

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

in Lithuania



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Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania

Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training

The preparation of this publication has been co-financed
by the European Community



General information about the Republic of Lithuania

Population (as at 1.1.2009): 3,349,900

Lithuanians as a percentage of the total population: 84%

Population per km²: 51.3

Total area: 65,300 km²

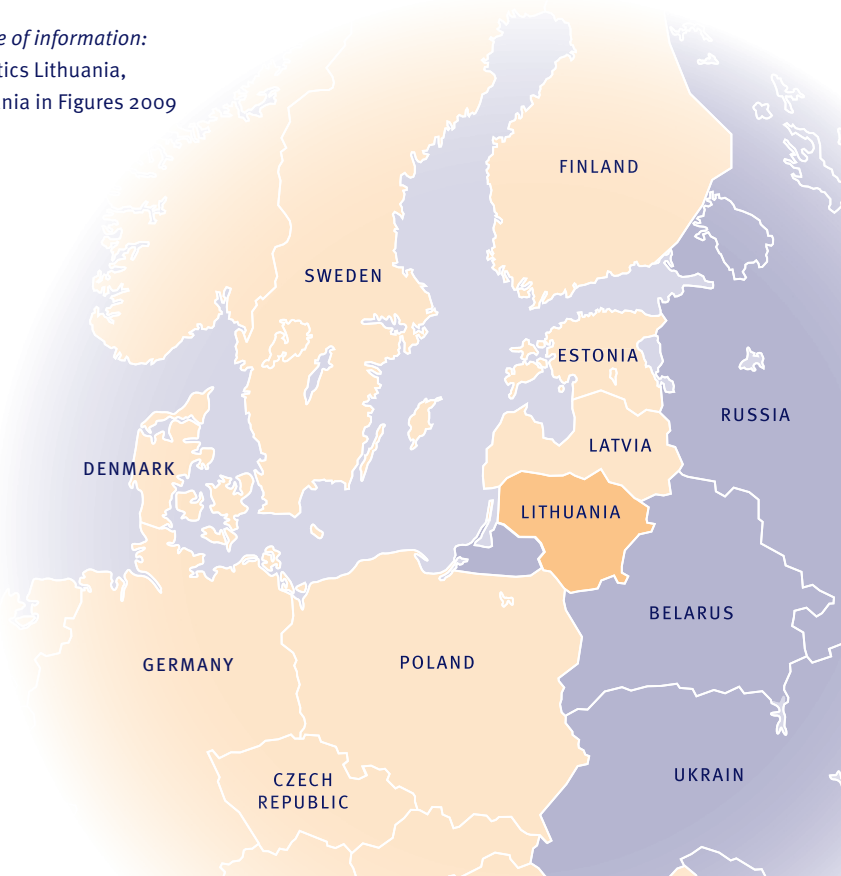
Capital (population): Vilnius (546,700)

Urban population: 66.9 %

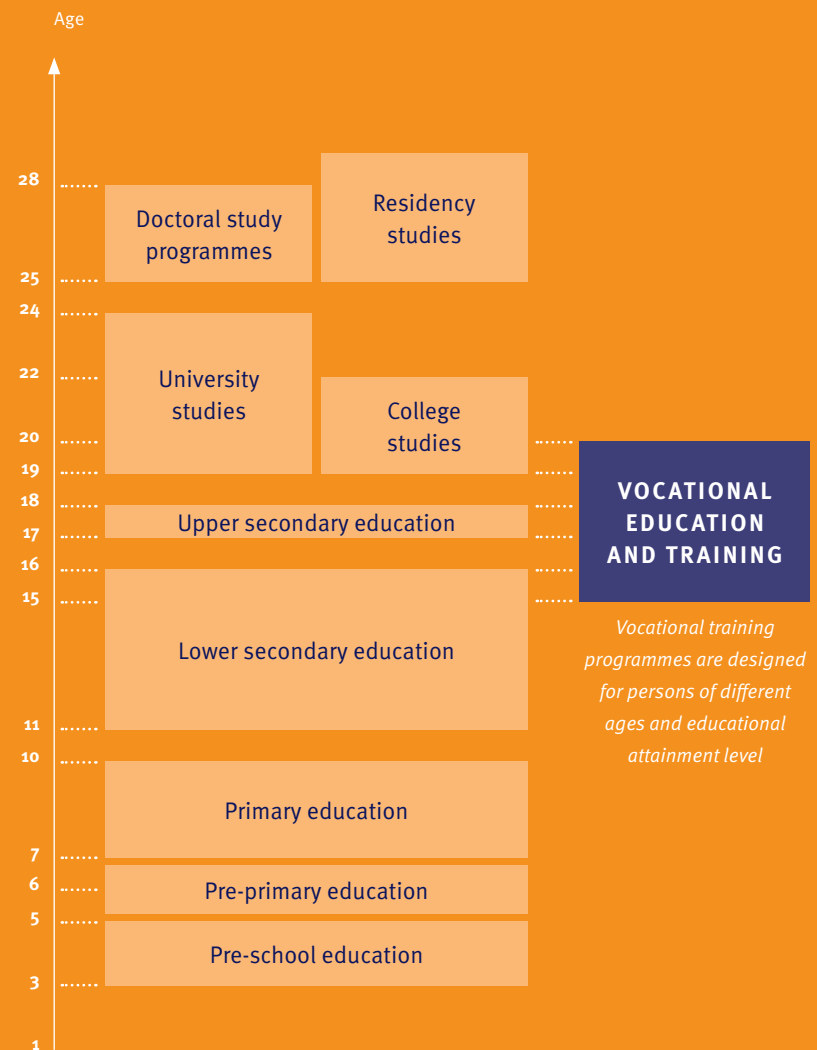
State language: Lithuanian

National currency: litas (LTL)

Source of information:
Statistics Lithuania,
Lithuania in Figures 2009



The Education System in Lithuania



Definitions

Pre-vocational education (*ikiprofesinis mokymas*): training-practical activity, helping trainees to raise their learning motivation, to understand the meaning of work, to get acquainted with current occupations, developing key competencies and providing knowledge on how to acquire a profession. (*Description of Procedure for Pre-Vocational Training, 2007*)

Vocational education and training (*profesinis mokymas*): education and training carried out according to vocational training programmes, helping a person to acquire and improve a qualification. (*Law on the Amendment of the Law on Vocational Education and Training, 2007*)

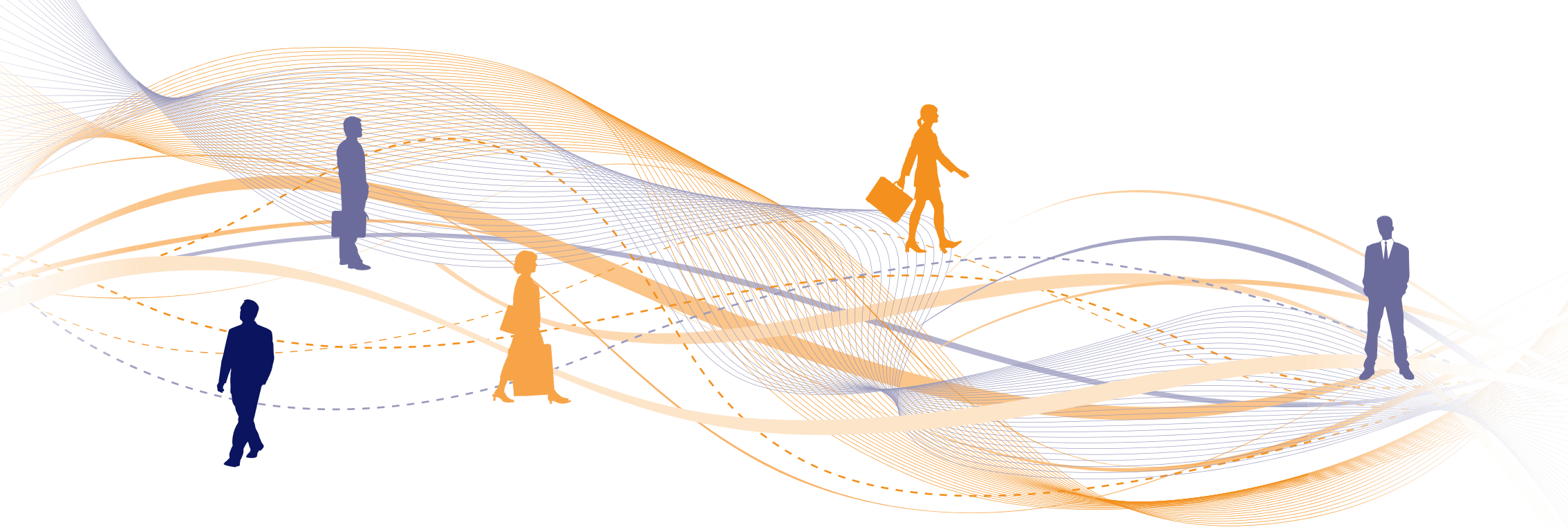
Initial vocational education and training (*pirminis profesinis mokymas*): vocational education and training intended for the acquisition of a first qualification. (*Law on the Amendment of the Law on Vocational Education and Training, 2007*)

Continuing vocational education and training (*tęstinis profesinis mokymas*): vocational training intended for upgrading a qualification or for the acquisition of another one. (*Law on the Amendment of the Law on Vocational Education and Training, 2007*)

Qualification (*kvalifikacija*): the ability and right to engage in a certain professional activity, as recognised according to a procedure prescribed by law or in legislation passed by the Government or an authorised institution. (*Law on the Amendment of the Law on Education, 2003*)

Skill (*gebėjimas*): an appropriate aptitude and/or ability to perform actions of a certain intellectual and/or physical nature in a specific area of activity developed as a result of learning. (*Laužackas, R. Profesinio rengimo terminų aiškinamasis žodynas. Terminology of Vocational Education and Training, 2005*)

Competency (*kompetencija*): the ability to perform a certain activity on the basis of the entirety of acquired knowledge, skills, abilities and values. (*Law on the Amendment of the Law on Education, 2003*)



VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING in Lithuania

WHAT do we have?

- system** The vocational education and training (VET) system comprises initial and continuing VET and vocational guidance and counselling. Responsibility for the development of the system lies with the Ministry of Education and Science.
- legal basis** Education legislation, including VET, is developed following European Union VET policy provisions and principles, as well as national priorities. The key laws regulating VET are as follows: the Law on Education, the Law on Vocational Education and Training, the Law on Science and Study, the Law on Non-formal Adult Education, and the Law on Support for Employment. They regulate the general principles of VET with further details set out in secondary legislation. This framework of legal regulation enables the authorities to react more quickly and flexibly to the changing needs of society when updating the education and training system.
- providers** In Lithuania, a VET provider may be any school, enterprise or other provider that is entitled to implement VET programmes. The main VET providers are vocational schools (*profesinės mokyklos*), which implement both initial and continuing VET. At the start of the 2009–2010 school year, there were 78

vocational schools. Initial VET is mainly funded from the State budget, and provided to students over 14 years of age. Continuing training is usually funded by enterprises, the Employment Fund or other funds, or the learner.

Vocational guidance covers both vocational information and vocational counselling. In 2004, the Open Information, Counselling and Guidance System (*Atvira informavimo, konsultavimo, orientavimo sistema*, AIKOS: <http://www.aikos.smm.lt>), explaining learning opportunities in Lithuania, was started. Users of AIKOS (students, employees, and others) may find learning and personal professional career-related information on occupations, qualifications, study and training programmes, education and training institutions, admission rules, training licences, Europass certificate supplements, training and employment statistics, etc. Portal information is updated each day. In seeking to ensure the accessibility of vocational information services across all of Lithuania, a network of Vocational Information Points (VIPs, *profesinio informavimo taškai*) has been established by the Ministry of Education and Science. At the moment, there are around 700 VIPs in general education and vocational schools, libraries and labour exchanges.

guidance
and counselling



learning opportunities

Vocational training programmes are designed for persons of different ages and educational attainment level. They are developed in accordance with the relevant VET standards. Practical training comprises 60% to 70% of the total time allocated to teaching vocational subjects, and is usually carried out in school-based workshops and companies. Parallel with a vocational qualification, students are provided with opportunities to acquire a lower or an upper secondary education. In the case of the latter, they may continue their studies in Lithuanian institutions of higher education on university or college study programmes. The most successful graduates, or those with work experience in the field of the acquired qualification, are awarded additional entrance points when applying to higher education. This increases their opportunities for receiving state funding for their studies.

WHAT'S next?

The target of VET development is to make VET an equal part of the lifelong learning system. Future priority actions are related to the development of the qualifications system, the reform of VET curricula (the implementation of modular training), the updating of resources for practical training (the establishment of sectoral practical training centres), the improvement of VET quality and attractiveness, and the decentralisation of the management of state-run VET institutions by the reorganisation of state institutions as self-governing ones.

interesting

Did you know that ... ?

- *with the aim of ensuring the uniform assessment of VET graduates' readiness for practical activity, the function of the final qualification assessment is delegated to social partners. The separation of the assessment from the training creates good preconditions for the validation of learning outcomes acquired outside formal education;*
- *the Vocational Education and Training Council (Profesinio mokymo taryba) functions as an advisory body in making decisions regarding strategic questions in VET on a national level. It comprises in equal proportions members representing state and municipal institutions, members representing employer and business organisations, and members representing employee organisations. On a regional level, county councils play an advisory role;*
- *the AIKOS portal is available in a special version for the disabled.*



NETWORK of providers

HOW has it changed?

colleges,
regional centres

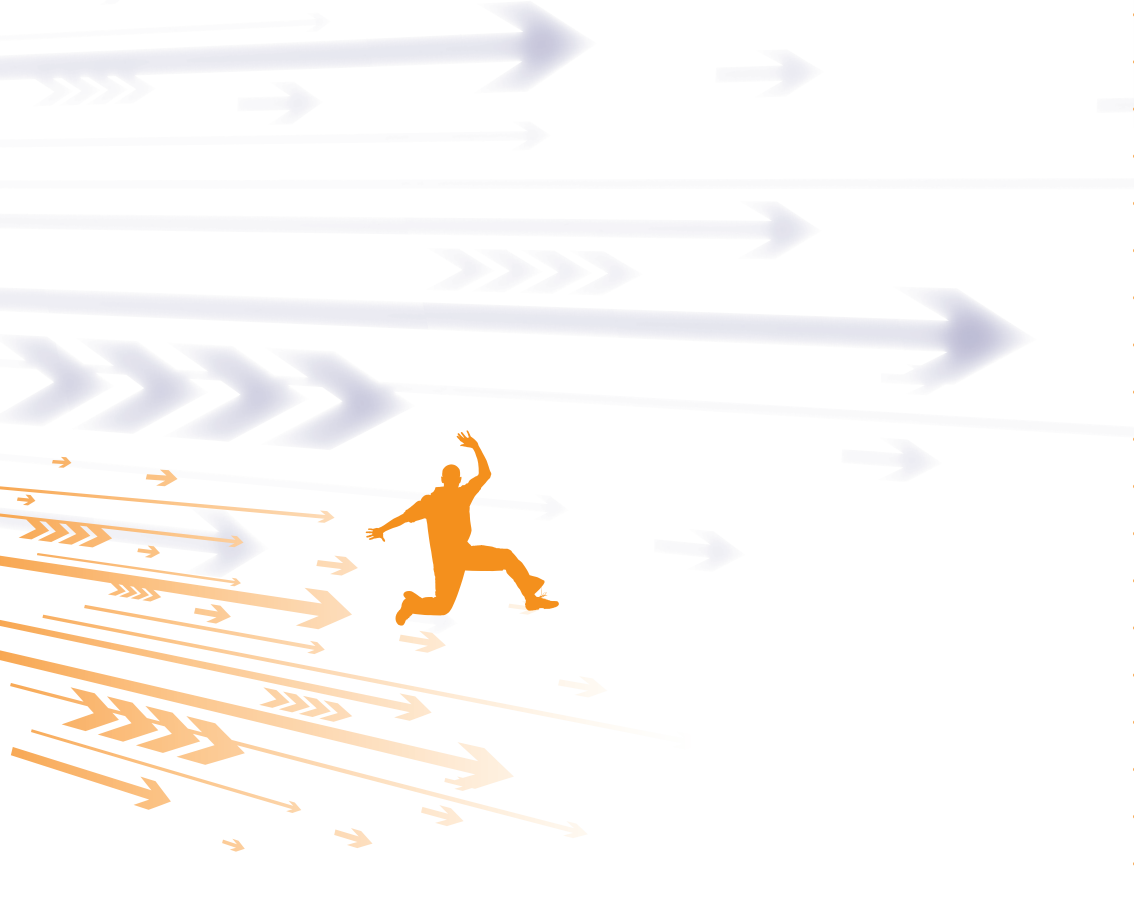
The main features of the reform of the VET providers network, which was started in 2000, are the establishment and development of higher education institutions providing college studies, and the establishment and development of multi-functional regional vocational training centres through mergers of vocational schools in the corresponding regions. The formation of the college network was completed in 2004.

technological
gymnasiums

In order to bring general education and VET closer, since 2000 technological gymnasiums have been set up at vocational schools. They provide upper secondary and pre-vocational education. Graduates are awarded a matura certificate. Then they can choose either to stay in a VET institution and continue their training according to VET programmes, or to enter higher education.

In 2003, the decentralisation of VET management started through a change of status of state-run vocational schools to self-governing institutions. This change enables different stakeholders (enterprises, social partners, regional and municipal government, etc) to participate in the management and funding of VET providers. The new status also increases their financial independence.

self-governing
institutions



WHAT'S next?

The reform of the VET providers network aims at the optimal and efficient use of training funds and resources and at improving VET quality and attractiveness. One of the priorities of the reform is to further optimise the network of VET providers, with the aim of making VET administration more effective. In addition, the establishment of the sectoral practical training centres (SPTC) framework is of particular importance. The main aim of the SPTC is to assure that learners, using the latest technologies and equipment, gain practical skills matching the needs of the labour market. These centres are open to students from VET, higher education institutions, employees from sector enterprises, vocational teachers and others.

interesting

Did you know that ... ?

- ▶ *the main administrative body in a self-governing institution is the general meeting of shareholders, with each shareholder having a single vote. Thus, the municipality, social partners and other stakeholders, being equal partners, gain the right to take part in administering the institution alongside its founder (the Ministry of Education and Science). This enables them to respond effectively to the needs of a particular region, as well as to the changing requirements for the qualification of graduates;*
- ▶ *the status of a self-governing institution changes essentially the approach of an enterprise towards the VET institution, because the material and the other values transferred to a VET institution are considered to remain the capital of the enterprise. The enterprise further manages its capital as an investment in the training of its future workers. This gives a VET institution the chance to make use of the company's equipment and its specialists' experience;*
- ▶ *the establishment of colleges has enabled an improvement in the correspondence of higher education studies to the needs of the economy, and has helped to shape the private sector in higher education. First, college study programmes are competence-based. Second, almost half of Lithuanian colleges are non-public, and around 30% of all students at college level study in them.*



Vocational education and training CURRICULA

WHAT do we have?

correspondence
of VET to the needs
of the economy

VET curricula in Lithuania are competence-based, with clearly defined training objectives. Seeking a close correspondence between VET and the needs of the economy, a particular emphasis is put on the identification of skill needs. Skill needs are evaluated by performing sectoral studies, and by making labour market forecasts, as well as in the course of developing VET standards.

VET programmes are developed by VET providers, in cooperation with representatives of employers. When developing programmes, providers follow VET standards and the general requirements approved by the Minister of Education and Science.

The training programme comprises two parts: the standardised part, common to the entire country, which defines the areas of professional activity, competencies, training objectives and provisions for the assessment of competences (the standardised part of the programme is automatically transferred from the relevant VET standard); and the optional part, covering teaching methods, subject programmes, training facilities, etc. Practical training should comprise 60% to 70% of the total time allocated to teaching vocational subjects. The programme should contain entrepreneurship and civil security modules. Environmental issues, ICT and foreign languages should either be integrated into the professional subjects, or developed as separate modules.

training
programmes



WHAT's next?

The reform of the VET curriculum aims at assuring the timely adjustment of training to the changing needs of the economy, creating favourable conditions for the validation of knowledge and skills acquired in various environments (learning according to formal and non-formal programmes, by work experience or informal learning), and improving mobility between individual training programmes and education sectors. Priority actions include the development of modular training programmes and the credit system, the design of teaching materials, and the improvement of the subject-related competencies of teachers.

interesting

Did you know that ... ?

- *Industrial Lead Bodies (Ūkio šakų ekspertų grupės, 14 in total), equally representing employers, trade unions and education providers, are the main consultative bodies of the Ministry of Education and Science on the sectoral level in developing VET standards and VET curricula;*
- *a newly drafted VET programme is subject for approval by the competent employer organisation (e.g. the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts). Next, experts (vocational teachers, employers) evaluate the quality of the programme, and, in the case of positive assessment, the programme is entered on the Register of Study and Training Programmes. A VET provider is entitled to implement a registered training programme if his resources are sufficient for implementation;*
- *in order to react to innovations in the economy and to reflect better local needs, VET institutions have the right to independently change the content by up to 10%. Additionally, specialisation subjects may comprise 10% to 15% of the total time allocated to teaching vocational subjects;*
- *approximately one third of VET institutions provide training programmes targeted at the disabled.*

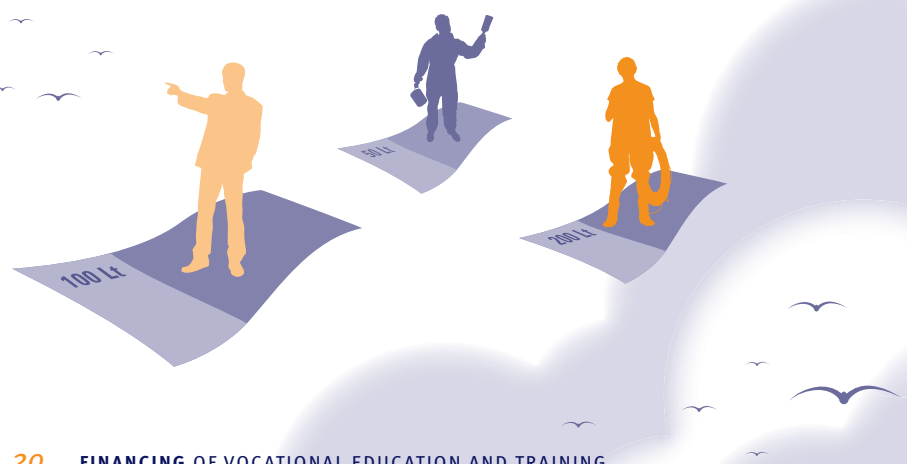
FINANCING of vocational education and training

WHAT do we have?

sources of funding The Law on Vocational Education and Training specifies that VET is funded from central and local government budgets, the Employment Fund, social partners and other legal sources.

funding of IVET IVET is funded from the State budget in accordance with a methodology for calculating training costs for each student. The unit costs (the so-called “pupil’s basket”) include allocations for staff salaries and social insurance, the in-service training of teachers and funding for the acquisition of professional and technical literature, and manuals and other learning materials. The funding for the maintenance of training facilities is also allocated in accordance with this methodology. Additionally, VET providers, under the approved Government investment, may receive funding from the State budget for the development and construction of training facilities, etc. VET providers (whose main activity is vocational training) may receive income from physical and legal entities for services provided (e.g. training courses, rent of premises). This income should be used for educational and training purposes.

funding of CVET Continuing training is usually funded by enterprises, the Employment Fund or other funds, or the learner. According to national legislation, in certain cases training can be sponsored by the State. For instance, a number of ministries and other public organisations receive funds from the State budget for the implementation of qualification development programmes for employees in their sector (for example, the training of social workers, lawyers, defence personnel, healthcare specialists, and others).



interesting

Did you know that ... ?

- *cost-sharing mechanisms and regulatory instruments for VET financing in Lithuania include tax incentives, grant schemes, payback clauses, and paid and unpaid training leave;*
- *the Law on Corporate Income Tax stipulates that some staff training costs can be deducted from the calculated amount of corporate income tax. The Law on Personal Income Tax stipulates that some costs associated with vocational training or higher education studies which lead to a first higher education degree and (or) qualification can be deducted from taxable income;*
- *the Labour Code provides general conditions for an employer to claim compensation from employees for the costs for training over the previous year if they leave the job earlier than the predetermined period.*

Vocational education and training: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

WHAT has been achieved?

know how Cooperation with other countries has encouraged and initiated a number of VET developments. For example, a VET standards concept was designed following the experience of Germany, and a methodology for sectoral studies was developed in cooperation with Irish experts.

international networks Participation in international networks ensures the relevant implementation in Lithuania of European Union initiatives, such as the creation of a qualifications framework for lifelong learning, the establishment of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training, VET quality assurance, and others. This is an opportunity to compare VET in different countries, and to share good practice in specific areas.



interesting

Did you know that ... ?

- *In 2005 a declaration of intent was signed between Quebec's Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sports (le Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport) and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. The ministries expressed their interest in exchanging experience in areas such as the development of VET standards and programmes, VET quality assurance, the organisation of training, etc. It was also agreed to support the exchange of students, teachers and management staff, and to promote cooperation among training institutions in training programmes, pedagogical, scientific and technical research, and learning materials;*
- *ReferNet is a network of reference and expertise established by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) to satisfy the growing demand for comparable information across Europe in VET. ReferNet involves national networks established in each EU member state. ReferNet Lithuania started its activities in 2003, and currently includes over 20 organisations, representing employers, employees, training providers, state institutions, etc. The purpose of the partnership is the promotion of the development of vocational education and training, and of human resources, on the basis of informed decisions;*
- *According to information from the Education Exchanges Support Foundation (Švietimo mainų paramos fondas, the national agency responsible for implementing the EU Lifelong Learning Programme), each year more than 1,000 VET students and specialists participate in Leonardo da Vinci mobility projects.*

SOME INTERESTING STATISTICS

Key macroeconomic and employment indicators, 2008

Indicator	LT	EU-27	
Gross domestic product per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS)	15 400	25 100	😞
Employment rate, %	64.3	65.9	😞
Unemployment rate, %	5.8	7.0	😞
Youth unemployment rate, %	13.4	15.4	😞
Long term unemployment rate, %	1.2	2.6	😞
Activity rate, %	68.4	70.9	😞

Sources:

Employment in Europe 2009. European Commission;

Eurostat database: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/>

Educational attainment levels and employment rates of population (25–64), 2008

Lithuania has one of the highest percentages in Europe of its population aged 25–64 having completed at least upper-secondary education



Educational Level	Total, %		Employment rate, %	
	LT	EU-27	LT	EU-27
Tertiary education (ISCED 5–6)	30.4	24.2	87.7	83.9
Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 3–4)	60.1	47.1	68.1	70.6
Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education (ISCED 0–2)	9.5	28.5	20.7	48.1

Source:

Eurostat database: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/>

Participation in lifelong learning

Indicator	Year	LT, %	EU-27 %	
Pupils in upper secondary education enrolled in vocational education and training stream ¹	2007	26.4	51.5	😞
Students in tertiary education (ISCED 5–6) ²	2007	23.6	17.6	😞
Adult participation in education and training ³	2008	4.9	9.5	😞
Training enterprises as % of all enterprises	2005	46	60	😞
Youth educational attainment level – percentage of population having completed at least upper secondary education	2008	89.1	78.5	😞
Early school leavers – population aged 18–24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education and training	2008	7.4	14.9	😞

1. Students in upper secondary vocational education and training compared to all students at upper secondary level
2. Students in tertiary education compared to all pupils and students
3. Percentage of the population aged 25–64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey

Source:

Eurostat database: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/>

