Principal analytical contributions

- Received the 2013 report volumes as a principal introduction to Presidency work and used the communication volume and other parts as an early operational checklist.
- Highlighted the practical difficulty of identifying who had worked with whom on a specific issue, despite the apparent volume of documentary memory.
- Warned that information delivered through the coordinator network does not automatically reach every relevant employee within participating institutions.
- Explained that older procedures became less useful as current plans developed and legal, technological and administrative conditions changed.
- Reported maintaining a dated record of major decisions and tasks, while noting that the final format, location and long-term ownership of the 2027 record remained undecided.

R5

Interview details: 17 August 2026; individual interview; 27 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: External implementation organisation; project manager responsible for Presidency-related events in Lithuania.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: External implementation role for 2027; no direct 2013 work experience.

Topics discussed: Independent retrieval of earlier material; advice from experienced colleagues; venue and event planning; NATO Summit precedent; security and business continuity; one-person dependency.

Principal analytical contributions

- Located and consulted only part of the 2013 report through individual initiative rather than a formal introduction package.
- Reported that experienced colleagues helped distinguish meaningful operational risks from less important issues, demonstrating the value of tacit interpretation.
- Treated the recent NATO Summit in Vilnius as a useful reference for particular venue and security questions, while not claiming it was a complete model for a six-month Presidency.
- Identified new requirements relating to security, drone risks and remote-work continuity and described shared mailboxes and overlapping assignments as safeguards against concentration of knowledge in one person.
- Presented early preparation and larger time reserves as central transferable lessons.
- The respondent's access to central government repositories was partial. The account reflects external implementation and event-management needs rather than the full national coordination system.

R6

Interview details: 18 August 2026; individual remote interview; 45 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Parliamentary political level; deputy chair of the European Affairs Committee.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Political oversight of preparation for 2027 and an institutional perspective on the 2013 experience.

Topics discussed: Political oversight; availability of earlier records; small-state capacity; priority-setting within the Trio framework; monitoring of preparation.

Principal analytical contributions

- Provided a political-level assessment that earlier plans and administrative records remained preserved and available across institutions.
- Rejected state size as a sufficient explanation for weak performance and emphasised early preparation and clear allocation of responsibilities.
- Explained that governing parties can alter the prominence and framing of issues even when the Trio programme constrains the overall agenda.
- Described recurring European Affairs Committee meetings through which ministries and the MFA report substantive priorities, events and organisational progress.

R7

Interview details: 19 August 2026; joint interview with R8; 51 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Presidency Preparation Group; planning and coordination team with 2013 training-project experience.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Participated in a 2013 preparation function and holds a central coordination role for 2027.

Topics discussed: Reuse of the 2013 organisational model; report use; coordinator network; observation of recent Presidencies; allocation of financial and operational responsibility; staffing; live process records; teamwork.

Principal analytical contributions

- Confirmed reuse of the three-team organisational structure and practical consultation of the 2013 report for present planning questions.
- Explained that function holders are sent to observe comparable work in recent Presidencies so that knowledge is acquired through direct observation rather than only relayed second-hand.
- Jointly with R8, linked the redistribution of budgetary, procurement and operational responsibilities to burdens experienced in 2013; this provides the strongest provisional case of double-loop learning in the study.
- Described a platform used to record progress, difficulties, delays and successful solutions for possible future retrieval.
- Warned that staffing lists can overstate capacity where the same person covers several functions and identified trust, proactivity and conflict prevention as central lessons.

R8

Interview details: 19 August 2026; joint interview with R7; 51 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Presidency Preparation Group; meetings team with direct 2013 coordination experience.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Direct involvement in both the 2013 and 2027 Presidency cycles.

Topics discussed: Operational use of the five-volume report; meetings-team design; master files and shared systems; redistribution of responsibility; selection of recent precedents; teamwork and motivation; prospective memory.

Principal analytical contributions

- Described the report volumes as initial material for new meetings-team members and as a source for checking costs, accreditation, seating and logistical details.
- Reported deliberate reuse of the meetings-team structure of coordinators, deputies and horizontal contacts, supplemented by master files, OneNote and SharePoint records.
- Jointly with R7, connected the reassignment of financial and operational responsibilities to problems experienced under the more centralised 2013 arrangement.
- Rejected the NATO Summit as an overall Presidency model by distinguishing a short 'sprint' from a six-month 'marathon', while using recent foreign experience selectively for suitable functions.
- Identified the principal weakness of earlier reporting as recording facts rather than explicit lessons and noted that the final electronic preservation structure for 2027 remained undecided.
- Emphasised team trust, national responsibility and meaningfulness as sources of commitment, while recognising the risk of excessive workload.

R9

Interview details: 20 August 2026; individual interview; 49 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Parliamentary administration, Office of the Chancellor; adviser and deputy coordinator of the parliamentary-dimension preparation group.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Direct involvement in both the 2013 and 2027 preparation cycles.

Topics discussed: Parliamentary archives and timelines; organisational-model selection; internal training and supervision; political change; staffing; interpretation arrangements; future reporting.

Principal analytical contributions

- Used earlier invitations, document examples and timelines to calibrate when current structures, events and preparatory steps should be approved.
- Explained that a project-management model was considered but rejected in favour of the team-based 2013 structure, adapted to current functions and a smaller coordinating core.
- Described transfer through internal sessions and recurring review of functional teams' plans, deadlines and resource assumptions.
- Reported reworking of programmes, speakers and cultural elements after political leadership changes, distinguishing administrative continuity from political reorientation.
- Identified adaptation from physical interpretation infrastructure in 2013 to planned remote interpretation for some 2027 meetings and anticipated a new parliamentary report preserving examples and timelines.

R10

Interview details: 20 August 2026; individual remote interview; 28 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Permanent Representation to the European Union; administrative meeting-coordination and logistics function.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Participant in preparation for 2027; no direct 2013 work experience.

Topics discussed: Practical guide; experienced personnel; training; handovers from recent Presidencies; meeting coordination; adaptation to Lithuanian working culture; temporary staffing and prospective records.

Principal analytical contributions

- Summarised the two main knowledge channels as the practical guide and people, confirming that the 2013 guide had been retained while a revised version was being prepared.
- Described a formal training mechanism that identified participants with 2013 experience and encouraged them to contribute during and after sessions.
- Reported handover notes and contacts passed between successive Presidency teams, forming an EU-level chain of procedural memory.
- Explained that more recent foreign examples were often more applicable to technology- and staffing-sensitive meeting questions, while their tone and level of prescription still had to be adapted to the Lithuanian team.
- Cautioned that operational preparedness could be evaluated only once room allocation, interpretation and schedules were being implemented and noted that some meeting functions were temporary.

R11

Interview details: 24 August 2026; individual interview; 48 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EU-affairs administration; senior coordinator of selected Council formations.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Direct involvement in 2013 chairing and in substantive preparation for 2027.

Topics discussed: Limits of the public post-Presidency report; interpersonal consultation; negotiating briefs; continuity under changed EU conditions; political buffering; emotional intensity; post-Presidency reflection.

Principal analytical contributions

- Explained that the public purpose of the 2013 report limited the operational detail it could contain and that consultation with experienced colleagues could be more usable under time pressure.
- Provided a direct application case by identifying the 2013 procedure for preparing and approving negotiating briefs and explaining its present reuse for 2027.
- Distinguished transferable coordination knowledge from committee-specific expertise that requires sustained participation and treated recent experience as particularly relevant to crisis-driven EU decision-making.
- Identified the experienced ambassador, Brussels team and Council Secretariat as possible buffers against discontinuity among newly appointed political office holders.
- Recalled the absence of a structured post-2013 examination of success and failure and proposed collecting chair-level reflections shortly after the Presidency.
- Highlighted the emotional transition after an intensive Presidency and the role of national and European responsibility in sustaining commitment.
- The account provides strong bridge evidence but reflects particular substantive functions and retrospective recall over a long interval.

R12

Interview details: 25 August 2026; joint interview with R13; 52 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Parliamentary Information and Communications Department; adviser leading the Presidency website and internal-communication team.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Direct communication involvement in 2013 and decision responsibility for communication preparation in 2027.

Topics discussed: 2013 communication records; internal-information weaknesses; new communication structures; website and visual design; recent foreign examples; current negative learning; future preservation of decision rationales; staffing.

Principal analytical contributions

- Consulted the 2013 website, parliamentary report, albums and exhibition catalogues when reconstructing earlier communication choices.
- Linked weaknesses in 2013 internal information flows to the creation of a dedicated internal-communication team, intranet, shared team spaces and a recurring newsletter process for 2027.
- Combined retained national material with recent foreign websites, choosing a lighter design and more selective strategy while identifying features not to copy.
- Reported immediate negative learning when a publication using Presidency colours had to be withdrawn because the visual identity was not yet public.
- Argued that future records should preserve the reasoning behind long decision processes, including abandoned external solutions and subsequent in-house production.

R13

Interview details: 25 August 2026; joint interview with R12; 52 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Parliamentary Information and Communications Department; adviser and deputy lead for the Presidency website and internal communication.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Current participant in preparation for 2027; no comparable operational role in 2013.

Topics discussed: General and function-specific training; self-directed research; use of 2013 and recent communication examples; internal communication; visual-identity coordination; staffing.

Principal analytical contributions

- Reported receiving general Presidency training while developing function-specific choices mainly through self-directed research and current task needs.
- Confirmed consultation of the 2013 website and parliamentary materials alongside more recent foreign examples for digital and creative communication.
- Contributed evidence on the creation and operation of new internal-communication channels and the learning episode involving premature use of the visual identity.
- Described a narrow operational core for parliamentary communication despite broader institutional support, illustrating how formal team structures can coexist with concentrated workloads.

R14

Interview details: 26 August 2026; individual remote interview; 54 minutes.

Generalised institutional context: Permanent Representation to the European Union, Presidency preparation team; senior diplomat coordinating staff training and procedural guidance.

Connection to the Presidency cycles: Participated in 2013 in a different function and is involved in preparation for 2027.

Topics discussed: Limitations of the 2013 experience repositories and five-volume report, revision of the practical guide, tiered training, use of experienced staff and recent Presidencies experience, late recruitment, documents version control, structured reflection, personnel retention.

Principal analytical contributions

- Considered the 2013 report useful but incomplete because it omitted many everyday problems and the reasons behind decisions.
- Traced the revised practical guide to a retrieved 2013 predecessor whose structure and thematic blocks were retained while rules, tools, working methods and technology were updated.
- Described a three-layer training system combining elements of the 2013 model, stronger support from EU institutions and direct observation of recent Presidency teams.
- Identified late recruitment and deployment as barriers where staff arrive after relevant training has already taken place.
- Proposed explicit, non-blaming post-Presidency reflection and a central secure repository in which users can identify the authoritative version and reconstruct a document's history.
- Framed personnel retention as an organisational-design problem requiring redeployment, mobility and continued use of specialised competence after temporary structures dissolve.
- The respondent's bridge and coordinating position provides strong process evidence, but the guide was still under review, and the proposed reflection, repository and personnel arrangements had not yet been implemented.

Appendix 4. Coding framework

Documentary material and interview transcripts were coded using a hybrid deductive-inductive framework. The unit of coding was an analytically meaningful passage, and passages could receive more than one code when they served multiple analytical functions. Deductive codes were derived from the integrated framework of organisational learning, organisational memory and policy transfer. Inductive refinements were added where recurring empirical patterns were not adequately captured by the initial categories. Each coded passage was linked to a source locator. Evidence of retention, retrieval, transfer, adaptation, application and institutionalisation was distinguished. Counterevidence, alternative explanations, and missing links were explicitly recorded. The final interview dataset contained 357 coded meaning units and 23 primary codes. Code counts were used only as a navigation aid and not as measures of prevalence or importance.

Table A3. Final coding framework

No.	Primary code	Origin	Operational definition	Coding criteria
1	Lesson identification and articulation	Deductive	A statement that identifies a lesson, recommendation, problem, success, failure or transferable object arising from the 2013 cycle or another Presidency.	Included when the material identifies what should be repeated, changed, avoided or examined further. A favourable description or general public statement alone is not sufficient.
2	Documentary and digital retention	Deductive	Knowledge retained in reports, archives, files, websites, databases, shared drives, SharePoint, OneNote, master files or other recorded artefacts.	Applies where a record was preserved or created for later use. Publication or storage alone does not demonstrate that the material was later retrieved or applied.
3	Individual and network retention	Deductive	Knowledge retained in experienced officials, former participants, professional contacts or interpersonal networks.	Includes cases where people or professional networks remained available after the Presidency. Previous participation alone is not treated as proof that knowledge remained complete or accurate.
4	Routine, tool and structural retention	Deductive	Knowledge embedded in recurring procedures, templates, guides, coordination arrangements, role structures, training designs or working routines.	Applies where organisational forms or tools continue over time. Similarity between 2013 and 2027 alone is not treated as evidence of continuity.
5	Retrieval, access, interpretability and authority	Deductive with inductive refinement	A current actor locates, requests, reads, recalls or otherwise activates retained knowledge and is able to understand its meaning or identify the relevant version.	Included where an act of retrieval or a clear access condition is described. Simply knowing that a source exists is treated as potential access rather than retrieval. Problems of location, access, interpretation and version control are also included..

6	Transfer agent or bridge actor	Deductive	A person or organisation that connects a knowledge source with a current recipient or task, including actors spanning the 2013 and 2027 cycles.	Applies where an identifiable actor communicates, interprets or applies earlier knowledge. Prior experience alone is not treated as transfer.
7	Formal transfer mechanism	Deductive	Organised transfer through training, onboarding, handovers, coordinator meetings, placements, study visits, manuals, simulations or assigned review procedures.	Included where there is a structured channel with identifiable participants or responsibilities. Participation in training or a study visit shows exposure, but not necessarily application or learning.
8	Informal and interpersonal transfer	Deductive	Knowledge communicated through consultation, mentoring, everyday conversation, personal contacts, peer advice or informal professional networks.	Applies where a concrete interaction or informal transfer channel is described. General collegial contact without identifiable knowledge content is not sufficient.
9	External learning and recent Presidencies	Deductive	Knowledge obtained from the Council Secretariat, EU institutions, recent Presidency holders, international partners or comparable events.	Included where the external source and its relevance to a current function can be identified. Contact or observation alone does not show that a practice was adopted.
10	Direct reuse or emulation	Deductive	An earlier structure, procedure, artefact or practice is deliberately reproduced with no or only minor modification.	Requires a clear link between the earlier practice and a current decision or arrangement. Similarity alone is not enough.
11	Adaptation or modification	Deductive	An earlier practice is retained but altered to fit changed legal, technological, organisational, political or operational conditions.	Applies when both the earlier practice and the reason for changing it can be identified. A difference between 2013 and 2027 without such a link is not treated as adaptation.
12	Combination or hybridisation	Deductive	Elements from several sources, especially Lithuanian 2013 experience and recent foreign experience, are combined in a current arrangement.	Included where the contribution of more than one source can be identified. The existence of several possible sources does not by itself show that all of them influenced the result.
13	Rejection, negative learning and unlearning	Deductive with inductive refinement	A practice is deliberately not adopted, discontinued or corrected because it is judged unsuitable, outdated or harmful.	Applies where there is evidence that the practice was considered and deliberately rejected or changed. Accidental loss, lack of awareness or unexplained non-use is treated separately.
14	Application and initial implementation	Deductive	Earlier or transferred knowledge affects a current plan, decision, procedure, staffing arrangement, training activity, record system or other observable preparation practice.	Included where an arrangement has been adopted or put into practice. A proposal or intention is kept separate from implementation unless it has been formally adopted or acted upon.
15	Single-loop organisational learning	Deductive	Earlier experience leads to the correction or improvement of practices while existing objectives, authority structures and governing assumptions remain unchanged.	Used where an observable organisational change can be linked to earlier experience. Individual learning or information sharing alone is not sufficient.
16	Double-loop organisational learning	Deductive	Experience leads actors to reconsider underlying assumptions, goals or the allocation of authority and responsibility.	Used only where earlier experience can be linked to a change in underlying assumptions or responsibilities. A redesigned structure alone is not sufficient.

17	Institutionalisation	Deductive	A transferred or learned practice becomes embedded in roles, rules, routines, budgets, responsibilities or recurring organisational structures beyond one individual or episode.	Applies where the practice is incorporated into current organisational arrangements. Where its durability after 2027 is still unclear, institutionalisation is treated as provisional.
18	Barriers, unequal access and missing links	Deductive with inductive refinement	Conditions that obstruct retention, retrieval, transfer, interpretation or use, including dispersed records, transmission gaps, late recruitment, restricted access or dependence on one person.	Included when a specific obstacle to the transfer process is described. If evidence about a link is simply unavailable, this is treated as a missing link rather than proof of failure.
19	Forgetting and loss	Deductive	Useful knowledge becomes unavailable because records, access, responsibilities, personnel continuity or the ability to interpret earlier knowledge have been lost or weakened.	Applies where there is evidence of accidental loss or declining accessibility. Deliberate rejection is treated separately, and absence from one source alone is not enough to establish forgetting.
20	Small-state capacity and staffing conditions	Deductive with inductive refinement	Capacity effects associated with limited personnel, role overlap, concentration of expertise, temporary staffing, rapid informal contact or resource constraints.	Used where these conditions have an identifiable effect on preparation or knowledge transfer. State size itself is not treated as an automatic explanation.
21	Political and institutional change	Inductive contextual code	Changes in government, political leadership, EU priorities, legal rules, institutional responsibilities or geopolitical conditions that alter the relevance or use of earlier knowledge.	Included when the changed context has a clear effect on continuity, adaptation or priority-setting. General references to change without such an effect are treated only as background.
22	Relational conditions and employee well-being	Inductive	Trust, conflict prevention, motivation, emotional transition, workload, stress, team relations and well-being as conditions affecting performance and knowledge sharing.	Applies where these conditions influence the ability or willingness to share knowledge, ask for help or sustain intensive work. Motivation alone is not treated as organisational learning.
23	Prospective organisational memory	Deductive with inductive refinement	Actions intended to make the 2027 experience retrievable later, including live records, decision rationales, structured reflection, repositories, custodianship, version history and personnel-retention arrangements.	Included where there is a concrete practice or proposal aimed at preserving the 2027 experience. Creating records is distinguished from their confirmed long-term preservation, accessibility and later reuse.

Coding procedure and evidentiary rules

- A source could be coded as retention without being coded as retrieval; a current actor had to locate, request, read or recall the knowledge for retrieval to be established.
- Exposure to training, a visit, a report or an experienced colleague established a possible transfer mechanism, but not application or organisational learning by itself.
- Application required evidence that knowledge affected a current decision, plan, procedure, structure, staffing arrangement or implemented activity.

- Organisational learning required observable organisational change. Single-loop and double-loop labels were used only when the depth of change could be supported by evidence.
- Institutionalisation required embedding in roles, rules, routines, responsibilities or recurring structures. Arrangements located in temporary project teams were classified as provisional where their durability after 2027 was unknown.
- Deliberate rejection of an unsuitable practice was coded as negative learning or unlearning; accidental loss, inability to locate knowledge or fading responsibility was coded as a barrier or forgetting.
- Legal and administrative acts established formal adoption, not practical operation or effectiveness. Interview evidence was used to reconstruct access, informal transfer, interpretation and practical use.

SANTRAUKA

2013 m. Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai pamokos: patirties perdavimas rengiantis 2027 m. pirmininkavimui

Šis magistro darbas tiria 2013 m. Lietuvos pirmininkavimo Europos Sąjungos Tarybai metu sukauptų žinių išsaugojimą, atkūrimą, perdavimą ir pritaikymą rengiantis 2027 m. pirmininkavimui. Darbe nagrinėjama kaip po ilgo laikotarpio laikino ir intensyvaus administracinio proceso metu sukaupta patirtis gali būti perduota ir panaudojama vėlesnio ciklo organizavimui. Ši problema ypač aktuali mažos valstybės viešojo administravimo sistemai, kurioje naudinga patirtis ir žinios dažnai priklauso nuo nedidelio skaičiaus darbuotojų ir yra pažeidžiamos dėl personalo kaitos. Darbo tikslas: atsekti, kaip 2013 m. pirmininkavimo metu sukauptos žinios išliko bei kaip ir ar jos buvo panaudotos rengiantis 2027 m. pirmininkavimui. Tyrime analizuojamos pagrindinės 2013 m. pamokos, jų išsaugojimo vietos ir formos, siekiama atrasti žinių atkūrimo ir perdavimo mechanizmus bei prie to prisidedančius veikėjus, taip pat vertinama, kaip ankstesnė patirtis buvo pakartotinai panaudota, pritaikyta, atmesta arba įtvirtinta dabartiniame pasirengimo procese. Pagrindinis tyrimo klausimas: kaip per 2013 m. Lietuvos pirmininkavimą Europos Sąjungos Tarybai sukauptos žinios yra išsaugomos, atkuriamos, perduodamos ir pritaikomos rengiantis 2027 m. pirmininkavimui ir kokių mastu jos įtraukiamos į dabartinės pasirengimo priemones? Tikrinama analitinė prielaida, kad po ilgo tarpo tarp pirmininkavimo ciklų tęstinumas yra selektyvus, o išsaugotos žinios daro įtaką naujam pasirengimui tik tada, kai jos patogiai pasiekiamos, aktyviai atkuriamos, interpretuojamos ir susiejamos su dabartinėmis organizacinėmis funkcijomis ir sprendimais. Teorinėje darbo dalyje jungiamos organizacinio mokymosi, organizacinės atminties ir politikos perkėlimo teorijos. Akademinės literatūros analizė apie mažųjų valstybių politiką naudojama Lietuvos administraciniam kontekstui paaiškinti. Darbe taikoma kokybinė retrospektyvi išilginė atvejo analizė. Empirinę medžiagą sudaro 25 dokumentai ir 14 dalyvių, apklaustų per 12 pusiau struktūruotų interviu sesijų. Dokumentų ir interviu medžiaga analizuota taikant dedukcinę ir indukcinę kokybinę turinio analizę.

Tyrimo rezultatai rodo, kad tęstinumas tarp 2013 ir 2027 m. pirmininkavimo yra selektyvus, nevienodas ir daugiasluoksnis. Organizacinė atmintis nebuvo sutelkta vienoje saugykloje, ji išliko oficialiose ataskaitose, gairėse, praktiniuose vadovuose, šablonuose, archyvuose, skaitmeninėse sistemose, profesiniuose tinkluose, darbo rutinos ir patyrusių darbuotojų bei diplomatų atmintyje. Vis dėlto vien žinių išsaugojimas neužtikrino jų panaudojimo, patirtis tapo reikšminga tik tada, kai ją aktyviai atkūrė ankstesniame cikle dalyvavę asmenys arba kai ji buvo susieta su konkrečiomis dabartinio pasirengimo funkcijomis. 2013 m. organizacinis modelis išliko pagrindiniu Lietuvos pasirengimo atskaitos tašku, tačiau nebuvo visiškai kopijuojamas neperžiūrint. Jis buvo derinamas su naujesne kitų pirmininkavusių valstybių patirtimi, ypač dėl technologinių pasikeitimų, komunikacijos srityje, saugumo ir geopolitinės situacijos bei pasikeitusių ES institucinių procedūrų.

Aiškiausiai matomi tęstinumo ir pritaikymo atvejai buvo organizaciniame modelyje, derybinių pozicijų rengimo procedūrose, atnaujintuose praktiniuose vadovuose, diferencijuotoje mokymų sistemoje, pradedant vidinę komunikaciją Seime ir finansinių bei organizacinių atsakomybių perskirstyme. Dauguma nustatytų pokyčių atitinka vieno ciklo mokymąsi, kai keičiamos priemonės, bet ne pagrindinės organizacinės prielaidos. Atsakomybės perskirstymas yra stipriausias galimas dviejų ciklų mokymosi atvejis, tačiau jo veiksmingumo iki 2027 m. pirmininkavimo dar negalima pilnai įvertinti.

Darbe rekomenduojama paskirti nuolatinį pirmininkavimo žinių valdytoją, sukurti vieną autoritetingą ir pagal funkcijas susistemintą dokumentų saugyklą, po pirmininkavimo organizuoti struktūruotą ir atvirą refleksiją, raginant pasidalinti ir klaidomis, taip pat integruoti darbuotojų išlaikymo, funkcijų perdavimo, mokymo, darbo krūvio ir gerovės klausimus į ilgalaikę institucinės atminties strategiją. Tyrimas prisideda prie organizacinio mokymosi ir politikos perkėlimo tyrimų parododamas, kaip mažoje valstybėje žinios perduodamos tarp dviejų laikinų, bet administraciniu požiūriu itin intensyvių valdymo ciklų.

DECLARATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USAGE

Name: Anelė Dromantaitė

Student ID number: 2416061

Please tick 'x' for applicable items:

☐ I have not used any AI tools in this assignment.

☒ I have used one or more AI tools in this assignment.

If yes, which ones? ChatGPT, Grammarly, PrismaScribe

I used AI tools critically, as an additional tool. I take full responsibility for the information, arguments and final results of my work.

.....

Please tick 'x' for applicable items and explain how you used AI tools.

I used the AI tool as a(n)/for the purpose of:

1. ☒ **Idea generator** (e.g., generating arguments or counter-arguments, developing a plan for structure, generating potential research questions, etc.)

Please explain: I used ChatGPT during the revision process for suggestions on section organising and to identify areas where arguments could be clearer. Suggestions were critically evaluated.

2. ☐ **Search engine** (e.g., to find additional literature or contextual information on a specific topic, etc.)

Please explain:

3. ☒ **Writing assistant** (e.g., to correct spelling mistakes and/or typos, to rewrite the text in a more formal or academic style, to restructure paragraphs, etc.)

Please explain: I used ChatGPT and Grammarly to correct spelling and grammatical errors, translate parts of the text from Lithuanian into English, improve academic language. AI-assisted wording was critically reviewed.

4. ☐ **Designer** (e.g., to create a new, unique image or visualization, etc.)

Please explain:

5. ☐ **Study buddy** (e.g., to ask for additional explanations with regard to specific learning contents, to generate self-check exercises, etc.)

Please explain:

6. ☒ **Data analysis tool** (e.g., to perform calculations, coding, create charts, graphs or other quantitative/qualitative data visualizations, etc.)

Please explain: I used ChatGPT to review the internal consistency of my coding framework, and help structure tables summarising the findings. I conducted the coding myself, checked all suggestions against the original documents and interview material.

7. ☒ **For efficiency** (e.g., to summarize existing texts, format references, etc.)

Please explain: I used ChatGPT to help format references and bibliography entries, identify inconsistencies or possible duplicates. All references and bibliographical details were checked against the original sources before inclusion in the thesis.

8. ☒ **Other** (I used AI tools in a different way.)

Please explain: I used PrismaScribe to produce draft transcripts of recorded interviews. The automatically generated transcripts were reviewed against the recordings and corrected manually before being used for analysis.

9. **What steps were taken to mitigate errors and minimize the chance of harm or inappropriate use of AI?**

Please explain: AI outputs were treated as suggestions and checked manually against original sources and research material. Transcripts were verified against recordings, respondents' identities were protected through coding and anonymisation. I take full responsibility for the final content and conclusions.