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Against the Current: Knowledge Brokerage in the Science-For-Policy Ecosystem of Lithuania*

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Abstract. This article examines how knowledge brokerage roles reconfigure in science-for-policy ecosystems where demand for scientific evidence is structurally weak, and what enables or constrains their consolidation. It introduces the concept of *structurally weak demand*, distinguishing weakness embedded in the organisation of policymaking from situational gaps in policymakers' skills or articulated needs. Drawing on Lithuania as an empirical case, it demonstrates how legalistic administrative culture, legislative inflation, drafting-first routines, political discontinuity and adversarial legislative politics suppress demand for evidence in a structural way. The analysis traces how key knowledge brokerage bodies and arrangements evolved between 2019 and 2026, including STRATA, the cross-ministerial Science and Innovation Advisers network coordinated by the Research Council of Lithuania, and the Office of the Government. It finds that their roles expanded

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beyond exchange facilitation towards demand cultivation to compensate for policymaking routines that did not reliably generate demand for evidence. Consolidation remained uneven, as temporary project funding, fragile organisational embedding and political discontinuity constrained durability despite investment.
Keywords: knowledge brokerage, science for policy, evidence-informed policymaking, structurally weak demand evidence, demand for evidence, legislative inflation, Lithuania.

Prieš srovę: žinių tarpininkavimas Lietuvos mokslo-politikai ekosistemoje

Santrauka. Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjama, kaip keičiasi žinių tarpininkų vaidmenys mokslo-politikai (angl. *science for policy*) ekosistemose, kuriose mokslinių įrodymų paklausa yra *struktūriškai silpna*, kokios sąlygos leidžia šiuos vaidmenis įtvirtinti ar juos apriboja. Straipsnyje pristatoma *struktūriškai silpnos paklausos* įrodymams sąvoka, atskiriant paklausos silpnumą, kurį lemia pats politikos formavimo organizavimas, nuo situacinių spragų, tokių kaip politikos formuotojų gebėjimų stoka ar nepakankamai išreikšti įrodymų poreikiai. Remiantis Lietuvos empiriniu atveju pristatoma, kaip legalistinė administracinė kultūra, teisėkūros infliacija, politinis nenuoseklumas ir konfrontacinė politikos kultūra slopina įrodymų paklausą politikos formavimo procesuose. Straipsnyje apžvelgiama, kaip 2019–2026 m. plėtojosi pagrindinės žinių tarpininkavimo institucijos ir struktūros: STRATA, Lietuvos mokslo tarybos koordinuojamas Mokslo ir inovacijų patarėjų tinklas ir Vyriausybės kanceliarija. Atskleidžiama, kad šių tarpininkų vaidmenys išsiplėtė nuo įrodymų apykaitos gerinimo link paklausos įrodymams stimuliavimo. Žinių tarpininkų vaidmenų įtvirtinimas išliko netolygus: laikinas projektinis finansavimas, trapus organizacinis įsitvirtinimas ir politinis nenuoseklumas ribojo iniciatyvų tvarumą nepaisant investicijų.
Reikšminiai žodžiai: žinių tarpininkavimas, mokslas-politikai, įrodymais grįstas politikos formavimas, struktūriškai silpna paklausa įrodymams, įrodymų paklausa, teisėkūros infliacija, Lietuva.

Introduction

Evidence-Informed Policymaking (EIPM) has become a widely shared aspiration in contemporary governance. It is commonly understood as the systematic use of scientific knowledge and other empirical evidence to inform policy decisions[1]. Its relevance has grown as governments confront increasingly complex societal problems, recurrent crises, deep uncertainty and an ever-expanding volume of informa-

[1] Brian W. Head, "Toward More 'Evidence-Informed' Policy Making?," *Public Administration Review* 76, no. 3 (2016): 472–484, https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12475.

tion. Governments pursue this ambition through *Science-for-Policy* (S4P) ecosystems: the actors, institutional arrangements, platforms and tools that connect researchers and policymakers[2].

Early thinking on evidence use in policymaking often rested on a linear understanding of research utilisation, in which, improvement of the supply and dissemination of research results was expected to translate relatively directly into greater policy uptake[3]. Subsequent scholarship has challenged this assumption, showing that evidence rarely enters policymaking in a straightforward way[4]. Instead, its use is uneven, indirect and mediated by institutional and political contexts[5]. The effectiveness of the science–policy interface, therefore, depends not only on the availability and accessibility of evidence, but also on the institutional environment in which evidence use is organised[6].

This shift in perspective has placed greater attention on the actors and arrangements that mediate between research and policymaking. Knowledge brokerage has emerged as one of the central concepts for understanding this mediating function. Knowledge brokers are individuals, organisations or dedicated intermediary bodies that facilitate the creation, translation and use of evidence by connecting those who produce it with those who may use it in policymaking[7].

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2 Paul Cairney, *The Politics of Evidence-Based Policy Making* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-51781-4; Kathryn Oliver, *Assessing National Institutional Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: The Role of a Science-for-Policy System*, ed. Kristian Krieger and Lorenzo Melchor (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2022), JRC129898, https://doi.org/10.2760/951556.

3 Carol H. Weiss, "The Many Meanings of Research Utilization," *Public Administration Review* 39, no. 5 (1979): 426–431, https://doi.org/10.2307/3109916.

4 Sandra M. Nutley, Isabel Walter, and Huw T. O. Davies, *Using Evidence: How Research Can Inform Public Services* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2007), 61–122, https://doi.org/10.1332/policypress/9781861346650.001.0001.

5 Ibid.

6 Weiss, "Many Meanings of Research Utilization," 426–431; Nutley, Walter, and Davies, *Using Evidence*, 61–122.

7 Jonathan Lomas, "The In-Between World of Knowledge Brokering," *BMJ* 334, no. 7585 (2007): 129–132, https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.39038.593380.AE; Vicky Ward, Allan House, and Susan Hamer, "Knowledge Brokering: The Missing Link in the Evidence to Action Chain?," *Evidence & Policy* 5, no. 3 (2009): 267–279, https://doi.org/10.1332/174426409X463811.

The barriers to evidence use in policymaking that knowledge brokers work to address have been extensively examined[8]. They concern both the supply of evidence – its production, accessibility, relevance and timeliness – and the demand for it among policymakers. While the supply-side barriers remain well documented, recent scholarship has been increasingly arguing that improvements in the availability and quality of the supply achieve little when policymakers do not treat evidence as an important consideration in policymaking[9].

Weak demand for evidence among policymakers may arise from several conditions. For instance, individual policymakers may lack the skills to consistently engage with evidence or define specific evidence needs[10]. Ministries and political cabinets may have limited analytical capacity, few organisational routines that build evidence into policy development, and organisational cultures that neither expect nor reward its use[11]. At the systemic level, scarce opportunities for researcher–policymaker interaction and wider political conditions shape whether evidence is seen as a valuable input into policymaking[12].

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8 Kathryn Oliver, Simon Innvær, Theo Lorenc, Jenny Woodman, and James Thomas, "A Systematic Review of Barriers to and Facilitators of the Use of Evidence by Policymakers," *BMC Health Services Research* 14 (2014), article 2, https://doi.org/10.1186/1472-6963-14-2.

9 OECD, *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making: Lessons from Country Experiences*, OECD Public Governance Reviews (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020), https://doi.org/10.1787/86331250-en; Paul Cairney and Kathryn Oliver, "Evidence-Based Policymaking Is Not Like Evidence-Based Medicine, So How Far Should You Go to Bridge the Divide Between Evidence and Policy?," *Health Research Policy and Systems* 15 (2017), article 35, https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-017-0192-x.

10 OECD, *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making*; Cairney and Oliver, "Evidence-Based Policymaking."

11 OECD, *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making*.

12 OECD, *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making*; Laurenz Langer, Janice Tripney, and David Gough, *The Science of Using Science: Researching the Use of Research Evidence in Decision-Making* (London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, UCL Institute of Education, University College London, 2016), https://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/publications/systematic-reviews/science-of-using-science; OECD and European Commission, *Strengthening National Evidence-Informed Policymaking Ecosystems: Lessons from Seven European Countries* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2025), https://doi.org/10.1787/855c5286-en.

Knowledge brokerage is widely viewed as a possible response to these weaknesses. Brokers are adaptive actors: they can adjust their activities to the barriers they encounter, while taking on different roles depending on where the evidence–policy relationship is weakest[13]. They translate and synthesise research, build relationships across the science–policy divide, strengthen the policymakers' capacity to engage with evidence, and help evidence needs that would otherwise remain unexpressed take explicit form[14]. Targeted configurations of brokerage roles are therefore expected to partly compensate for the weak demand for evidence. Where brokers are present and adequately supported, demand-side barriers should become easier to address, thus improving the functioning of S4P ecosystems and the conditions for evidence uptake in policymaking.

This expectation helps explain why recent EU-level S4P initiatives have invested not only in evidence production, but also in the intermediary capacities, infrastructures and communities, through which, knowledge brokerage is performed. If brokers can adapt to weaknesses in the evidence–policy relationship, then strengthening such arrangements appears to offer a way of improving S4P ecosystems more broadly. At the EU level, the European Commission's Knowledge4Policy platform and related Knowledge Services perform several brokerage functions, including curating policy-relevant

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13 Ward, House, and Hamer, "Knowledge Brokering"; Sarah Michaels, "Matching Knowledge Brokering Strategies to Environmental Policy Problems and Settings," *Environmental Science & Policy* 12, no. 7 (2009): 994–1011, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2009.05.002.

14 Vicky Ward, Allan House, and Susan Hamer, "Developing a Framework for Transferring Knowledge into Action: A Thematic Analysis of the Literature," *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy* 14, no. 3 (2009): 156–164, https://doi.org/10.1258/jhsrp.2009.008120; Catherine C. Bornbaum, Kathy Kornas, Leslea Peirson, and Laura C. Rosella, "Exploring the Function and Effectiveness of Knowledge Brokers as Facilitators of Knowledge Translation in Health-Related Settings: A Systematic Review and Thematic Analysis," *Implementation Science* 10 (2015), article 162, https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-015-0351-9; Peter D. Gluckman, Anne Bardsley, and Matthias Kaiser, "Brokerage at the Science–Policy Interface: From Conceptual Framework to Practical Guidance," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 8 (2021), article 84, https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-021-00756-3.

knowledge, organising evidence resources, and supporting exchange between scientists and policymakers[15]. Similar priorities are visible in the Technical Support Instrument multi-country project on evidence-informed policymaking, implemented by the Joint Research Centre and the OECD and funded by DG REFORM, which supported seven Member States, including Lithuania, through diagnostic analysis, reform roadmaps, capacity-building and mutual learning[16]. They are also reflected in the ERA Policy Agenda 2025–2027, whose action on advancing the European S4P ecosystem includes national S4P coordinators, a community of practice, peer learning and an observatory of the European S4P landscape[17]. Taken together, these initiatives reflect a policy expectation that intermediary institutions, roles and competences can help reduce barriers between evidence supply and policy demand.

Whether these expectations hold in practice remains an open empirical question. Research on knowledge brokerage in EIPM has grown considerably, but systematic findings on the effectiveness of brokerage arrangements remain limited[18]. In particular, it is unclear under which conditions of weakened demand brokerage can be ex-

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15 European Commission, "Knowledge4Policy," accessed July 5, 2026, https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/.

16 Vitalis Nakrošis, Ieva Petraitė, Rasa Bortkevičiūtė, and Ramūnas Vilpišauskas, *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Governance and Public Administration in a Post-Pandemic Europe: Country Analysis, Policy Recommendations and Implementation Roadmap–Lithuania*, ed. Mara Almeida and Alexandra Olajos-Szabo (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2025), JRC141125, https://doi.org/10.2760/0030376.

17 European Commission, "Science for Policy," accessed July 5, 2026, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/support-policy-making/scientific-support-eu-policies/science-policy_en; European Commission, "Advancing the European Science for Policy (S4P) Ecosystem," in *ERA Actions (2025–2027)*, European Research Area Platform, accessed July 5, 2026, https://european-research-area.ec.europa.eu/era-actions-2025-2027.

18 Bornbaum et al., "Exploring the Function and Effectiveness of Knowledge Brokers"; Eleanor MacKillop, Sarah Quarmby, and James Downe, "Does Knowledge Brokering Facilitate Evidence-Based Policy? A Review of Existing Knowledge and an Agenda for Future Research," *Policy & Politics* 48, no. 2 (2020): 335–353, https://doi.org/10.1332/030557319X15740848311069.

pected to work. Knowledge brokerage should be well placed to help where weak demand reflects situational weaknesses, such as poorly articulated evidence needs[19], limited skills or weak absorptive capacity[20], since these are problems to which demand articulation, capacity-building and support in interpreting and applying research are directly relevant. Its impact is less well understood where weak demand is rooted in institutional routines, incentive structures or political conditions that give policymakers little reason to seek evidence in the first place[21]. In such cases, the problem lies in the organisation of policymaking itself, and not only in policymakers' immediate skills or situational needs. The issue, therefore, is whether different sources of weak demand place different limits on what brokerage can achieve, and whether the roles brokers develop in response can consolidate into durable features of S4P ecosystems given the substantial recent investment at the EU level.

Building on institutionalist scholarship, which shows that policy routines, incentives, time horizons and decision procedures structure what policymakers attend to[22] and can therefore sideline evidence at the points where problems are defined and decisions made, this article introduces the term *structurally weak demand*. Structurally weak demand refers to a situation in which limited demand for evidence is built into the way policymaking is organised, rather than resulting

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19 Jeremy Howells, "Intermediation and the Role of Intermediaries in Innovation," *Research Policy* 35, no. 5 (2006): 715–728, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2006.03.005; Laurens Klerkx and Cees Leeuwis, "Establishment and Embedding of Innovation Brokers at Different Innovation System Levels: Insights from the Dutch Agricultural Sector," *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 76, no. 6 (2009): 849–860, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2008.10.001; Gluckman, Bardsley, and Kaiser, "Brokerage at the Science–Policy Interface."

20 Ward, House, and Hamer, "Knowledge Brokering"; Langer, Tripney, and Gough, *The Science of Using Science*; OECD, *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making*.

21 Cairney and Oliver, "Evidence-Based Policymaking"; Justin Parkhurst, *The Politics of Evidence: From Evidence-Based Policy to the Good Governance of Evidence* (Taylor & Francis, 2016), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315675008.

22 James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1989); Parkhurst, *The Politics of Evidence*.

from temporary skills gaps or poorly expressed needs. It arises when administrative routines prioritise legal drafting over analysis and do not consistently require, reward or encourage evidence use before key policy decisions are made. Political discontinuity further weakens demand by disrupting priorities and reducing the expected value of investing in analysis, while confrontational political relations limit the role of evidence as a shared basis for deliberation.

In such settings, brokerage may need to go beyond responding to immediate demand-side needs and, instead, help create and sustain demand within institutions that do not routinely produce it. Whether the roles which brokers develop in response can take hold, moreover, depends not only on how they are performed but also on the continuity of the political environment in which they are anchored. Where incoming governments routinely discontinue or deprioritise their predecessors' arrangements, brokerage roles may have to be rebuilt with each political cycle rather than consolidated[23]. The research question this article poses is therefore: *Under conditions of structurally weak demand for evidence, how do knowledge brokerage roles reconfigure, and what conditions enable or constrain their consolidation?*

The argument developed here is best examined in a setting that combines two features: deliberate investment in brokerage capacity and prior indications that demand for evidence may be weakened by the organisation of policymaking itself. Lithuania meets both conditions. Since 2019, the country has developed a layered set of S4P arrangements, including the establishment of the government strategic analysis centre STRATA; a cross-ministerial network of fifteen Science and Innovation Advisers, operating from 2023 to 2026 under the coordination of the Research Council of Lithuania; evidence-related commitments and procedural requirements anchored at the Office of

[23] Klerkx and Leeuwis, "Establishment and Embedding of Innovation Brokers"; see also Alastair Stark, *Public Inquiries, Policy Learning, and the Threat of Future Crises* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198831990.001.0001 for the related problem of sustaining institutional learning across changing political contexts.

the Government; and participation in the Technical Support Instrument multi-country project on evidence-informed policymaking[24]. At the same time, existing analyses point to features of Lithuanian policymaking that may structurally weaken the demand for evidence: a legalistic administrative culture, legislative inflation, compressed policy time horizons, and the limited integration of analytical work into the early stages of deciding what the policy problem is and what options should be considered[25]. The S4P arrangements developed since 2019 have spanned several governments of different political composition, making it possible to observe how brokerage roles fare across political transitions. This combination makes Lithuania an instructive setting for examining how brokerage roles reconfigure where the demand is structurally weak, and whether roles developed through sustained investment consolidate into durable features of the S4P ecosystem.

The analysis proceeds in two steps. It first assesses whether the demand for evidence in Lithuania is indeed structurally weak in the sense defined above, examining how the organisation of policymak-

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24 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking – Lithuania Country Report*; OECD, *Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania: Strengthening Decision Making and Policy Evaluation for Long-term Development*, OECD Public Governance Reviews (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2021), https://doi.org/10.1787/323e3500-en; Vyriausybės strateginės analizės centras (STRATA), "STRATA," accessed December 20, 2025, https://strata.gov.lt/; Lietuvos mokslo taryba, "Mokslo ir inovacijų patarėjų tinklas Vyriausybės institucijose," accessed December 31, 2025, https://lmt.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys/mokslo-politika/mokslo-ir-inovaciju-patareju-tinklas/.

25 OECD, *Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania*; Vitalis Nakrošis, "Lithuanian Civil Service Reform 1990–2018: From the Communist Legacy to a Professional Administration," in *Public Service Evolution in the 15 Post-Soviet Countries: Diversity in Transformation*, ed. Alikhan Baimenov and Panos Liverakos (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 327–363, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-2462-9_10; Dalia Juknevičiūtė, *2020–2024 m. kadencijos Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo veiklos teisėkūros srityje tendencijos (I–VII sesijų statistinių duomenų apžvalga)* (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo kanceliarija, 2024), https://www.lrs.lt/sip/getFile3?p_fid=72376; Ramūnas Vilpišauskas, Marius Kalanta, and Daunis Auers, *Lithuania Report SGI 2024* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024), https://doi.org/10.11586/2024134; Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking – Lithuania*, 23.

ing shapes the occasions, incentives and expectations for evidence use. It then traces how the roles of the key knowledge brokerage actors and initiatives have developed against this background, and under what conditions they have taken hold or receded. While single-case findings are not statistically generalisable, the identification of mechanisms and scope conditions supports analytic generalisation to other systems combining legalistic administrative cultures with recurrent political discontinuity, notably in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe[26]. The analysis concludes that, under structurally weak demand, knowledge brokerage roles in Lithuania's S4P ecosystem reconfigured towards demand cultivation – through capacity-building, embedded demand articulation and authority-based demand stimulation. However, despite substantial investment and adaptation, these roles achieved only limited consolidation. Legalistic administrative structures and routines continued to suppress demand, while recurrent political discontinuity deprived brokerage arrangements of the sustained prioritisation needed to become durable features of the ecosystem.

Following the introduction, the article is organised into four sections. The first section develops the analytical framework, distinguishing situational from structural sources of weak demand and setting out how this distinction informs the analysis of brokerage roles. The second section describes the methods and data used in the study. The third section presents the empirical analysis: it first examines whether demand for evidence in Lithuania is structurally weak, then analyses how the main brokerage actors have adapted their roles in this context and finally considers how political discontinuity affects the durability of these roles. The final section discusses wider implications for research and for European investment in S4P ecosystems.

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26 Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

1. Framework for Analysis

1.1. Knowledge brokerage in S4P ecosystems

Early scholarship on the S4P interface conceptualised the relationship between research and policymaking as a problem of separation between two distinct communities with different languages, incentives and temporal logics[27]. Research utilisation studies further demonstrated that instrumental uptake of evidence is the exception rather than the norm: research more often exerts influence indirectly, by shaping the policy actors' understandings of problems and solutions over time[28]. Subsequent work has challenged overly rigid readings of the 'two communities' model, showing that policymakers' engagement with research varies across institutional roles, policy domains and governance contexts, and that the interface is more porous and heterogeneous than the dichotomy implies[29].

Knowledge brokerage emerged as a response to these persistent interface challenges, shifting attention from one-way dissemination towards interaction, mediation and relationship-building between the research and policy worlds[30]. Knowledge brokers – individuals, organisations or dedicated intermediary structures – are commonly defined as actors who facilitate the creation, translation and use of knowledge by connecting those who produce evidence with those who may use it[31]. Core brokerage roles identified in the literature

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27 Nathan Caplan, "The Two-Communities Theory and Knowledge Utilization," *American Behavioral Scientist* 22, no. 3 (1979): 459–470.

28 Carol H. Weiss, "The Many Meanings of Research Utilization," *Public Administration Review* 39, no. 5 (1979): 426–431.

29 Karen Bogenschneider and Thomas J. Corbett, *Evidence-Based Policymaking: Insights from Policy-Minded Researchers and Research-Minded Policymakers* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Joshua Newman, Adrian Cherney, and Brian W. Head, "Do Policy Makers Use Academic Research? Reexamining the 'Two Communities' Theory of Research Utilization," *Public Administration Review* 76, no. 1 (2016): 24–32.

30 Jonathan Lomas, "The In-Between World of Knowledge Brokering," *BMJ* 334, no. 7585 (2007): 129–132.

31 Lomas, "The In-Between World of Knowledge Brokering"; Vicky Ward, Allan House, and Susan Hamer, "Developing a Framework for Transferring Knowledge into Action: A Thematic Analysis of the Literature," *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy* 14, no. 3 (2009): 156–164.

include translating and packaging research into policy-relevant formats, convening and sustaining dialogue across professional boundaries, mediating between different epistemic cultures, and building capacity on both the supply and demand sides of evidence use[32]. Ward et al.'s influential typology distinguishes three brokerage models – knowledge management, linkage and exchange, and capacity building – each emphasising a different mechanism for connecting research producers with policy users[33].

Brokerage is not a neutral transmission activity, however. As Meyer argues, intermediaries routinely transform knowledge as they select, interpret and re-contextualise evidence to fit policy problems, institutional constraints and decision-making logics, producing 'brokered knowledge' that is distinct from its original form[34]. Brokers thus exercise considerable agency over what counts as relevant evidence and how it is framed for policy audiences. They are not passive conduits but institutional actors who shape the terms of exchange between the research and policy communities. This capacity for agency is what later grounds the possibility that brokers can act on the demand side of the interface, and not only on the supply side.

Despite this recognition, much of the brokerage literature has remained wedded to implicitly linear and transactional models, focused on improving access to research, enhancing the quality of translation and strengthening interaction mechanisms[35]. The critical limitation of such approaches is their underlying assumption that demand for evidence already exists within policymaking systems and merely awaits better supply-side intervention. Where that assumption fails –

32 Ward, House, and Hamer, "Developing a Framework," 156–164.

33 Vicky Ward, Allan House, and Susan Hamer, "Knowledge Brokering: The Missing Link in the Evidence to Action Chain?," *Evidence & Policy* 5, no. 3 (2009): 267–279.

34 Morgan Meyer, "The Rise of the Knowledge Broker," *Science Communication* 32, no. 1 (2010): 118–127.

35 Lomas, "The In-Between World of Knowledge Brokering"; Ward, House, and Hamer, "Developing a Framework"; Catherine C. Bornbaum, Kathy Kornas, Leslea Peirson, and Laura C. Rosella, "Exploring the Function and Effectiveness of Knowledge Brokers as Facilitators of Knowledge Translation in Health-Related Settings: A Systematic Review and Thematic Analysis," *Implementation Science* 10 (2015): 162.

where demand itself is weak – the adequacy of the classic brokerage repertoire becomes an open question. Whether it suffices, however, is not simply a matter of how weak the demand is, but of why it is weak: different sources of weak demand imply different possibilities for brokers to compensate for it. The next subsection therefore turns to the sources of weak demand and to what they imply for brokerage roles.

1.2. Structurally weak demand: sources and implications for brokerage roles

The barriers to evidence use that brokers work to address concern not only the supply of evidence – its production, accessibility, relevance and timeliness – but also the demand for it among policymakers[36]. Weak demand can arise at several levels. Individual policymakers may lack the skills to engage with evidence or to formulate evidence needs; ministries and political cabinets may have limited analytical capacity of their own, few routines that build evidence into policy preparation, and management cultures that neither expect nor reward its use; and, at the systemic level, the scarcity of researcher-policymaker interaction along with wider political conditions shape whether evidence is treated as a valuable input into policymaking at all[37]. The supply side has attracted the greater share of scholarly and policy attention; the demand side is analytically less settled, and it is here that this article's central distinction is developed[38].

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36 Kathryn Oliver, Simon Innvær, Theo Lorenc, Jenny Woodman, and James Thomas, "A Systematic Review of Barriers to and Facilitators of the Use of Evidence by Policymakers," *BMC Health Services Research* 14 (2014): 2.

37 Laurenz Langer, Janice Tripney, and David Gough, *The Science of Using Science: Researching the Use of Research Evidence in Decision-Making* (London: EPPI-Centre, UCL Institute of Education, 2016); OECD, *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policy-Making: Lessons from Country Experiences*, OECD Public Governance Reviews (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2020), https://doi.org/10.1787/86331250-en.

38 Eleanor MacKillop, Sarah Quarmby, and James Downe, "Does Knowledge Brokering Facilitate Evidence-Based Policy? A Review of Existing Knowledge and an Agenda for Future Research," *Policy & Politics* 48, no. 2 (2020): 335–353.

These demand-side barriers are not all of the same kind, and the difference matters for what brokerage can be expected to do. Some are situational: poorly articulated evidence needs, limited skills or weak absorptive capacity – these are problems to which established brokerage responses such as demand articulation, capacity-building and support in interpreting research are directly relevant[39]. Punton et al. capture one such situation with the concept of latent demand, where policymakers want information but do not recognise that research can provide it[40], while Gluckman, Bardsley and Kaiser observe that effective brokerage requires understanding policymakers' information needs "even when it may not be clear to policymakers themselves"[41]. Other sources of weak demand are structural: they stem from the routines, incentive structures, time horizons and decision procedures that organise policymaking itself and determine what policymakers attend to[42]. Demand is *structurally weak*, in the sense introduced above, where policymaking routines do not regularly prompt, reward or require the use of evidence – a condition that is an institutional feature of the policymaking system rather than a gap in individual skills, capacities or expressed needs. Under such conditions, improved supply and better translation cannot be assumed to generate the uptake[43].

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39 Jeremy Howells, "Intermediation and the Role of Intermediaries in Innovation," *Research Policy* 35, no. 5 (2006): 715–728; Laurens Klerkx and Cees Leeuwis, "Establishment and Embedding of Innovation Brokers at Different Innovation System Levels: Insights from the Dutch Agricultural Sector," *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 76, no. 6 (2009): 849–860; Peter Gluckman, Anne Bardsley, and Matthias Kaiser, "Brokerage at the Science-Policy Interface: From Conceptual Framework to Practical Guidance," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 8 (2021): 84.

40 Melanie Punton, Katharine Hagerman, Chris Brown, Leandro Echt, Caitlin Fisher, Rob Lloyd, and Isabel Vogel, *How Can Capacity Development Promote Evidence-Informed Policy Making? Literature Review for the Building Capacity to Use Research Evidence Programme* (Hove: ITAD, 2016).

41 Gluckman, Bardsley, and Kaiser, "Brokerage at the Science-Policy Interface."

42 James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1989); Parkhurst, *The Politics of Evidence*.

43 Paul Cairney and Kathryn Oliver, "Evidence-Based Policymaking Is Not Like Evidence-Based Medicine, So How Far Should You Go to Bridge the Divide Between Evidence and Policy?," *Health Research Policy and Systems* 15 (2017): 35.

Comparative public administration research points to legalistic administrative culture as a paradigmatic structural source of weak demand. In such systems, policymaking is oriented towards procedural compliance and the production of legal outputs, and success is measured by legislative quantity rather than policy quality or impact[44]. Legislative inflation – the proliferation of legal acts without commensurate attention to implementation or evaluation – creates chronic time pressure that structurally suppresses deliberation and analytical reflection[45]. Politicisation and short-termism compound these dynamics: where decisions are driven by electoral cycles and political positioning rather than longer-term problem-solving, the conditions for sustained evidence use are further eroded[46]. In such environments, policymakers may lack not only the time but also the incentive to engage with evidence, since institutional rewards accrue to legislative productivity rather than evidence-informed decision-making. Brokers operating under these conditions are, in effect, working against the current.

What do such conditions imply for brokerage roles? If weak demand were only ever situational, the classic brokerage repertoire would, in principle, be sufficient: better translation, closer relationships and targeted capacity-building could be expected to close the gap. The more demanding question is whether the same kind of adaptive response is available once weak demand is structural, or whether structural conditions call for a different repertoire altogether. A growing body of scholarship has criticised early brokerage accounts for conceptual ambiguity, a strong supply-side bias, limited attention to organisational arrangements and insufficient engagement with the po-

44 OECD, *Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania*; Victor Lapuente and Kohei Suzuki, "Politicization, Bureaucratic Legalism, and Innovative Attitudes in the Public Sector," *Public Administration Review* 80, no. 3 (2020): 454–467, https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13175; B. Guy Peters, *Advanced Introduction to Public Policy*, 2nd ed. (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021).

45 OECD, *Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania*.

46 Paul Cairney, *The Politics of Evidence-Based Policy Making* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

litical and institutional conditions shaping evidence use[47]. These critiques point beyond conceptualising brokers as connectors between pre-existing supply and demand, and towards the question of how brokerage roles shift and expand where demand is structurally weak. The literature discussing innovation intermediaries offers useful conceptual resources here. Howells identifies demand articulation – helping potential users identify and express their knowledge needs – as a core intermediary function[48], whereas Klerkx and Leeuwis show that innovation brokers must help stakeholders articulate needs that are not self-evident, through continuous re-articulation rather than one-off transmission[49]. Van Lente et al. conceptualise 'systemic intermediaries' whose explicit functions include enhancing "the articulation of options and demand", placing demand creation at the core of the intermediary role[50]. In the S4P field, Gluckman, Bardsley, and Kaiser likewise note that brokers have "a valuable role in identifying the appropriate timing for policy advice" and can "assist by building the case with the policy community to seek input"[51]. This literature, however, largely theorises demand articulation as a response to gaps in what policymakers already know they need – which is closer to situational than to structural weak demand.

Research on boundary organisations extends these insights by theorising how intermediaries actively shape, rather than merely navigate, the systems in which they operate. Guston demonstrates

47 MacKillop, Quarmby, and Downe, "Does Knowledge Brokering Facilitate Evidence-Based Policy? A Review of Existing Knowledge and an Agenda for Future Research"; Christopher Cvitanovic, Alistair J. Hobday, Lorrae van Kerkhoff, Stuart K. Wilson, Kirstin Dobbs, and Nadine A. Marshall, "Improving Knowledge Exchange among Scientists and Decision-Makers to Facilitate the Adaptive Governance of Marine Resources," *Ocean & Coastal Management* 112 (2015): 25–35.

48 Howells, "Intermediation and the Role of Intermediaries in Innovation," 715–728.

49 Klerkx and Leeuwis, "Establishment and Embedding of Innovation Brokers," 849–860.

50 Harro van Lente, Marko Hekkert, Ruud Smits, and Bas van Waveren, "Roles of Systemic Intermediaries in Transition Processes," *International Journal of Innovation Management* 7, no. 3 (2003): 247–279.

51 Gluckman, Bardsley, and Kaiser, "Brokerage at the Science-Policy Interface."

that boundary organisations do not simply broker information: they stabilise interactions, shape problem definitions and influence which forms of knowledge are considered credible, salient and legitimate across constituencies[52]. This work goes beyond helping policymakers articulate pre-existing needs: it involves actively cultivating demand – demonstrating the value of evidence use, embedding routines of evidence consultation and building receptive capacity within policy organisations. The concepts of institutional entrepreneurship and institutional work, which examine how actors with sufficient resources and motivation create, maintain, transform or disrupt institutional arrangements, supply the interpretive lens adopted here: brokers facing structurally weak demand are read not as neutral connectors but as agents doing institutional work on the demand side itself[53]. Applied to knowledge brokerage under structurally weak demand, this suggests that brokers may deliberately work to reshape the institutional conditions governing evidence demand, rather than accepting weak demand as a fixed parameter of their operating environment.

Read through this lens, this article expects knowledge brokerage roles to reconfigure under structurally weak demand, rather than being reducible to matching the supply and demand through improved translation alone. Two clusters of roles are distinguished. The first comprises the classic exchange-facilitation roles: translation, synthesis and relationship management between knowledge producers and

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52 David H. Guston, "Boundary Organizations in Environmental Policy and Science: An Introduction," *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 26, no. 4 (2001): 399–408. See also David W. Cash, William C. Clark, Frank Alcock, Nancy M. Dickson, Noelle Eckley, David H. Guston, Jill Jager, and Ronald B. Mitchell, "Knowledge Systems for Sustainable Development," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 100, no. 14 (2003): 8086–8091.

53 Paul J. DiMaggio, "Interest and Agency in Institutional Theory," in *Institutional Patterns and Organizations: Culture and Environment*, ed. Lynne G. Zucker (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1988), 3–21; Julie Battilana, Bernard Leca, and Eva Boxenbaum, "How Actors Change Institutions: Towards a Theory of Institutional Entrepreneurship," *Academy of Management Annals* 3, no. 1 (2009): 65–107; Thomas B. Lawrence and Roy Suddaby, "Institutions and Institutional Work," in *The SAGE Handbook of Organization Studies*, 2nd ed., ed. Stewart R. Clegg, Cynthia Hardy, Thomas B. Lawrence, and Walter R. Nord (London: SAGE, 2006), 215–254.

users[54]. Whereas, the second cluster comprises demand-cultivation roles, through which, brokers engage in institutional work aimed at stimulating and stabilising demand for evidence within policymaking processes themselves. This demand-side work may include advocacy for evidence-informed approaches, demonstrating the value of research through pilot initiatives, embedding routines for evidence consultation, and supporting the development of organisational capacities to articulate and absorb knowledge[55]. Where demand is structurally weak, brokerage roles are expected to expand from the first cluster towards the second, thereby positioning brokers not as neutral intermediaries but as change agents who work on the institutional conditions of their environment. Whether this reconfiguration in fact occurs, and how far it succeeds, is treated here as an open empirical question rather than a settled proposition.

1.3. Political discontinuity and the consolidation of brokerage roles

Reconfiguration, however, is only half the puzzle: roles that expand under structurally weak demand are of limited interest if they cannot be sustained. Brokerage roles can be said to *consolidate* when they become routinised, adequately resourced and expected features of the policymaking process – embedded in the ecosystem rather than dependent on particular individuals, projects or governments[56]. Consolidation matters because effective brokerage rests on sustained relationships, accumulated trust, routinised interaction and institutional memory: these are assets that take time to build and cannot be conjured anew for each policy episode.

Political discontinuity is the principal condition working against consolidation. Where political competition rewards differentiation

54 Ward, House, and Hamer, "Developing a Framework," 156–164.

55 Lawrence and Suddaby, "Institutions and Institutional Work," 215–254.

56 Klerkx and Leeuwis, "Establishment and Embedding of Innovation Brokers," 849–860; Lawrence and Suddaby, "Institutions and Institutional Work," 215–254.

from predecessor governments, policy instruments, organisational practices and advisory arrangements associated with previous administrations may be dismantled, deprioritised or allowed to erode, regardless of their effectiveness[57]. For S4P ecosystems, such discontinuity is particularly damaging. When new governments discontinue engagement with established brokerage arrangements or deprioritise evidence-informed approaches associated with their predecessors, brokers must rebuild demand and re-legitimise their role with each political cycle. This undermines cumulative learning and forces repeated rounds of institutional work that would be unnecessary in more stable environments.

In this article, these systemic conditions – legalistic administrative culture as a structural source of weak demand, and political discontinuity as a threat to consolidation – are not treated as stand-alone explanations of policymaking outcomes, nor as the primary focus of analysis. They are conceptualised as the structural conditions under which brokerage operates: they determine whether brokers can rely on existing demand for evidence or must actively cultivate it, and whether brokerage roles can consolidate over time or remain fragile and contingent[58]. Brokerage is expected to be most consequential upstream, where policy problems are defined, evidence needs are articulated, and options are appraised. Where evidence is introduced only after political direction has been set or legal drafting has begun, brokerage is more likely to become compensatory and procedural, with limited influence over substantive policy choices.

The analysis therefore treats brokerage-role reconfiguration and consolidation as the main outcomes to be explained. The principal conditioning factors are structurally weak demand, generated by legalistic policymaking routines and legislative inflation, and po-

[57] Michael W. Bauer, Andrew Jordan, Christoffer Green-Pedersen, and Adrienne Héritier, eds., *Dismantling Public Policy: Preferences, Strategies, and Effects* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[58] Parkhurst, *The Politics of Evidence*; Klerkx and Leeuwis, "Establishment and Embedding of Innovation Brokers," 849–860.

litical discontinuity, which affects whether brokerage roles endure. The expected mechanism is that, where policymaking routines do not generate regular demand for evidence, brokers expand from exchange facilitation towards demand cultivation. Where political and institutional support is discontinuous, however, these expanded roles remain fragile rather than consolidating.

2. Methodology and Data

This article employs a qualitative single-case study design[59] to examine how knowledge brokerage roles reconfigure, and under what conditions they consolidate, within Lithuania's S4P ecosystem. A single-case approach suits the research question for two reasons. First, establishing whether demand for evidence is structurally weak requires close, context-dependent attention to how policymaking routines, incentives and time horizons operate within a specific institutional setting[60]. Second, tracing whether brokerage roles consolidate requires following relationships, routines and institutional memory over time and across political cycles – relational and temporal dimensions of brokerage that are often lost in broader comparative assessments[61]. Lithuania was selected because it combines the two features the argument requires: deliberate and layered investment in brokerage capacity since 2019, and prior indications that demand for evidence may be structurally weak owing to a legalistic administrative culture and legislative inflation, with recurrent political discontinuity bearing on whether brokerage arrangements endure. While the findings of a single case are not statistically generalisable, the identification of mechanisms and scope conditions supports analytic generalisation to other systems combining legalistic administrative

59 Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods, 4th ed.* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2009).

60 Bent Flyvbjerg, "Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research," *Qualitative Inquiry* 12, no. 2 (2006): 219–245.

61 Yin, *Case Study Research*.

cultures with recurrent political discontinuity, in particular in Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe[62].

The empirical analysis draws in part on research conducted within the multi-country project *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Governance and Public Administration in a Post-Pandemic Europe* (22EL07), funded by the European Commission's Technical Support Instrument (TSI) and coordinated by the Joint Research Centre (JRC)[63]. The methodology of the project combined an analysis of primary and secondary sources; a survey of the Office of the Government, line ministries, the Research Council of Lithuania (hereafter, the RCL), research-performing organisations and governmental networks and knowledge brokers, with a total of 28 responses received; 24 interviews were conducted with stakeholders from across the ecosystem; three focus groups were created; and a participatory workshop was set up bringing together over 20 participants from both the demand and supply sides of the S4P ecosystem. The key empirical output of that research was a Lithuanian country report published by the Commission (hereafter referred to as the country report)[64]. This article draws only on data and evidence already presented and cited in that report.

This material is complemented by desk research conducted during a follow-up phase, drawing on publicly available sources, including policy documents, legislative acts, strategic frameworks,

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62 See Flyvbjerg, and also George and Bennett, who explicitly argue that in-depth case studies enable analytic generalisation by identifying causal mechanisms and scope conditions, thereby allowing findings to be transferable to other contexts sharing similar institutional and structural characteristics: Flyvbjerg, "Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research," 219–245; Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

63 Vitalis Nakrošis, Ieva Petraitė, Rasa Bortkevičiūtė, and Ramūnas Vilpišauskas, *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking in Governance and Public Administration in a Post-Pandemic Europe: Country Analysis, Policy Recommendations and Implementation Roadmap–Lithuania*, ed. Mara Almeida and Alexandra Olajos-Szabo (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2025), 23, JRC141125, https://doi.org/10.2760/0030376.

64 Ibid.

organisational mandates, information on activities and reported developments, legislative statistics, and relevant secondary literature. Together, these sources support the two stages of the analysis. The assessment of whether demand for evidence in Lithuania is structurally weak rests primarily on documentary and statistical evidence concerning legislative activity, impact assessment practices and policy-making routines, corroborated by the survey and interview findings reported in the country report. The tracing of brokerage roles and their consolidation draws on publicly available information about their mandates, activities and development across successive governments, supplemented, wherever relevant, by empirical evidence already presented and cited in the country report.

The analysis proceeded through theoretically guided coding. Documentary and statistical sources were first used to identify institutional features associated with structurally weak demand, including the legislative volume, urgency procedures, timing of impact assessments and the location of analytical work in the policy process. Interview, focus-group and workshop material reported in the country report was then used to examine how these conditions were experienced by actors in the ecosystem, and how brokerage roles were performed in practice. Triangulation involved checking whether claims derived from the interviews were consistent with documentary evidence, survey findings and institutional developments over time. Where post-2024 developments are discussed, the analysis relies on documentary evidence only, and these findings are therefore treated as indicative rather than definitive.

Several limitations warrant acknowledgement. First, the research design prioritises the depth of understanding over breadth: the findings illuminate dynamics specific to Lithuania's institutional context, and their transferability rests on analytic rather than statistical generalisation, as set out above. Second, the primary data collection was undertaken within the framework of a policy-oriented project with defined beneficiaries (the Office of the Government, the RCL and STRATA), which may have shaped participant selection and response

dynamics. Third, the political transition following the 2024 parliamentary elections occurred after the primary fieldwork period; developments under the new government are therefore assessed through documentary sources only, which constrains the depth, with which, continuity and change in brokerage arrangements can be judged.

3. Empirical Analysis

3.1. Structurally weak demand for evidence in Lithuania: administrative and political dimensions

The assessment of structurally weak demand in Lithuania is organised around the two constitutive dimensions of the concept. It first examines the administrative dimension, showing how the organisation of lawmaking and civil service routines displaces analytical engagement from the moments where policy problems are defined and options appraised. It then turns to the political dimension, showing how recurrent political change and the confrontational nature of legislative politics weaken incentives for sustained evidence use and shorten the time horizons within which it can take place.

3.1.1. The administrative dimension: legalistic culture, legislative inflation and compressed deliberation

Lithuania's policymaking environment is characterised by a legalistic administrative culture, with a strong emphasis on formal legal compliance, frequent legislative amendments, and extensive use of urgency procedures[65]. Producing legal acts is often treated as the main policymaking task. Policy development, therefore, frequently moves directly into drafting legislation, leaving limited time and space for

[65] Vitalis Nakrošis, "Lithuanian Civil Service Reform 1990–2018: From the Communist Legacy to a Professional Administration," in *Public Service Evolution in the 15 Post-Soviet Countries: Diversity in Transformation*, ed. Alikhan Baimenov and Panos Liverakos (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 327–363, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-2462-9_10.

evidence to inform the substance and direction of proposals. This legalistic administrative culture has contributed to legislative inflation, with a growing number of legal acts adopted with limited prior consideration of their likely effects[66].

The frequent use of urgency procedures further narrows the space for considering evidence, reducing the likelihood that it will shape policy problems and options at an early stage. Although the share of legal acts adopted under urgency or special urgency procedures fell during the 2020–2024 parliamentary term – notably, from 20.35 per cent in 2016–2020 to 15.30 per cent in 2020–2024[67] – accelerated adoption still remains a common feature of legislative practice. These procedures limit the time available for analysis and make evidence more likely to play a supplementary role than to inform the direction of decision-making. Over time, this can reinforce short policy time horizons, within which, deliberation and evidence use are perceived as slowing effective policymaking instead of supporting it. Their continued use appears to reflect a broader legislative and administrative culture, in which, speed and visible lawmaking activity are often prioritised over policy deliberation.

Amendment-dominated legislative practice adds to these pressures. During the 2020–2024 parliamentary term, original laws accounted for only around 3 per cent of all adopted legislation, while laws adopted in a new consolidated version represented under 4 per cent; these proportions were broadly consistent with the previous term[68]. The overwhelming majority of legislative output therefore consisted of amendments to existing laws. This sustains a mode of policy development centred on technical correction, alignment and

66 Ramūnas Vilpišauskas, Marius Kalanta, and Daunis Auers, *Lithuania Report: Sustainable Governance Indicators 2024* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024), https://doi.org/10.11586/2024134.

67 Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo kanceliarijos Informacijos ir komunikacijos departamento Tyrimų skyrius, *Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo veikla teisėkūros srityje: 2016–2020 m. ir 2020–2024 m. kadencijų statistiniai duomenys. Seimo kadencijų teisėkūros rodiklių ir tendencijų palyginimas*, Analitinė apžvalga 24/97 (Vilnius: Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo kanceliarija, 2024), https://www.lrs.lt/sip/getFile3?p_fid=85127.

68 Ibid.

adjustment, leaving less administrative space for strategic review and the evidence-informed exploration of policy alternatives. Limited use of evidence during the initial development of policy measures may also increase the need for subsequent correction and revision. This pattern can therefore become self-reinforcing: the continuous adjustment of existing legal provisions absorbs administrative capacity, while the resulting time pressure further constrains the use of evidence in developing new measures. As regulation becomes denser and more complex, the cycle reinforces regulatory congestion and a persistent sense of time scarcity across policymaking processes.

Survey and interview evidence cited in the country report indicates that policymakers frequently identify a "lack of time for analysis" as a major barrier to evidence use[69]. However, in the context of evidence described above, this time pressure is being continually reproduced by the volume of administrative work devoted to correcting, aligning and adjusting the existing legal framework. As these tasks absorb administrative capacity, policymaking routines leave limited space and few incentives for engagement with analytical input. Time scarcity therefore becomes a structural feature of the system, rather than a situational constraint.

A further feature of the unfavourable administrative structures underlying weak demand lies in the routines through which policy proposals are prepared and in the expectations surrounding the role of evidence. Assessments of Lithuania's regulatory practice indicate that ministries often begin by drafting legal text, while analytical work is conducted alongside or even after the drafting process[70]. By

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69 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Lithuania Country Report*, 22.

70 OECD, *Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania: Strengthening Decision Making and Policy Evaluation for Long-term Development*, OECD Public Governance Reviews (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2021), https://doi.org/10.1787/323e3500-en; STRATA, *Numatomo teisinio reguliavimo poveikio vertinimo praktikos Lietuvoje vertinimas: Teisės aktų rengėjų perspektyva* (2021), https://2014.esinvesticijos.lt/media/force_download/?url=/uploads/main/esproducts/docs/122893_0c3e12517e920227c08a774696e86ed4.pdf; Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking*.

this stage, the policy direction of the proposal is often largely established, and evidence therefore tends to support, refine or formally justify it, with limited scope to genuinely shape its development.

At the beginning of the previous political term, the Office of the Government sought to strengthen *ex ante* analysis by applying the principle of proportionality. It identified 35 legislative initiatives expected to have a potentially higher impact for more extensive assessment between 2021 and 2023[71]. Concentrating analytical effort on a manageable set of priority proposals was intended to address the time and capacity pressures reported by ministries. Towards the end of the term, which coincided with the preparation of the country report, eight assessments had been completed and six were still under way[72]. This indicates that prioritisation alone was insufficient to overcome the administrative routines and constraints limiting the use of evidence.

The low completion rate, read alongside the qualitative evidence, suggests that the constraint lay partly in the officials' expectations about whether assessment would influence decisions. Impact assessments often entered the process after the direction of a proposal had largely been established, and civil servants identified the limited influence of their work on final decisions as a persistent source of demotivation in a survey implemented by STRATA[73]. Interviews reported in the country report likewise indicate that line ministries often treated extensive *ex ante* assessment as an additional administrative requirement and sought exemptions from it[74]. This produced a self-reinforcing pattern: low expectations of influence discouraged investment in assessment and encouraged avoidance or mini-

71 Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės kanceliarija, *Galimo didesnio poveikio teisės aktų projektai, jų poveikio vertinimo atlikimo ir viešųjų konsultacijų vykdymo terminai*, accessed December 20, 2025, https://lrv.lt/media/viesa/saugykla/2023/11/6iNhi8vDOVM.pdf.

72 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Lithuania Country Report*, 58.

73 STRATA, *Numatomo teisinio reguliavimo poveikio vertinimo praktikos Lietuvoje vertinimas*.

74 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Lithuania Country Report*, 58.

mal compliance, while limited engagement kept analysis peripheral and confirmed its low perceived value. Concentrating resources on a smaller number of high-impact proposals eased immediate time and capacity pressures but left these entrenched routines and expectations largely unchanged.

3.1.2. The political dimension: discontinuity and confrontational legislative politics

These administrative mechanisms operate within a political environment that further shapes the expected value of seeking and using evidence. Political discontinuity and adversarial legislative politics affect this value through different time horizons: the former makes the future use of analytical investment less certain, while the latter reduces its immediate value as a shared basis for policy deliberation.

Across the period under study, the Ingrida Šimonytė-led Government of 2020–2024 was followed, after the 2024 parliamentary elections, by the Gintautas Paluckas-led Government (2024–2025), the Inga Ruginienė Government (2025–2026) and, in July 2026, the transition to a government led by the Prime Minister Mindaugas Sinkevičius (2026–). The current parliamentary term has, therefore, already seen three successive prime ministers, together with some changes in the coalition composition and ministerial leadership[75].

Changes of government do not necessarily weaken evidence use. They do, however, make the continuity of political priorities, proce-

[75] Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentas, dekretas Nr. 1K-733, "Dėl Mindaugo Sinkevičiaus skyrimo Lietuvos Respublikos Ministru Pirmininku," June 30, 2026, https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/2d23a764749011f1a305c23ba1643967; Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, nutarimas Nr. XV-54, "Dėl Devynioliktosios Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos," December 12, 2024, https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/d4b57910b89711efbb3fe9794b4a33e2; Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, nutarimas Nr. XV-439, "Dėl Dvidešimtosios Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos," September 25, 2025, https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/24290d0099f611f0bb51b0620d4bdb93; Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, nutarimas Nr. XV-1157, "Dėl Dvidešimt pirmosios Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos," July 14, 2026, https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/7d6d67bb7f7111f19655fb04e2f4d972.

dural commitments and institutional sponsorship less certain. Investments in analytical capacity and knowledge brokerage arrangements often require sustained support before their benefits become visible. Where political ownership may be short-lived and commitments can be revised by successors, the expected value of bearing their immediate costs declines. This mechanism is consistent with wider research on the political difficulty of investing in benefits that materialise over longer time horizons, and with the OECD's observation that short political cycles restrict the time available for thorough analysis and long-term planning[76]. In terms of structurally weak demand, discontinuity makes it difficult for evidence engagement to consolidate into a stable institutional expectation: its value and relevance must be re-established under each new political configuration. Ministries receive less consistent signals that investment in analysis will remain important over time, while longer-horizon analytical work is exposed to changing political priorities. Section 3.3 examines how this uncertainty affected the consolidation of particular brokerage arrangements.

A second political condition contributing to structurally weak demand is the adversarial relationship between governing coalitions and opposition parties. In this environment, the political origin of a proposal may matter more than the quality of the evidence supporting it. Voting behaviour often follows the governing–opposition divide, and external impact assessments may be used tactically to delay initiatives advanced by the governing coalition, with limited attention to their substantive findings[77].

Evidence still can enter political discussions, but its role depends on the strategic interests of the actor using it. When evidence is not accepted across party lines as a common basis for assessing proposals, investment in analysis becomes a less reliable way to improve

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76 Alan M. Jacobs, *Governing for the Long Term: Democracy and the Politics of Investment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); OECD, *Building Anticipatory Capacity with Strategic Foresight in Government: Lessons from Lithuania, Italy, and Malta*, OECD Public Governance Reviews (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2025), https://doi.org/10.1787/d7eb0bb6-en.

77 Vilpišauskas, Kalanta, and Auers, *Lithuania Report SGI 2024*, 8, 22–23.

policy, build wider legitimacy or reduce later contestation. Demand consequently remains selective and episodic. Political actors may seek evidence to defend or challenge a particular initiative without using it systematically to examine policy problems, alternatives and likely effects. Adversarial legislative politics thus limits the deliberative value of evidence while increasing its tactical value in individual disputes.

The administrative and political dimensions together explain why weak demand persists despite efforts to increase analytical capacity and introduce evidence-use instruments. Legalistic routines narrow the occasions at which evidence can shape policy choices; continuous regulatory adjustment generates time scarcity and short horizons; drafting-first assessment lowers officials' expectations that analysis will influence decisions; political discontinuity reduces the prospective return on sustained analytical investment; and adversarial politics reduces its immediate value as a common basis for deliberation. Demand is structurally weak not because evidence is never commissioned or used, but because the regular organisation of policymaking does not consistently prompt, reward or require engagement with it before central policy commitments are made.

This diagnosis provides the baseline for examining brokerage reconfiguration. The brokers considered in the following section operate not only where evidence needs are insufficiently expressed, but where established routines and incentives often fail to generate such needs at the stage when evidence could meaningfully shape policy. Their roles must therefore be assessed in terms of how they attempt to alter those routines, expectations and entry points.

3.2. Knowledge brokerage under structurally weak demand: compensatory roles in practice

Section 3.1 established that demand for evidence in Lithuania is structurally weak along both its administrative and political dimensions. This section carries out the first part of the second analytical

step: it examines how the key actors within the S4P ecosystem have developed their brokerage roles under these conditions. It analyses three central actors in turn – STRATA, the RCL with its Science and Innovation Advisers (S&IA) network, and the Office of the Government – tracing the compensatory roles each performs alongside established exchange-facilitation work. As the analysis shows, all three engage in demand cultivation, but through distinct mechanisms: capacity-building and value demonstration, embedded demand articulation, and procedural authority, respectively. Each mechanism responds primarily to the administrative dimension of structurally weak demand – the legalistic routines, compressed deliberation and marginalised analytical instruments documented above. The extent to which the resulting roles can withstand the political dimension – discontinuity and shifting prioritisation – is taken up in Section 3.3.

3.2.1. STRATA: cultivating and stabilising demand for evidence

STRATA occupies a central position within Lithuania's S4P ecosystem. Established in 2019 through the reorganisation of the Research and Higher Education Monitoring Centre (MOSTA), it was created to strengthen the analytical foundations of government decision-making. Operating as a public institution under the Office of the Government, its mandate includes producing strategic analyses, evaluations and foresight; providing policy recommendations; coordinating analytical capacity across the public administration; and offering methodological support for evidence use[78]. Its proximity to the centre of government, cross-domain remit and links with external research communities enable it to connect policy questions with analytical expertise and translate knowledge into policy-relevant forms.

Under the conditions described in Section 3.1, these functions are situated in an administrative and political environment in which evidence needs are not consistently recognised or expressed through es-

[78] Vyriausybės strateginės analizės centras (STRATA), "STRATA", accessed December 20, 2025, https://strata.gov.lt/.

tablished policymaking routines. STRATA's strategic objective to "be a proactive partner in embedding a culture of evidence-informed decision-making" reflects this context[79]. The emphasis on culture suggests that stronger evidence use depends not only on the availability of analytical products, but also on the expectations, routines and perceived value of evidence that shape whether policymakers engage with it.

STRATA's involvement in regulatory impact assessment provides a central illustration. Ministries have often undertaken impact assessment after legal drafting has begun, and have frequently perceived it as an administrative requirement. Following the OECD's 2021 review of Lithuania's RIA framework, which recommended systematic and permanent training for civil servants[80], STRATA intensified its support to line ministries, particularly for higher-impact legislative initiatives. Its support included targeted training, methodological guidance and a community of practice around impact assessment[81]. Some sessions incorporated design-thinking approaches intended to make analytical methods more accessible and relevant to officials working under the time pressures generated by Lithuania's mode of lawmaking[82]. In 2023, STRATA extended this work to *ex post* evaluation by offering training on the assessment of existing legislation, addressing a recognised gap in Lithuanian policymaking[83].

STRATA's training, guidance and communities of practice targeted the absorption of impact assessment into compliance-oriented

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79 Vyriausybės strateginės analizės centras (STRATA), *Strategija 2021–2025 m.* (Vilnius: STRATA, 2020), 3, https://strata.gov.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Strata-strategija-LT.pdf.

80 OECD, *Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania*.

81 Vyriausybės strateginės analizės centras (STRATA), "Poveikio vertinimas," accessed July 16, 2026, https://strata.gov.lt/veikla/poveikio-vertinimas/; STRATA, "Teisinio reguliavimo poveikio vertinimo mokymai – STRATA žingsnis stiprinant įrodymais grįstą viešąjį valdymą," October 4, 2024, https://strata.gov.lt/teisinio-reguliavimo-poveikio-vertinimo-mokymai-strata-zingsnis-stiprinant-irodymais-grista-viesaji-valdyma/.

82 Ibid.

83 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Lithuania Country Report*, 60.

routines. Training and methodological support gave officials practical means to work with assessment. Design-thinking exercises connected analytical methods to concrete policy tasks, and communities of practice created recurring contact among officials responsible for assessment[84]. The intervention sought to strengthen the practical value officials attached to assessment and increase their engagement with it during policy development. The capacity-building dimension of STRATA's knowledge-brokerage work was therefore reconfigured to influence how officials understood the purpose of impact assessment, and whether they considered analytical engagement worthwhile.

STRATA has also supported more long-term forms of knowledge brokerage through network-building. Its coordination of analytical input into the State Progress Strategy Lithuania 2050 facilitated the formation of a community of co-creators spanning ministries, policymakers, civil society and external researchers[85]. From a brokerage perspective, these relationships not only connect policy questions with relevant knowledge but also create recurring channels through which evidence needs can be articulated and developed collectively. Such networks can make demand less dependent on isolated requests, individual officials or one-off analytical exercises.

STRATA's role under structurally weak demand lay in the use of capacity-building, methodological support and network-building to cultivate engagement with evidence. These activities worked on the expectations, practices and relationships through which policymakers recognised the relevance of analytical input.

3.2.2. The Research Council of Lithuania and the S&IA network: embedded demand articulation

The Research Council of Lithuania constitutes a second important knowledge brokerage actor within Lithuania's S4P ecosystem.

84 STRATA, "Poveikio vertinimas."

85 Vyriausybės strateginės analizės centras (STRATA), "Pasiruošimas užtikrina vizijos Lietuva2050 atsparumą krizėms," August 13, 2024, https://strata.gov.lt/en/pasiruosimas-uztikrina-vizijos-lietuva2050-atparuma-krizems/.

Alongside administering competitive research programmes, including state-commissioned and applied research instruments, it advises the Government on research and higher education policy and supports the alignment of research activity with national priorities[86]. Its brokerage role expanded with the establishment in 2023 of the Science and Innovation Advisers (S&IA) network, which it coordinated[87]. Advisers were placed within line ministries and the Office of the Government, while coordination and methodological support were retained centrally. The network of fifteen advisers operated from July 2023 until May 2026. It was financed through a Recovery and Resilience Facility project running from 1 May 2023 to 29 May 2026 and ceased operating when the project ended, as no continued funding was provided from the state budget[88]. This section examines the brokerage role envisaged and developed during its operation. The circumstances of its discontinuation and their implications are considered in Section 3.3.

Science and Innovation Advisers were embedded within line ministries and the Office of the Government to bring scientific expertise closer to policy development. This arrangement responded to a context in which evidence needs within ministries were unevenly recognised, articulated largely on an *ad hoc* basis and often identified only after the policy direction had already begun to take shape. This positioning was expected to create opportunities for scientific knowledge to inform policy development before proposals would take shape. In this sense, the network represented an attempt to build demand for evidence into the early stages of policymaking, where it is not routinely generated under the conditions described in Section 3.1.

Interview and focus-group evidence reported in the country study indicates that S&IAs were expected to identify areas in which scientific knowledge was absent or underused, help ministries formulate

86 Lietuvos mokslo taryba, "Lietuvos mokslo taryba," accessed July 16, 2026, https://lmt.lrv.lt/.

87 Lietuvos mokslo taryba, "Mokslo ir inovacijų patarėjų tinklas Vyriausybės institucijose," accessed July 16, 2026, https://lmt.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys/mokslo-politika/mokslo-ir-inovaciju-patareju-tinklas/.

88 Ibid.

evidence needs, and translate broad policy challenges into questions that could be addressed through research[89]. These functions were particularly relevant in a system where few ministries systematically plan their analytical needs and demand for evidence remains largely reactive[90]. The advisers' intended contribution was therefore not limited to locating expertise in response to existing requests. It also involved helping officials recognise where evidence could contribute, clarify what type of knowledge was needed, and frame policy concerns in ways that could guide research or analysis[91].

This role reflects a wider insight from the literature on innovation intermediaries: demand is not always sufficiently clear or developed to be matched directly with the relevant knowledge, but it may emerge through problem clarification, interaction and translation[92]. The S&IA network was designed to bring this process closer to policymaking by placing advisers within ministries rather than relying primarily on occasional exchanges with external research organisations. Their proximity to policy processes was expected to allow evidence needs to be identified while problems and possible responses were still being defined. The available evidence does not establish that this occurred consistently across the network, however. The advisers' ability to perform this role depended on their organisational position, access to relevant discussions, and recognition within individual ministries[93].

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89 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Lithuania Country Report*, 85–86.

90 While certain ministries – such as the Ministries of Justice and Agriculture – plan for evidence needs as part of the budgetary cycle and reflect these in their strategic activity plans, this practice is not uniform across the Government. For example, the Ministry of Economy and Innovation does not formally embed evidence requirements within its budgeting or strategic planning processes. Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking–Lithuania*, 109.

91 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Lithuania Country Report*, 85–86.

92 Howells, "Intermediation and the Role of Intermediaries in Innovation"; Klerkx and Leeuwis, "Establishment and Embedding of Innovation Brokers."

93 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Lithuania Country Report*, 85–86.

The advisers' expected contribution to regulatory impact assessment illustrates the same logic. They were not responsible for conducting assessments themselves, but were intended to help ministries clarify which questions required analytical attention, identify relevant researchers, and facilitate access to scientific expertise[94]. In an administrative setting where impact assessments had often been undertaken late or treated primarily as administrative requirements, this support had the potential to make evidence needs more explicit and introduce evidence earlier in the process.

The network's cross-governmental scope was designed to add a horizontal dimension to demand articulation. Advisers were positioned to identify related evidence needs across institutions, connect ministries confronting similar policy questions, and support the joint formulation of research needs[95]. Central coordination through the RCL was expected to facilitate the exchange of methods, practical experience and examples of evidence use across host institutions. The model, therefore, created the possibility of extending demand articulation beyond individual ministries and reducing its dependence on isolated officials or one-off analytical exercises.

The extent to which advisers could perform these demand-articulation functions varied across the institutions. Interviews and focus groups cited in the country report indicate that differences in their mandates, organisational position and access to senior decision-makers shaped how consistently the network's intended functions could actually be carried out[96]. Advisers situated close to strategic planning, policy development or budgetary functions were regarded as better placed to identify emerging evidence needs and bring them into the relevant discussions. Elsewhere, poorly defined mandates or limited access to decision-making created a risk that advisers would be absorbed into routine administrative work. Organisational embedding, therefore, did not automatically amount to substantive integration into policymaking.

94 Ibid., 81–84.

95 Ibid., 86.

96 Ibid., 85–86.

Locating a knowledge broker within a ministry may have created opportunities for earlier demand articulation, but those opportunities depend on whether the adviser is recognised as relevant to policy development and included at the stages when problems and options are defined. Where access and authority remained informal, the role depended heavily on individual initiative, personal relationships, and the receptivity of administrative leadership.

The project-based character of the network reinforced this fragility. Financed through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, it operated without a permanent funding basis or fully consolidated mandates across the host institutions[97]. The absence of common success criteria also made it difficult to assess and demonstrate the network's contribution consistently[98]. These conditions meant that the role developed unevenly and remained dependent on the competences of individual advisers, the relationships they established and the support they received within host institutions.

3.2.3. The Office of the Government: authority-based demand stimulation

The Office of the Government occupies a distinctive position within Lithuania's S4P ecosystem because it combines a central role in executive policymaking with responsibility for organising how analytical knowledge enters government decision-making. It acts as a knowledge broker by connecting political priorities with analytical requirements, coordinating inputs from the ministries, STRATA and external experts, and creating processes through which evidence can inform government deliberation. During the 2020–2024 political term, it made active use of this position to strengthen its brokerage function.

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97 Ibid., 111.

98 Ibid., 111; see also Vyriausybės strateginės analizės centras (STRATA), *Mokslo ir inovacijų pareigūnų tinklo sukūrimo Lietuvoje alternatyvos ir įgyvendinimo sėkmės prielaidos* (Vilnius: STRATA, 2021), https://strata.gov.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/20220302-Mokslo-ir-inovaciju-pareigunu-tinklas.pdf.

The Office supports the Prime Minister and the Government in coordinating priorities and reviewing policy and legislative proposals submitted by line ministries. During this period, it used that position to shape when analysis was expected, how policy problems and options were to be justified, and what evidence the ministries were required to provide[99]. It therefore exercised brokerage by seeking to build expectations around evidence use into the routines through which proposals were prepared and reviewed.

This included strengthening impact-assessment requirements, identifying higher-impact legislative initiatives for more extensive assessment and encouraging analytical work before proposals had taken shape[100]. These measures sought to change the drafting-first routines identified in Section 3.1, in which evidence is often introduced only after the preferred course of action has largely been decided. Through these measures, the Office sought to make evidence a more explicit expectation in the preparation and review of ministerial proposals.

The Office also performed knowledge brokerage by creating processes that connected policymakers with scientific and analytical expertise. A central example was its leadership, in cooperation with STRATA, of the development of the *State Progress Strategy Lithuania 2050*[101]. The process brought together officials from line ministries, researchers, STRATA analysts, civil society representatives and other stakeholders through foresight exercises, thematic discussions and public consultations. Scientific and analytical knowledge was used to examine long-term trends, develop alternative scenarios, and identify challenges extending across sectoral and legislative bounda-

99 OECD, *Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania*.

100 Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, 2020 m. gruodžio 11 d. nutarimas Nr. XIV-72, "Dėl Aštuonioliktosios Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos," https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/973c87403bc311eb8c97e01ffe050e1c; Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės kanceliarija, *Galimo didesnio poveikio teisės aktų projektai, jų poveikio vertinimo atlikimo ir viešųjų konsultacijų vykdymo terminai*.

101 Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės kanceliarija, "Valstybės ateities vizija „Lietuva 2050"," accessed December 30, 2025, https://lrv.lt/lt/lietuva-2050/.

ries. The State Progress Council provided a recurring forum for this interaction. Convened by the Office of the Government, it brought together representatives of politics, science, business, culture and civil society to contribute to the formulation and discussion of long-term state development priorities[102].

During the 2020–2024 term, the Office's brokerage role therefore reconfigured around two related functions: using executive authority to build expectations around evidence use into policy-preparation routines, and convening processes through which policymakers, researchers and other actors could jointly define longer-term problems. These functions remained constrained by the wider institutional setting. Formal requirements could still be absorbed into compliance-oriented routines, while their consolidation depended on the political priority assigned to evidence-informed policymaking – which is a dependency to be examined in Section 3.3.

Across the three cases, brokerage became involved in the institutional production of demand. The actors sought to shape the recognition and formulation of evidence needs and to create procedures or forums through which evidence could enter policymaking. Their roles responded most directly to the administrative sources of structurally weak demand identified in Section 3.1. Political discontinuity shaped the continuity of the authority, funding and institutional sponsorship on which these roles relied.

3.3. The political dimension revisited: discontinuity and the consolidation of brokerage arrangements

Section 3.1 showed that recurrent government change weakens the continuity of political support for evidence use. The same discontinuity shapes whether the brokerage roles examined in Section 3.2 endure. Consolidation refers here to the continuation of brokerage

[102] Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, "Valstybės pažangos taryba," accessed July 30, 2026, https://lrv.lt/lt/lietuva-2050/valstybes-pazangos-taryba/.

functions, relationships and routines after the government, project or funding arrangement that supported their development has changed. In Lithuania, consolidation has been uneven. Shifts in political priority weakened the cross-government mandate for evidence use, repeated reorganisation limited the cumulative development of the central steering capacity, and brokerage arrangements differed in the security of their institutional anchoring.

Successive Lithuanian governments assigned different levels of priority to evidence-informed policymaking and the development of the S4P ecosystem. Under conditions of structurally weak demand, this variation matters because the brokers' efforts to cultivate the demand and reshape the established routines are more likely to take hold when they are supported by clear political expectations across the government.

During the 2020–2024 term, the Šimonytė-led Government made strengthening demand for evidence an explicit objective. Its Government Programme and Implementation Plan included a dedicated commitment to debate and knowledge-based decision-making, covering both the use of evidence-informed governance tools and an increase in demand for evidence across government[103]. This framing recognised that stronger evidence use would not follow automatically from improvements in evidence supply, but required deliberate efforts to change how evidence was sought and used within policymaking[104].

This priority provided political backing for the Office of the Government to use its coordinating authority to strengthen expectations around evidence use. It also supported STRATA's demand-cultivating activities and the subsequent development of embedded demand articulation through the Science and Innovation Advisers network. The administrative constraints identified in Section 3.1 persisted, but brokerage actors had a clearer support to address them.

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103 Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, "Dėl Aštuonioliktosios Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos."

104 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Lithuania Country Report*, 15.

Evidence-informed policymaking received a less prominent and less operational place under the Lithuanian governments that followed. The Paluckas-led Government (2024–2025) included a general commitment to research- and data-informed policymaking in its programme, but this was not translated into corresponding measures in its implementation plan[105]. Meanwhile, the Ruginienė-led Government (2025–2026) did not explicitly refer to evidence-informed policymaking or the development of the S4P ecosystem in either its programme or implementation plan, while the programme of the Sinkevičius Government (2026–) likewise contains no explicit commitment in either area[106].

These differences do not indicate opposition to evidence use, but they show that evidence-informed policymaking and the development of the S4P ecosystem did not retain the same political priority across the different governments. As that priority receded, ministries received weaker signals that analytical engagement was an expected part of policymaking, while brokers had less political support for cultivating demand, changing established routines, and consolidating new arrangements.

Compounding this shift, the recent Lithuanian governments led by Prime Ministers from the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party increasingly politicised senior civil service management across the Lithuanian ministries and other state institutions. Crucially, this political influence penetrated even key technocratic ministries – such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance – that had historically been regarded as meritocratic centres of excellence insu-

105 Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, "Dėl Devynioliktosios Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos."

106 Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, "Dėl Dvidešimtosios Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos"; Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, 2025 m. gruodžio 10 d. nutarimas Nr. 895, "Dėl Dvidešimtosios Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos nuostatų įgyvendinimo plano patvirtinimo," https://e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/01c09b12d-97b11f08918e1adc7c5b1ec; Lietuvos Respublikos Seimas, 2026 m. liepos 14 d. nutarimas Nr. XV-1157, "Dėl Dvidešimt pirmosios Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybės programos," https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/7d6d67bb7f7111f19655f-b04e2f4d972.

lated from party patronage. By prioritising political alignment over professional merit and continuity in senior staffing, this trend might directly undermine civil service capacity and institutional memory, running fundamentally counter to the principles of evidence-informed policymaking.

3.3.1. Cyclical reorganisation of the Office of the Government

The Office of the Government is particularly exposed to political discontinuity because its brokerage role depends on how each governing coalition uses the centre of government to steer policy development and monitoring. Its formal position allows it to connect political priorities with analytical knowledge and to build expectations around evidence use into policy-preparation routines. The extent to which it performs this role, however, has varied as successive governments have repeatedly reorganised its mandate and central steering capacity.

This pattern predates the current S4P arrangements. Under Prime Minister Kubilius (2008–2012), the Office of the Government was reorganised as the Prime Minister's Office and was given a stronger role in supporting the formulation and implementation of the government policy. Its capacity to assess the policy substance of draft government decisions was strengthened, while the responsibility for reviewing their legal quality was transferred to the Ministry of Justice[107].

The Butkevičius-led Government (2012–2016) reversed this reform shortly after taking office, restoring the Office of the Government and reducing the emphasis placed on its policy-steering function[108].

Under the Prime Minister Skvernelis (2016–2020), the Office was again reorganised to support strategic reform, coordinate government

[107] Vytautas Kuokštis, Ramūnas Vilpišauskas, and Detlef Jahn, *Sustainable Governance Indicators 2022: Lithuania Report* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2022), 54, https://www.sgi-network.org/docs/2022/country/SGI2022_Lithuania.pdf.

[108] Ibid.

priorities, and strengthen the review of draft legal acts[109]. During this term, the Government also commissioned an OECD review of how expertise could be used more systematically in policymaking[110].

Whereas, the Šimonytė Government (2020–2024) continued to strengthen analytical and policy-quality functions at the Office and within line ministries, with explicit objectives concerning the quality of draft legislation and the rigour of the Office's review[111]. As Section 3.2 showed, this enabled the Office to make more active use of its position as a knowledge broker and to build expectations around evidence use into policy-preparation routines.

The Office of the Government has also undergone reorganisations under the recent Lithuanian governments led by the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party. These organisational changes were further exacerbated by political turnover within the leadership of the Office of the Government itself. With the Government Chancellor changing every time with the appointment of a new government, institutional memory and administrative routines at the centre of government were repeatedly disrupted[112].

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109 Vitalis Nakrošis, Jurgita Šiugždinienė, and Inga Antanaitė, "New Development: Between Politics and Strategic Planning–The Management of Government Priorities in Lithuania," *Public Money & Management* 40, no. 4 (2020): 299–303, https://doi.org/10.1080/09540962.2020.1715096.

110 OECD, *Mobilising Evidence at the Centre of Government in Lithuania*.

111 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Lithuania Country Report*, 98.

112 Gintautas Paluckas appointed Laimonas Rudys as the Government Chancellor in December 2024; under Inga Ruginienė, Rudys was replaced by Eitvydas Bingelis in December 2025; and Tomas Daukantas became Chancellor following the formation of the next government in July 2026. This repeated turnover provides the basis for inferring weakened continuity in institutional memory and administrative routines. Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, "Vyriausybės kanceliarijos struktūra," accessed July 30, 2026, https://lrv.lt/lt/vyriausybes-kanceliarija/struktura-ir-kontaktine-informacija/vyriausybes-kanceliarijos-struktura/; Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, "Formuojama Ministro Pirmininko komanda," December 13, 2024, https://lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/formuojama-ministro-pirmininko-komanda/; Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, "Darbą pradeda Vyriausybės kancleris Eitvydas Bingelis," December 10, 2025, https://lrv.lt/lt/naujienos/darba-pradeda-vyriausybes-kancleris-eitvydas-bingelis-te9L/; Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, "Gyvenimo aprašymas: Tomas Daukantas," accessed July 30, 2026, https://lrv.lt/lt/vyriausybes-kanceliarija/gyvenimo-aprasymas-tomas-daukantas/.

This sequence of expansion, reversal and renewed strengthening shows that the Office's brokerage role has not been developing cumulatively across political cycles. Its capacity to stimulate demand for evidence depends not only on its formal location at the centre of government, but also on the substantive role assigned to it by the governing coalition. When that role is narrowed or deprioritised, the routines, competences and relationships developed under the preceding government may not be carried forward.

Cyclical reorganisation, therefore, constrains consolidation under conditions of structurally weak demand. The Office can use its authority to support evidence use across government, but this capacity remains vulnerable to changing political priorities. Rather than becoming a durable feature of the S4P ecosystem, its brokerage role may need to be rebuilt under each political configuration, thus interrupting the accumulation of institutional learning over time.

3.3.2. Political discontinuity and the fragility of brokerage consolidation

The analysis above shows that brokerage roles can develop in response to structurally weak demand. A separate question is whether they consolidate: whether the functions, relationships and routines developed by brokers continue beyond the political or funding conditions under which they emerged. In Lithuania, consolidation has remained uneven. Brokera3e arrangements have often depended on temporary funding, support from particular governments, or the active use of central coordinating authority, thus leaving them vulnerable when these conditions changed.

STRATA represents the most organisationally continuous of the actors examined. Its formal mandate and institutional position have survived changes of government, allowing its analytical, methodological and capacity-building functions to continue[113]. Despite this, the operational capacity of the agency has been constrained by fund-

[113] Ibid., 32.

ing transitions (from project-based financing toward more core public funding)[114]. Also, the consolidation of its demand-cultivating role is less certain, however. Training, guidance and communities of practice can remain available even where ministries face limited expectations to apply them in policy development. STRATA's organisational continuity, therefore, preserves brokerage capacity but does not in itself ensure that the routines and relationships it seeks to establish become embedded across the government.

The Science and Innovation Advisers network illustrates a more direct failure of institutional continuation. The network was established through the temporary Recovery and Resilience Facility (hereafter, RRF) funding, while the advisers' mandates, organisational positions and access to decision-making varied across the host institutions[115]. These conditions already limited the consistency with which embedded demand articulation could develop. When the RRF project ended in May 2026, the network was not continued in its existing, centrally financed form[116]. This does not establish that the brokerage model was ineffective, nor does it imply that political discontinuity was the sole reason for its termination. It does, however, show that the functions developed through the network were not anchored strongly enough to survive the end of the project through

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114 STRATA's financing shifted from a mix of state-budget and EU project funding towards predominantly state-budget financing after 2023, but with a smaller overall funding envelope: its 2023 budget was EUR 2.1 million, of which, 67.9 percent came from EU structural funds and 32.1 percent from the state budget, while, in 2025, almost all reported financing income – specifically, EUR 1.06 million – came from the state budget. STRATA, *2023 metų veiklos ataskaita* (Vilnius: STRATA, 2024), 35–36, https://strata.gov.lt/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2023-veiklos-ataskaita.pdf; STRATA, *2025 m. gruodžio 31 d. pasibaigusių metų finansinių ataskaitų rinkinys* (Vilnius: STRATA, 2026), 5, 32, https://strata.gov.lt/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/STRATA_FAR_2025-12-31_pasirasytas.pdf.

115 Nakrošis et al., *Building Capacity for Evidence-Informed Policymaking: Lithuania Country Report*, 97.

116 Lietuvos mokslo taryba, "Mokslo ir inovacijų patarėjų tinklas Vyriausybės institucijose," updated June 1, 2026, https://lmt.lrv.lt/lt/veiklos-sritys/mokslo-politika/mokslo-ir-inovaciju-patareju-tinklas/; Lietuvos mokslo taryba, "MIP tinklas – apie mokslą ir inovacijas," *Naujienlaiškis*, no. 6 (April 2026), 2, https://lmt.lrv.lt/public/canonical/1776406192/7895/MIP%20tinklo%20naujienlais%CC%8Ckis%20Nr.%206.pdf.

which they had been created. Roles that depended on individual advisers and informal access within ministries could, therefore, disappear without being incorporated into permanent organisational responsibilities.

The Office of the Government was exposed to discontinuity through a different mechanism. Its institutional position remained central, but the brokerage role it performed depended on the priority assigned to evidence-informed policymaking by the governing coalition. During the 2020–2024 term, the Office used its authority to strengthen expectations around evidence use and to convene longer-term processes linking policymakers with scientific and analytical expertise. As the preceding analysis showed, however, the Office's policy-steering capacity has repeatedly been strengthened, narrowed and reorganised across the governments. Its brokerage functions were therefore tied not only to the existence of the institution, but also to how successive governments chose to use it.

The State Progress Council provides a concrete example of how an arrangement may remain formally intact while its brokerage function weakens through non-use or limited use. Following the change of the government, the Council did not convene for a sustained period (until early 2026)[117], thus leaving dormant a forum designed to connect political decision-makers with representatives of science, business, culture and civil society. Meetings resumed only in early 2026, after updating the composition of the Council in the middle of 2025, but only two sessions were held. Although an institutional platform might have retained its legal or organisational form, the interactions and routines through which it performed brokerage have clearly become somewhat weaker. Taken together, these cases show that different forms of brokerage face different consolidation risks. STRATA's organisational continuity has preserved its capacity to cultivate demand across political transitions, but the place of these functions within the ministries' policymaking routines remains uneven: bro-

[117] Lietuvos Respublikos Vyriausybė, "Valstybės pažangos taryba," accessed July 30, 2026, https://lrv.lt/lt/lietuva-2050/valstybes-pazangos-taryba/.

kerage capacity persists at STRATA without a correspondingly stable demand for its support across the government. The Science and Innovation Advisers network developed an embedded demand-articulation role without securing permanent funding or consolidated mandates. The Office of the Government possessed formal authority, but the use of that authority to support evidence-informed policymaking varied with political priorities. Consolidation was therefore weakest where brokerage functions depended on temporary projects, informal access, or continued support from a particular government.

Conclusions and Discussion

This article has examined how knowledge brokerage roles reconfigure under conditions of structurally weak demand for evidence, and what conditions enable or constrain their consolidation into durable features of S4P ecosystems. The Lithuanian case shows that weak demand becomes structural where it is produced and reproduced by the organisation of policymaking itself, rather than arising only from situational gaps in the policymakers' skills, capacities, or expressed evidence needs.

In Lithuania, the administrative dimension of structurally weak demand is rooted in a legalistic policymaking culture, in which, policy development is closely associated with drafting and amending legal acts. Legislative inflation, continuous regulatory adjustment and compressed deliberation absorb administrative capacity and reinforce routines in which legal drafting precedes policy analysis. Evidence is consequently introduced after the preferred course of action has often begun to take shape, limiting its contribution to problem definition and the consideration of alternatives. Impact assessment is correspondingly liable to be treated as an administrative check rather than as a meaningful input into policy deliberation. The frequently cited lack of time for analysis is therefore not only a situational constraint, but is partly generated by the policymaking routines centred on continuous legal adjustment.

The political dimension reinforces these administrative conditions. Recurrent changes of the government make the political priority assigned to evidence-informed policymaking unstable, while confrontational relations between governing coalitions and opposition parties reduce the value of evidence as a shared basis for policy deliberation. Together, these administrative and political structures weaken the occasions, incentives and expectations for seeking and using evidence.

Under these conditions, the brokerage roles examined in the article reconfigured towards creating and sustaining demand that established policymaking routines did not reliably generate. STRATA pursued demand cultivation through capacity-building, methodological support, communities of practice and longer-term networks intended to familiarise policymakers with analytical tools and demonstrate their practical value. The Science and Innovation Advisers network represented an attempt to embed demand articulation within ministries by helping officials recognise evidence needs, formulate questions that could be addressed through research, and identify relevant expertise before proposals had fully taken shape. During the 2020–2024 term, the Office of the Government made active use of its central position to stimulate demand through authority, seeking to make evidence a more explicit expectation in the preparation and review of ministerial proposals and policymaking processes in which scientific knowledge could contribute to problem definition and the consideration of alternatives.

Capacity-building and demand articulation, therefore, took on a broader function under structurally weak demand. They were directed not only at strengthening the policymakers' ability to engage with evidence, but also at influencing the routines, expectations and relationships through which evidence needs are recognised and acted upon. Demand cultivation, embedded demand articulation and authority-based demand stimulation thus represented distinct but complementary responses to an administrative environment that otherwise kept analytical engagement peripheral to policymaking.

The Lithuanian case also shows how the same administrative and political structures that produce structurally weak demand shape the

conditions under which brokerage arrangements can consolidate. A legalistic policymaking culture, the proliferation and continuous amendment of legal acts, and the resulting pressure on administrative capacity sustain routines in which evidence enters late, and impact assessment is treated as an administrative check rather than as a meaningful contribution to policy deliberation. Brokers can respond through capacity-building, demand articulation and the demonstration of alternative ways of developing the policy, but these roles are more likely to become durable features of the S4P ecosystem where the centre of government uses its authority and its own practice to reinforce evidence use across the ministries.

Consolidation also depends on sustained political prioritisation. Political support is needed both to challenge the established administrative routines and to carry forward brokerage arrangements once temporary funding or project structures have ended. Recurrent changes of the government, together with confrontational political relations that may discourage incoming coalitions from maintaining arrangements associated with their predecessors, leave brokerage roles and platforms vulnerable to discontinuation or neglect. Political discontinuity, therefore, constrains consolidation in two related ways: ministries face weaker expectations to seek and use evidence when evidence-informed policymaking loses political priority, while the brokerage arrangements developed to strengthen such engagement receive less support to be carried forward. The result is a pattern of substantial investment and adaptation by brokers, but limited consolidation because the administrative structures that weaken the demand persist, and the political conditions needed to sustain brokerage remain unstable.

These findings clarify the importance of distinguishing situational from structural sources of weak demand. Where weak demand reflects limited skills, weak analytical capacity or poorly articulated evidence needs, training, translation, relationship-building and demand articulation respond relatively directly to the problem. Where demand is structurally weak, these activities remain relevant, but their effects depend on whether wider administrative routines and political structures

support the direction in which brokerage roles develop. The source of weak demand, therefore, shapes both how brokerage roles reconfigure and the conditions under which they can consolidate.

Although Lithuania is examined as a single case, the findings support analytical generalisation to other systems combining legalistic administrative cultures with recurrent political discontinuity, including countries in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe. Comparative and longitudinal research could examine how different combinations of administrative and political structures shape brokerage roles, and under what conditions these roles become durable features of S4P ecosystems rather than temporary responses to structurally weak demand.

More specifically, it could be worth examining more in-depth the vulnerabilities of S4P initiatives funded through temporary external mechanisms (such as National Recovery and Resilience Plans, European Structural and Investment Funds or technical support instruments) versus permanently budgeted civil service roles, in particular during transitional periods. National administrative systems might struggle retaining enhanced administrative capacity and established networks when external support is discontinued, especially when it occurs during political or institutional transitions involving formal re-organisations at the centre of government. This is because pre-existing administrative capacity and further development of this capacity occurs dynamically through processes of socialisation and learning that could be disrupted by sudden institutional and political changes[118].

Author Contributions

Ieva Petraitė: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Writing – Original Draft Preparation, Writing – Review and Editing, Project Administration.

[118] V. Nakrošis, S. Dan, and R. Goštautaitė, "The Role of EU Funding in EU Member States: Building Administrative Capacity to Advance Administrative Reforms," *International Journal of Public Sector Management* 36, no. 1 (2023): 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPSM-01-2022-0008

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