



Youth Wiki national description

Youth policies in Lithuania

2021

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Lithuania

Youth Policy in Lithuania

Youth policy in Lithuanian legal acts is defined as a purposeful activity intended to resolve youth problems and to seek to create favourable conditions for the formation of the personality of a young person and his integration into public life, as well as an activity which has the purpose of achieving understanding and tolerance of society and individual groups thereof towards young people. Youth policy in Lithuania is understood as the entirety of systems and measures, aspiring after the most favorable terms for personal maturity of a young person and successful integration into society. It is generally accepted to refer to structures of assistance (fields of socialization), subsidiary adding to the effort of a person and, especially, of a family, and helping to prepare a young person for independent life. These structures can be divided into informal (friends, contemporaries), non-formal (communities, non-governmental organizations, youth activity system), formal (schools, universities), and commercial (telecommunications, banks, recreation and entertainment industry). Youth policy in Lithuania is developed in two directions. First, ensuring the interests of youth in individual fields of public policy – education and science, culture, sports, work and employment, housing, health care and well-being, participation, etc. Second, youth activities aimed at enabling young people to learn from experience and experiment (voluntariness, independence, autonomy). The youth policy is shaped by the Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labour; in the field of social security and labour, it is implemented by the Department of Youth Affairs, municipal authorities, other establishments and institutions in cooperation with non-governmental sector. In 2015, young people in Lithuania accounted for nearly 20 percent of the country's population. The number of young people as well as residents in other population groups is dropping as emigration of young people has been significantly speeding up the ageing of population. Thus, the policy emphasizes that the youth of Lithuania is one of the most important factors contributing to the future stability of the country. Youth policy is developed in multi-year programmes. The National Youth Policy Development Programme covered the period 2011 to 2019. The current [National youth policy action plan for 2022](#) sets out the objectives, tasks, measures, qualitative and quantitative evaluation criteria for the implementation of the national youth policy in the field of youth policy for 2022 including measures addressing Covid-19 pandemic.

1. YOUTH POLICY GOVERNANCE

The concept of Lithuanian national youth policy could hardly be understood without a broader historic context and appreciation of the time of changes that happened after the country regained independence from the Soviet Union in 1990. Due to the dramatic changes in the Lithuanian society after it regained independence, Lithuanian youth policy has to be shaped almost from scratch due to the changes in social and economic structure of the Lithuanian society, shift from planned towards the market economy, building of the nation state and establishing youth policy including the institutions which support it. Taking this into account it can be stated that youth policy in Lithuania is successfully developed.

In accordance with Article 4 of the [Law on Youth Policy Framework of the Republic of Lithuania](#), youth policy means a purposeful activity intended to resolve youth problems and to seek to create favorable conditions for the formation of a young person and his integration into public life, as well as an activity, which has the purpose of achieving understanding and tolerance of society and individual groups thereof towards young people.

[2022 National Youth Policy Action Plan](#) aims to strengthen the implementation of national youth policies in order to ensure inter-agency cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors, and to create the infrastructure needed to implement a coherent, factual and knowledge-based youth policy.

The plan sets these objectives:

Purpose, objectives, means	2022 estimated funds (thousand euros)	Responsible institutions
<p>Objective 1 To ensure the development of a social security system that meets the various needs of young people</p>		

The task is to ensure better employment opportunities for young people - to promote economic and social entrepreneurship of young people, to create favorable conditions for young people to actively participate in the labor market

<p>Implement the youth voluntary service, the organization of which is regulated in the Description of the Procedure for the Organization of the Youth Voluntary Service approved by the Minister of Social Security and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania in 2018. June 22 by order no. A1-317 "On the Approval of the Description of the Procedure for the Organization of Youth Voluntary Service"</p>	-	<p>Department of Youth Affairs</p>
<p>Implement summer employment and labor market integration programs in municipalities</p>	150	<p>Department of Youth Affairs, Department of Social Services Supervision</p>

Objective 2
To develop a conscious, civic, patriotic, mature, cultural and creative personality of a young person who is able to be an active part of a diverse society

The task is to encourage young people to take an active part in public life and to develop their civic competences

<p>Select and fund, through a call for proposals, projects promoting innovation in the implementation of youth policy with a view to developing new forms of involving young people in civic life</p>	107	<p>Department of Youth Affairs, Department of Social Services Supervision</p>
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Objective 3

To develop and coordinate the system of youth work and to ensure the development of youth employment infrastructure

The task is to develop the existing and create new spaces favorable for the employment and education of young people - to provide more opportunities for young people experiencing social exclusion, to promote rich, active, high-quality education of young people in their free time

Select and fund organizations using at least one form of youth work through a call for proposals	1 303	Department of Youth Affairs, Department of Social Services Supervision
To ensure the development of youth work in Lithuania (methodological support to organizations performing or planning to work with youth and their employees)	25	Department of Youth Affairs

Objective 4

To facilitate the consistent and high-quality activities of young people and organizations working with young people in order to increase the involvement of young people in organized activities

The task is to provide the necessary support to youth and youth organizations - to improve their organizational capacity, maintain their distinctiveness and coherence

To select and fund projects for the membership of young people in youth organizations and organizations uniting other youth organizations and youth initiatives through a competition	528	Department of Youth Affairs, Department of Social Services Supervision
To select and fund organizations organizing voluntary activities, to provide them with methodological assistance, to organize the implementation of the model of youth voluntary service in order to involve young people in voluntary activities	26	Department of Youth Affairs
	164	Department of Social Services Supervision
Coordinate the activities of international protocols, projects, foundations, implement measures for	156	Department of Youth Affairs, Department of Social Services Supervision

awarding scholarships to young Lithuanians living abroad, organize and implement international events

Objective 5

To ensure cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors in developing coherent, evidence-based and knowledge-based youth policies

The challenge is to ensure consistent monitoring of the situation of young people and to develop evidence-based and knowledge-based youth policies.

To ensure consistent high-quality activities of the European Union youth information program Eurodesk in Lithuania	16	Department of Youth Affairs
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Ensure the implementation of evidence-based and knowledge-based youth policies	25	Department of Youth Affairs
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The task is to develop cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors at the local, national and international levels.

Contribute to the development of development programs and other strategic documents in the field of youth policy	-	Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Social Security and Labor
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To ensure the plan for the celebration of the Lithuanian Youth Year in 2022, approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania in 2021. December 1 by resolution no. 1030 "On the Approval of the Plan for the Commemoration of the Lithuanian Year of Youth in 2022", implementation of measures	69	Department of Youth Affairs
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The challenge is to strengthen youth policy at international and regional level

Implement measures to strengthen youth policy at regional level (events for municipal youth coordinators, visits to municipalities, etc.)	100	Department of Youth Affairs, Department of Social Services Supervision
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Ensure implementation of measures to mark the European Year of Youth 2022	-	Department of Youth Affairs
To transfer Lithuania's experience in the field of youth affairs to the European Union's Eastern Partnership and other developing countries	7	Department of Youth Affairs
(Activities of the Lithuanian-Ukrainian Youth Exchange Fund)	93	Department of Social Services Supervision
To support the activities of foreign Lithuanian youth organizations aimed at fostering Lithuanianness, community spirit, cooperation between Lithuanians living in Lithuania and abroad, and to establish the concept of global Lithuania in the field of social security and labor	1	Department of Youth Affairs
	46	Department of Social Services Supervision

Youth policy is developed in multi-year programmes. The **2021 [The National Youth Policy Action Plan for 2021](#)** aimed to identify measures to strengthen the implementation of youth policy at the national level, ensuring interdepartmental cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors. The measures shall be implemented in order to:

- to ensure the development of the social security system that meets the various needs of young people
- to develop a conscious, civic, patriotic, mature, cultural and creative personality of a young person who is able to be an active part of a diverse society
- develop and coordinate the youth work system and ensure the development of youth employment infrastructure
- to facilitate the consistent and high-quality activities of young people and organizations working with young people in order to increase the involvement of young people in organized activities
- ensure cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors in developing coherent, factual and knowledge-based youth policies

An [action plan for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee initiative](#) is also being implemented, with the following objectives: identification of inactive young people, prevention of inactivity, implementation of initial intervention through early intervention and activation measures, and increased integration of young people into the labor market.

1.1 Target population of youth policy

The lower and higher age limits of the young population are specified in the [Law on Youth Policy Framework](#). A young person is a person between the ages of 14 and 29 (Article 2).

No sub-groups within the main youth age group are established in relation to specific policy measures.

1.2 National youth law

Existence of a National Youth Law

The [Law on Youth Policy Framework](#) was approved in 2003 (with amendments in 2005 and 2018). It is a national law establishing the principles of the implementation youth policy.

Scope and contents

The [Law on Youth Policy Framework](#) establishes principles of the implementation of youth policy, fields of the implementation of youth policy, organization and management of the implementation of youth policy. It also establishes the terms of youth organizations as well as youth organization councils. It names responsible institutions at the national level (State Council of Youth Affairs) and local level. The law establishes the role of municipal coordinators of youth affairs, councils of youth affairs and councils of youth organizations. Seeking to ensure interagency and cross-sectorial cooperation in the sphere of youth policy, the State Council of Youth Affairs was established on the basis of equal partnership while creating the youth policy structure in Lithuania. The State Council of Youth Affairs is a collegial advisory institution, functioning under [the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#). In designing the [Law on Youth Policy Framework](#) young people and their representatives have been consulted by the responsible public authorities. These consultations with young people concerning its implementation and revisions happen systematically.

Youth policy is a purposeful activity that addresses the problems of young people and aims to create favorable conditions for the formation of a young person's personality and his / her integration into the life of society.

The foundations of the current youth policy are enshrined in the 2003 Law on the Framework of Youth Policy. It sets out the main concepts of youth policy, defines youth policy areas and sets out the principles for implementing this policy.

Youth policy in Lithuania is implemented in accordance with the following principles:

- **parity and subsidiarity** , which means that state and municipal institutions and bodies and youth organizations are equally represented and decisions are taken at the level where they are most effective;
- **participation and information** - this means that state and municipal institutions and bodies inform young people about issues relevant to them in a form that is acceptable and accessible to them, and youth-related issues are addressed with the participation of young people;
- **self-government, autonomy and volunteering** - this means that young people voluntarily choose the field of activity, formulate its goals, actively participate in it and are responsible for the fulfillment of the goals; determine the methods, form, responsibility and evaluation of the implementation of the operational objectives;
- **interdepartmental coordination, communication and co-operation** means that state and municipal institutions and bodies communicate and co-operate with each other in resolving issues related to youth, and Lithuanian youth organizations interact and co-operate with Lithuanian and foreign youth organizations and other natural and legal persons.

The task of coordination of youth policy is assigned to the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#). This ministry performs control and supervision of the implementation of the Law on Youth Policy Framework. The task of implementation of youth policy is assigned to the [Department of Youth Affairs](#).

Revisions/updates

[The Law on Youth Policy Framework](#) was revised and updated in 2005 and 2018. In 2005 the [amendments](#) to the [Law on Youth Policy Framework](#) were adopted providing for the reformation of the State Council of Youth Affairs to the [Department of Youth Affairs](#) under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor and formation of the [Council of Youth Affairs](#) to perform the advisory function. The [Law on Local Self-Government of the Republic of Lithuania](#) establishing that the protection of rights of children and youth has become the function of the state handed over to municipalities. This had a great effect on the development of municipal youth policy. It meant that since 2003 all municipalities had to establish the positions of coordinators of youth affairs, funded from the state budget. Main functions were provided for the coordinators of youth affairs – to assist the municipal institutions to frame and implement the municipal youth policy. In 2018 the [amendments](#) aim at improving the legal regulation of youth policy, ensuring its systematic implementation in Lithuania. The participation of young people in youth work and youth work organizations is also encouraged, thus increasing their involvement in society. The new version of the Law on the Framework of Youth Policy brought more clarity in work with young people and its forms. The requirements for the activities of open youth centers and spaces were established, and their goals were envisaged. The current law regulates the environment that is needed to ensure the proper formulation and implementation of youth policy. This was necessary in order to improve the quality of work with youth.

1.3 National youth strategy

Existence of a National Youth Strategy

The chapter on youth policy was for the first time incorporated as a separate part in the [Program of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania for 2004-2008](#). The provisions of this program aimed to encourage the cohesion of youth organizations, engage youth participation in the civil society as well as improve policies in the areas of youth education, employment, housing, leisure and culture, social and health services, sports, crime prevention and youth local self-government. Program of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania for 2008-2012 and [Program of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania 2012-2016](#) also had chapters on youth policy. In order to implement the provisions and measures, provided in these programs in December 2010 the Government of Lithuania approved the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) which established the main strategic goals of the national youth policy. The [Program of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania 2020](#) stresses youth participation, youth entrepreneurship and employment possibilities, regional development, and youth participation in culture and sports.

2021 [The National Youth Policy Action Plan for 2021 is being implemented](#), the aim of which is to identify measures to strengthen the implementation of youth policy at the national level, ensuring interdepartmental cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors.

An [action plan for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee initiative](#) is also being implemented, with the following objectives: identification of inactive young people, prevention of inactivity, implementation of initial intervention through early intervention and activation measures, and increased integration of young people into the labor market.

Scope and contents

The measures shall be implemented of [The National Youth Policy Action Plan for 2021](#):

- to ensure the development of the social security system that meets the various needs of young people

- to develop a conscious, civic, patriotic, mature, cultural and creative personality of a young person who is able to be an active part of a diverse society
- develop and coordinate the youth work system and ensure the development of youth employment infrastructure
- to facilitate the consistent and high-quality activities of young people and organizations working with young people in order to increase the involvement of young people in organized activities
- ensure cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors in developing coherent, factual and knowledge-based youth policies

Related national measures:

1. [Government Resolution on the Approval of the Development Program for the Reduction of Income Inequality](#)
2. [2021-2030 Development Program for the Reduction of Income Inequality - Measures](#)
3. [Government Resolution on the Approval of the Development Program for the Development of a Suitable Environment for All People with Disabilities](#)
4. [2021-2030 Program for the Development of a Disability-Friendly Environment in All Areas of Life - Analysis](#)
5. [2021-2030 Program for the Development of a Accessible Environment for All in All Ways of Living](#)
6. [Government Resolution on the Approval of the Inclusive Labor Market Development Program](#)
7. [2021-2030 Inclusive Labor Market Development Program \(measures \)](#)
8. [Government Resolution on the Approval of the Development Program for the Strengthening of Family Policy](#)
9. [2021-2030 Family Policy Strengthening Development Program - Analysis](#)
10. [2021-2030 Family Policy Strengthening Development Program - Measures](#)
11. [Government Resolution on the Approval of the Social Inclusion Development Program](#)
12. [2021-2030 Social Inclusion Development Program - Analysis](#)
13. [2021-2030 Social Inclusion Development Program - Measures](#)

Previously the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) was integrated in the overall national development policy. The [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#), established the main strategic goals of the national youth policy. This Program prioritised the improvement of the social inclusion of young people, with particular emphasis on young people not in employment, education and training (NEETs), the promotion of cross-sectorial cooperation as the underlying principle of integral youth policy, the exchange of good practices on social inclusion of young people and the promotion of the cooperation in the youth policy field between young people from European Union and Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries. The goals of ensuring better youth employment opportunities, creating favourable conditions for young people to participate in the labour market, promoting economic and social entrepreneurship, developing non-formal education system, encouraging youth creativity and active participation in the society were also established by the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#). Furthermore, the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) is aimed to ensure the development of social security, education and health care systems; develop a conscious, public-spirited, patriotic, mature, cultural and creative young individual, capable of being an active part of a diverse society; develop and coordinate the system of youth work and to ensure the development of youth employment infrastructure; create favourable conditions for consistent and high quality activities of youth organisations and organisations working with youth; and ensure inter-institutional and cross-sectorial cooperation in developing coherent, fact and knowledge-based youth policy.

Responsible authority for the implementation of the Youth Strategy

The [Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania](#) is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the [National youth policy development action plan for 2020](#). Earlier the Ministry had been implementing the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) through [Action Plan for the periods of 2014-2016](#) and Action Plan for the period of 2017-2019. In each of the Action Plan's specific objectives, actions, terms of implementation, budget allocations and responsible institutions for its implementations are indicated.

The [National youth policy development action plan for 2020](#) aims ensure the development of the social security system that meets the various needs of young people, to develop a conscious, civic, patriotic, mature, cultural and creative personality of a young person who is able to be an active part of a diverse society, to develop and coordinate the system of youth work and ensure the development of youth employment infrastructure to facilitate the consistent and high-quality activities of young people and youth organizations in order to increase the involvement of young people in organized activities, and to ensure cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors by developing a coherent, evidence-based and knowledge-based youth policy

Responsible institutions for the implementation of the cross-sectorial Action Plan are the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Agriculture, the Drug Control Department under the Government of Lithuania, Lithuanian Labour Exchange, and Council of Youth Affairs. These institutions report to [The Ministry of Social Security and Labor](#) about implementation of the Action Plan every year until February 1.

Revisions/updates

The National Youth Policy Development Program for 2011-2019 underwent a few revisions or updates since its introduction. Firstly, the [2014-2016 Action Plan](#) of the National Youth Policy Program for 2011-2019 development program has been reviewed and more focus given on youth employment and volunteering as well as the development of youth centers and open spaces, regional youth policies and non-formal education. The [2015-2017 Plan for the Regional Youth Policy Strengthening](#) has been approved and implemented. The [National youth policy development action plan for 2020](#) was adopted on March 18, 2020.

1.4 Youth policy decision-making

Structure of Decision-making

The structure of Lithuanian youth policy decision-making is illustrated in this [scheme](#).

The activities of structures of youth policy in Lithuania are governed by the Law on Youth Policy Framework of the Republic of Lithuania. This law establishes the main terms of youth policy and principles of its implementation as well as defines the areas of youth policy. An important part of the Law is related to the establishment of institutions executing and managing youth policy on national and municipal level (see also youth policy decision-making scheme in [Lithuanian Youth Policy: Legislation, Structures, Good Practices](#)).

National Parliament and [Commission for Youth and Sport Affairs](#) controls youth policy implementing institutions. The Commission for Youth and Sport Affairs has the following tasks: 1) to concern about framing and implementing the state youth policy; 2) to concern about framing and implementing the state sports policy. It also concerns about the rights of youth, implementation of the state youth policy, gives suggestions on implementation of objectives and performs parliamentary control, listens to the announcements of ministries and other state institutions (Department of Youth Affairs, Department of Physical Culture and Sports), as well as assesses the information received.

The coordination and implementation of youth policy in Lithuania is delegated to [The Ministry of Social Security and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania](#). It supervises the implementation of the [Law on Youth Policy Framework](#) as well as implementation of youth policy measures adopted by the EU Commission. [The Family and Communities Department](#) of the Ministry has Youth Division with the following functions relevant to youth policy: coordinate the implementation of youth policy, perform national as well as international obligations in the field of youth policy; implement the measures attributed to the division's competence relevant to the youth policy, implemented by the European Union, the European Council; coordinate the implementation of the state (handed over to municipalities) youth rights protection function. The [Department of Youth Affairs](#) under the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) implements the objectives of the state youth policy, supervises the implementation of the [Law on Youth Policy Framework](#). Its main functions are political, executive, and administrative. It acts as a state institution that works out and implements the state youth policy programs and measures, analyses the state of youth and youth organizations in Lithuania, coordinates the activities of the state and municipal institutions in the field of youth policy, as well as performs other activities relevant to youth, youth organizations, and organizations working with youth. The Department of Youth Affairs also implements the objectives of the state youth policy through application of measures to enhance the motivation and possibilities for youth to acquire education, get work, and engage in active social life; takes part in solution of youth related problems; develops non-formal education; as well as controls the socialization processes of youth.

The Law on Youth Policy Framework also governs the framing and implementing of youth policy in municipalities. A permanent municipal council for youth affairs (for the duration of the term of office) or an ad hoc municipal council for youth affairs (for the examination of specific matters) may be set up by a decision of a municipal council. A municipal council for youth affairs is set up on the principle of parity from representatives of municipal institutions and agencies as well as youth organisations. A regional youth council can delegate representatives of youth organisations to a municipal council for youth affairs. Municipal institutions frame and implement a municipal youth policy. Different committees of Municipality Council as well as departments, institutions of Municipality Administration (educational institutions, pedagogical-psychological services, jobcentres, institutions of non-formal education (music and art schools, sports centers, etc.), youth leisure centers, cultural centers, museums, libraries, etc.) frame and implement youth policy in municipalities. Coordinator of youth affairs assists the municipal institutions to frame and implement a municipal youth policy (standard functions are approved by the Order No. A1-68 of the Minister of Social Security and Labour of 4 March 2008). Coordinator of youth affairs serves as a mediator between the politicians of municipality, officers, as well as youth. Coordinators of youth affairs supervise and initiate measures, necessary for performance of youth policy, as well as, where necessary, carry out youth surveys. With the view of due cooperation in the field of youth affairs, they furnish the institutions and persons concerned with information on implementation of youth policy in the municipality, cooperate with the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Department of Youth Affairs, and other institutions, youth organisations, non-formal youth groups, as well as take part in developing cooperation with the municipalities of foreign countries in the field of youth policy

Lithuanian youth organisations have a co-operative approach to the state and the political system. The [Council of Youth Affairs](#) is a collegial advisory institution, functioning under the Department of Youth Affairs on social grounds, constituted on the basis of equal partnership from the representatives, delegated by the state institutions and the Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT). The task of the Council of Youth Affairs is to deal with the fundamental youth policy problems and give suggestions to the Department of Youth Affairs on the implementation of youth policy that meets the needs of youth and youth organizations. The decisions of the Council of Youth Affairs for the Department of Youth Affairs are of advisory nature only. The Council of Youth Affairs includes 12 members: 6

representatives of the state institutions and 6 representatives of youth organizations, who are delegated by the Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT).

The [Lithuanian Youth Council](#) (LiJOT) provides suggestions to governmental institutions which work with problems of youth and youth organizations. LiJOT is the biggest non-governmental, non-profit umbrella structure for Lithuanian national youth organizations and regional unions of youth organizations. LiJOT has 62 members (non-governmental youth organizations) and represents more than 200 000 young people in Lithuania. LiJOT is a full member of the European Youth Forum and is coordinating EURODESK Lithuania.

The main purpose of the [Agency of International Youth Co-operation](#) is to ensure the development of international youth cooperation and successful participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programs for young people (through financial grants for project implementation).

Main Themes

The main policy themes covered by youth policy are identified taking into consideration the policy areas indicated by the EU Youth Strategy and research evidence.

The [National youth policy development action plan for 2020](#) provides for the goals, objectives, measures, qualitative and quantitative evaluation criteria for the implementation of the National Youth Policy.

It has the following objectives: 1.1. Ensuring better employment opportunities for young people - promoting economic and social entrepreneurship, creating favorable conditions for young people to actively participate in the labor market; 2.1. Encourage young people to take an active part in public life and develop their civic competences; 3.1. To develop existing and create new areas favorable for youth employment and education - to provide more opportunities for young people experiencing social exclusion; 3.2. To develop meaningful, active, high-quality youth education in leisure time; 3.3. To form a positive attitude of young people towards family, motherhood, parenthood, childhood and life; 4.1. Provide the necessary support to youth and youth organizations to improve their organizational capacity, maintain their distinctiveness and coherence; 4.2. To encourage Lithuanian youth non-governmental organizations to cooperate more actively with Lithuanian youth of the world, by joint efforts to ensure the preservation and promotion of national identity and culture; 4.3. Improve the legal framework to facilitate the activities of young people and youth organizations; 5.1. To create a structured system of information and counseling for young people in order to increase the understanding of the problems and needs of young people in the whole society; 5.2. To ensure consistent monitoring of the situation of young people, to form evidence-based and knowledge-based youth policy; 5.3. To develop cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors at the local, national and international levels.

The National Agency for Youth

The [Agency of International Youth Co-operation](#) is a public non-profit institution established in February 1999 by The State Council for Youth Affairs (currently Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour) and Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT). The main aim of the agency is to ensure the development of international youth cooperation and successful participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programmes for young people.

Policy monitoring and evaluation

Since 1999 Annual Strategic plans have been introduced and have become an instrument for overall Ministry of Social Security and Labour activity planning, preparation of new legislation, developing strategic approach to policy development and monitoring and evaluation of policies in a systemic way.

1.5 Cross-sectoral approach with other ministries

Mechanisms and actors

The Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania and other ministries are responsible for coordination and implementation of youth policy in Lithuania. The [Department of Youth Affairs](#) within the the Ministry of Social Security and Labour is primarily responsible for youth and/or youth programming and this includes cross-sectorial mechanisms of cooperation. The [Department of Youth Affairs](#) coordinates and organizes committees on monitoring specific policy measures (e.g. Youth Guarantee Committee etc.). Responsible institutions for the implementation of specific youth policy measures are the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Agriculture, the Drug Control Department under the Government of Lithuania, Employment Services, and Council of Youth Affairs. There is no special formal body for cross-sectorial collaboration, however cross-sectorial mechanisms of cooperation include [designated employees](#) within the ministries.

1.6 Evidence-based youth policy

Political Commitment to Evidence-Based Youth Policy

Evidence-based youth policy principles were adopted within the framework of [Recommendations for the organization and evaluation of the activities of municipal youth councils](#) (2019). The main principles of youth council activities that should be followed are:

1. **evidence-based youth policies** - decisions are taken on the basis of available facts and sound knowledge;
2. **transparency and openness** - the youth and the public of the municipality are regularly informed about the activities of the SJRT and its organization, and the discussion of issues relevant to young people.
3. **active involvement** - young people and other stakeholders are involved and actively participate in the discussion, decision-making and implementation of decisions about the programs and measures implemented in the municipality;
4. **active interest** - representatives seconded to the youth councils are interested in the implementation of youth policy, have or seek to gain knowledge and experience in various areas of youth policy implementation;
5. **appropriate representation** - Representatives of the councils represent various fields of activity related to the implementation of youth policy, representatives of youth - various groups of young people, and issues related to youth are always addressed in coordination with young people, representatives of youth organizations;
6. **communication and co-operation** - municipal institutions, establishments and organizations communicate and co-operate with each other in solving youth issues, inter-agency and inter-institutional networking is encouraged;
7. **efficiency and effectiveness** - measures and programs implemented for young people are focused on quality and change;

National Youth Policy Development programme (2011-2019) strives towards inter-institutional and cross-sectoral cooperation in developing a coherent, evidence-and knowledge-based youth policy. All 60 Lithuanian municipalities have prepared long-term (2013 – 2018) strategic documents on youth policy followed by medium-term (2013-2015) action plans and monitoring and control systems for their implementation. These plans include information and data collection: analysis of documents (municipal strategic documents, youth programs / conceptions, researches of youth related issues in municipalities, quality assessments of municipal youth policy, etc.), events (discussions, meetings etc.), analysis of good practice. Plans and action plans also include assessment criteria for each of long-term aims based on data collection and analysis of youth indicators

such as 1) part of young people (14–29 years), participating in the activities offered by open youth centers and spaces (% of overall number of young people in a municipality); 2) official rate of youth unemployment; 3) share of municipality budget allocated for development of recreational infrastructure per young person (1 – 29 years) living in a municipality; 4) share of municipality budget allocated for implementation of youth policy through grants for youth projects per young person (14 – 29 years) living in a municipality; and measures (number of newly established open youth spaces in local neighborhoods, ensuring their even distribution in the area; annually organised youth entrepreneurship contest to support youth business ideas; number of sports grounds, organised and newly equipped; annually organised training for members of the council for youth affairs; numbers of established youth leadership clubs.

Cooperation between policy-making and research

In general, youth activities and activities of Youth organisations in Lithuania are remarkably well documented and presented. Institutionalised and regular cooperation between the ministry responsible for youth and the youth research community is common practice. They present a consistent analysis of the background situation and define the approach of each relevant organisation to it. Each ministry provides reports and all necessary information. The following activities are implemented in order to form and implement evidence and knowledge-based youth policy on national and local levels: youth issues related national research and quality assessment of youth policy implementation on national level and in municipalities, analysis of cross-sectorial cooperation in the field of youth policy. The Department of Youth Affairs performs periodical youth situation research in Lithuania. One of the key objectives of such research is to analyse to what extent youth is distinguished as a part of society as well as perceived as a distinctive social group. The objective is also to find out the problems of youth, activity of youth in society, moral values of young people, as well as general assessment of situation in Lithuania. For more information on evidence based youth policy see [youth situation research](#) section on the Department of Youth Affairs website. With the view of conceptual changes in compiling and systemizing information on youth as well as making timely decisions, to solve youth problems the Department of Youth Affairs cooperates with universities in the field of research on youth. Compilation of information and performance of analyses are annually carried out for the European Commission as to implementation of priorities, raised in the field of the EU youth policy ES (involvement and information of youth, voluntariness, and better knowledge of youth), in Lithuania. The Department of Youth Affairs is engaged in the activities of the European Knowledge Center for Youth Policy (EKCYC). EKCYC is continually furnished with updated information on the national youth policy in cooperation with the state and other institutions, non-governmental youth organizations and other entities working with youth. Youth Affairs Researchers' Network is an informal structure, composed of higher education institutions, private institutions, youth policy makers, non-governmental youth organizations, public authorities responsible for the implementation of youth policy, representatives of other interested youth policy actors. The Youth Affairs Researchers' Network also includes researchers and academics from universities and research institutions. Members of the Youth Affairs Researchers' Network are invited to speak and express their opinions in meetings and conferences, policy evaluations and expert group meetings.

National Statistics and available data sources

[Lithuanian statistics](#) periodically collects statistics of [Youth of Lithuania](#) demographic and social characteristics. [Statistics Lithuania](#) in cooperation with research institutes and universities also publishes thematic publications with official statistics and analysis. [The Statistical Portrait of the Youth in Lithuania between 2005 and 2014](#) contains the main official statistics, such as the number of young people by age and sex, their marriage, divorce, employment, education, standard of living, health, and crime indicators. Detailed information on youth data and research is also provided on the Department of Youth Affairs website where all information on [youth research and available data](#) is published. The Department of Youth Affairs systemises research reports and data available. Their website

section contains links to sources of information on youth research done by various bodies: research institutes, universities, commissioned research by different governmental and non-governmental organizations in Lithuania. The data is available since 2004 and is continuously updated. Department of Youth Affairs regularly commissions [youth situation research](#). Specific data on NEETs is collected quarterly by regional youth coordinators in municipalities and reported to the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#). There also exists specific [youth guarantee implementation monitoring](#) system and data collection framework coordinated by [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#).

Budgetary Allocations supporting research in the youth field

Budgetary allocations by [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) supporting research in the youth field are demand-driven i.e. data is collected by commissioning ad-hoc research addressing specific youth problems. Specific [youth guarantee implementation monitoring](#) system and data collection framework is coordinated by Lithuanian Labour Exchange.

1.7 Funding youth policy

How Youth policy is funded

A special budget is allocated for national youth policy. It is funded from national budget (program 3.2) "Implementation of the youth policy". The program has this strategic objective: "to create favorable family environment and youth activity" i.e. the funding is used to implement international, national and regional youth policy goals of the national youth policy for 2011-2019 development program. Allocations from national budget dotations to municipalities to implement national function "Youth rights protection" were used to fully finance one position of a youth affairs coordinator in each municipality

What is funded?

- Allocations from national budget dotations to municipalities to implement national function "Youth rights protection" in 2015 were 790, in 2016 – 800 thousand euros. This opened up opportunities to fully finance one position of a youth affairs coordinator in each municipality.
- Allocations from national budget (program 3.2) "Implementation of the youth policy" in 2015 were 1124, in 2016 - 1174 thousand euros.

Financial accountability

The laws of the Republic of Lithuania establish mandatory requirements concerning financial records of all state institutions and business entities. State institutions provide mandatory financial accountability reports once a year.

Use of EU Funds

Allocations for additional funding from EU Commission, European Social Fund and others in 2015 were 12121,5 in 2016 – 24869,1 thousand euros.

1.8 Cross-border cooperation

Cooperation with European countries

The Department of Youth Affairs represents Lithuania in the Baltic Sea States-Expert Group on Youth Affairs, meetings of the European Network of Youth Knowledge (EuNYK), working groups of the European Knowledge Center for Youth Policy (EKCYC) and meetings of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ). Based on former cooperation agreements with Georgia and Moldova (2006-2007) Lithuania prepared renewed agreements on youth affairs with both countries. The Eastern Partnership made significant progress in 2014. New Association Agreements were signed with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Both the

Lithuanian and the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU put a focus on strengthening youth cooperation with Eastern Partnership countries. In 2013 and 2015, Eastern Partnership Youth Forums were organised through cooperation between the Presidencies, the Commission and other stakeholders. The participants' recommendations from these forums were brought to the attention of the Eastern Partnership Summits.

International cooperation

The Department of Youth Affairs together leads international cooperation in the field of youth policy. International relations as well as cooperation is maintained and developed with a view to exchange good practice with the institutions of other countries that implement youth policy, thereby contributing to framing of the evidence based youth policy as well as implementation in Lithuania.

Several projects of the Latvia, Lithuania and Belarus Cross Border Cooperation programme within the [European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument](#) (ENPI) promote cross-border professional and vocational opportunities for young people, such as the one on '[Youth Entrepreneurship Encouragement in Kaunas and Minsk regions](#)', whose overall objective is to enhance entrepreneurship, youth cooperation, reduction of unemployment and young people's mobility in the regions concerned.

Lithuania's [Democracy Promotion and Development Cooperation programme](#) is used to foster exchange between young people and policy-makers on issues of global relevance. In Lithuania, the Democracy Promotion and Development Cooperation programme (implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) provides funding for development cooperation projects which are implemented in cooperation with other governmental and non-governmental institutions in Lithuania and partner countries.

1.9 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

A new youth policy strategy is being discussed in work groups. The main actors involved include the [Department of Youth Affairs](#), other policy makers, researchers and other stakeholders.

Ongoing debates

Main issues related to youth policy in Lithuania include developing youth dialogue with municipalities of small towns and villages, developing local initiatives in the rural areas, including job creation schemes, developing the business environment in rural areas and supporting self-employment and small business in rural areas to involve young people. Developing and strengthening youth information centres where young people can be consulted about education, health, social welfare etc. remain main preoccupations of developing youth policy and increasing youth participation.

There is increasing disparity between urban and rural areas in terms of education and employment opportunities and living conditions. This drives young people from rural areas to the major cities (Vilnius, Klaipėda and Kaunas) and abroad.

The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the labor market, had the most negative impact on young people's unemployment rates. The growth in the number of young unemployed persons aged 16–29 in the Lithuanian Employment Service people has been recorded since June 2020. Of particular concern is the growing number of unskilled or under-qualified young people of working age.

2. VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES

Volunteering in Lithuania does not have particularly deep traditions. The concept of volunteering as an activity has been established in Lithuanian society only recently. Although historical experience and the economic situation for volunteering in Lithuania have not created a particularly friendly environment, one can nevertheless notice an increasing number of Lithuanians being interested in and getting involved in volunteering activities. According to [data](#) collected in 2011, 34% of the population stated that they had participated or were currently participating in volunteering activities. Volunteering activities are most developed in the largest cities of Lithuania. Most of the organizations involved in volunteering are in the social work and health care sectors and mostly young people take part in volunteering, students and school pupils being the most active.

2.1 General context

Historical developments

Volunteering in Lithuania does not have particularly deep traditions. The historic and economic situation in Lithuania played an important role in explaining this. Voluntary organizations in Lithuania began to be set up in the 18th century. They were charitable associations, with the aim of preventing poverty and begging. The volunteers in such associations took care of the poor, propagated religious ideas, and encouraged love of the country. In 1919 doctors founded the Lithuanian Red Cross, which provided aid to the injured in war. The Lithuanian Red Cross remains one of the largest organizations in Lithuania with more than 1000 volunteers.

In the interwar years (1918-1939), social care institutions were established thanks to private and state initiatives. During this period voluntary organizations expanded significantly. However, after the loss of independence (1940), the Soviet Union started to restrict volunteer initiatives. "Volunteering" activities became obligatory for all citizens, with obligatory accountability. Compulsory "voluntary" activity contradicted the volunteering idea itself and ruined the foundations of genuine voluntary activity. The strict control of people's lives in the Soviet Union had a great impact on voluntary initiatives. This decreased people's trust in each other.

An understanding of the nature of volunteering activities has also been distorted due to a comparison with volunteering to serving in the army. Since the Lithuanian National Defence Volunteer Forces (army) were set up in 1918, persons serving in this army were called "volunteer soldiers". Part of today's Lithuanian armed forces is comprised of "volunteer soldiers", and one of the meanings of the word "volunteer" in Lithuanian is often understood as a person in military service.

Although historical experience and the economic situation for volunteering in Lithuania have not created a particularly friendly environment, an increasing number of young Lithuanians are interested in and getting involved in volunteering activities. According to data collected in 2011, 34% of the population stated that they had participated or were participating in volunteering activities at some point in their lives.

Volunteering activities in Lithuania are most developed in the largest cities of Lithuania (Vilnius and Kaunas). There is not much information about volunteering in small towns. Most of the organizations involved in volunteering are in the social work and health care sectors. Other sectors include education, environmental protection, sport and culture, animal welfare and civil rights organizations. Voluntary organizations differ significantly from each other by the number of volunteers (from 3 to 1000). For example the Order of Malta has 700 volunteers, with branches in 24 Lithuanian towns. Those active in just one locality have an average of 18 active volunteers. University students and secondary school students are the most active in volunteering. The lowest participation rate is amongst older and unemployed persons.

Main concepts

In 2011 the [Law on Volunteering](#) was adopted. The new law defines the basic principles of voluntary work and the special characteristics for the organization such work, the rights and duties of a volunteer and of the person organising the volunteering, and provisions for volunteers' insurance and reimbursement of expenses. Volunteering activities are not regulated in great detail in order not to restrict them within narrow definitions.

The Law on Volunteering defines voluntary work as: socially useful activities carried out by a volunteer free of charge, under the conditions and procedures agreed between the volunteer and volunteering organizer.

2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering

Governance

The [Order on Description of the Organization of the Youth Voluntary Service](#) which was adopted in 2018 defines the principles of organization of youth volunteering in Lithuania, its implementation organization of their work and financing of volunteering activities.

The volunteering activities are not strictly regulated. The [Law on Volunteering](#) (article 6) provides that the following may be organizers of voluntary work: charity and assistance funds; budgetary institutions; associations; public establishments; religious communities, associations and religious centres; branches and representative offices of international public organizations; embassies; political parties; trade unions; other legal persons whose activities are governed by specific laws that are non-profit seeking and where any surplus obtained cannot be distributed amongst the participants. The governmental authority responsible for implementing the [Law on Volunteering](#) is the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#). According to the [Law on Volunteering](#), volunteer activity organizer and a volunteer are required to sign a written agreement if volunteer work will be pursued 5 or more days in a row. If voluntary work will be pursued for more than 30 days volunteering-related expenses are subject to reimbursement.

Main actors

The main **public actors** in youth volunteering is the [Department of Youth Affairs](#) within the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#). The [Family and Community Department](#) within the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) is responsible for implementation of policy measures in relation to communities and NGOs. The main **non-public actors** in youth volunteering in Lithuania are [The Non-Governmental Organisation Information and Support Centre](#) (NISC) and the European Voluntary Service Association's [Saltes](#). [The Non-Governmental Organisation Information and Support Centre](#) has the strategic goal of the development of volunteer sector, preparation and implementation of legal proposals related to volunteer activities, promoting greater awareness about volunteering. The aim of the European Voluntary Service Association "[Saltes](#)" is to spread ideas of voluntary work and informal education, unite participants of EU program YOUTH European Voluntary Service, support them with information, and promote intercultural cooperation as well as educate sociocultural competences. Information websites such as [Savanoriaujam](#) ('We volunteer'), [Savanorių duomenų bazė "Būk-savanoriu"](#) (volunteers' database 'Be a Volunter'), [Kulturossavanoriai](#) ('Culture volunteers') provide various links and information on volunteering organizations and activities available in Lithuania and abroad.

The [Order on Description of the Organization of the Youth Voluntary Service](#) defines the types and functions of voluntary organizations. The **host organization** is a non-profit legal entity registered in the Republic of Lithuania (an organizer of a voluntary service) that is capable of facilitating the development of volunteers in a personal or professional area and ensuring their support. A volunteer is a young person who performs gratis activities for the benefit of society in the host organization. The **organization providing**

voluntary services (SVO, savanorystės organizacija) is an accredited non-governmental organization operating in the Republic of Lithuania, which can provide volunteer participation in volunteering activities, co-operation with the host organizations, provide methodological support to the host organizations for the assessment and evaluation of competencies acquired by the volunteer during volunteering. **Host organization** has the following functions: to provide volunteer activities and to create volunteer attendance schedules based on their individual needs, available and desired competencies; to enable volunteers to join the host organization team; sign volunteers in writing to the organization's internal rules and labor safety regulations; monitor voluntary activities and provide advice to volunteers on issues related to them; inform the volunteer organization mentors about volunteer attendance according to the host and volunteer organization agreement, but not less than once in one calendar month; to enable volunteers to attend their meetings with the mentor and other activities related to volunteering; to cooperate with the volunteers and mentors during the voluntary service and at the end of it to inform the volunteer about the results achieved, the competences gained; in terms of financial capacity, help the volunteer organization to provide volunteering accommodation, meals, provision of activities or other necessary means; to help resolve conflicts between mentors, curators and volunteers; to assist the volunteer organization, as appropriate, in providing administrative assistance to the volunteer; periodically organize meetings with volunteers to discuss issues related to volunteering. It is recommended that meetings be organized on a regular basis, at least once in 14 calendar days; under the terms of the contract, help the volunteer develop the competencies required to carry out the activities; motivate the volunteer to participate in the assessment of competencies, to enable the volunteer to perform the tasks assigned, to present them to the curator and to discuss and evaluate the newly acquired / refined competences / achievements. Functions of the **volunteer organization**: to advise young people who apply for volunteering, organization choice and other volunteering issues; monitor and coordinate the volunteering activities of volunteers in host organizations and counsel volunteers; to monitor the activities of volunteers in the host organizations and the development of their competences, in accordance with the approved competencies acquired by the legal acts regulating the quality of the activities of the host organizations, in assessing and evaluating volunteering activities; to enable the volunteer to assess the competences acquired during volunteering, to perform the necessary tasks; to issue a voluntary service and a document certifying competences / achievements gained by a volunteer; to manage administrative expenses of volunteer expenses; Ensure proper administration of voluntary documents; to provide individual consultations with volunteers on issues related to the curators of the host organizations; consult and communicate with mentors and partners of other volunteer organizations; at the beginning and at the end of the volunteering, to evaluate the perspectives for gaining, gaining, refined competences / achievements, the results of volunteering and the use of acquired competence.

Functions of the [Youth Department](#): to provide methodological assistance, recommendations to municipalities, volunteer organizations and host organizations, other state and municipal institutions and bodies, other natural and legal persons on issues related to the implementation of the voluntary service; organize accreditation of host organizations and voluntary organizations; to analyze the changes in the host organizations, the areas in which they operate, and their opportunities and the need for volunteers to be accepted; to organize and fulfill the recognition of volunteer competence; to analyze the number of young volunteers, achievements, qualitative and quantitative indicators of volunteering; with financial resources, to fund the activities of volunteer organizations; to promote the possibilities of youth voluntary service in Lithuania.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

Stakeholder consultations are legally required for amendments or drafting new policy. However, the law does not specify that evidence should be collected. Policy-makers can decide whether research findings should be included in policy proposals and how this is done. The institutions that formally participate in the policy-making process usually include

dedicated research agencies, evaluation/testing agencies, research and statistical departments, youth organisations, national statistics offices, think tanks and consultants. Likewise, representatives of NGOs, businesses and trade unions, and other interested parties can take part in the public policy-making process by providing comments in the public hearings and in parliamentary committees, to which these actors have free access.

2.3 National strategy on youth volunteering

Existence of a National Strategy

The [Order on Description of the Organization of the Youth Voluntary Service](#) defines the principles of organization of youth volunteering in Lithuania, its implementation organization of their work and financing of volunteering activities.

Scope and contents

The [Order on Description of the Organization of the Youth Voluntary Service](#) defines the types and functions of voluntary organizations. The host organization is a non-profit legal entity registered in the Republic of Lithuania (an organizer of a voluntary service) that is capable of facilitating the development of volunteers in a personal or professional area and ensuring their support. A volunteer is a young person who performs gratis activities for the benefit of society in the host organization. The organization providing voluntary services (savanyrystės) is an accredited non-governmental organization operating in the Republic of Lithuania, which can provide volunteer participation in volunteering activities, co-operation with the Host Organizations, provide methodological support to the Host Organizations for the assessment and evaluation of competencies acquired by the volunteer during volunteering.

Host organization functions: to provide volunteer activities and to create volunteer attendance schedules based on their individual needs, available and desired competencies; to enable volunteers to join the Host Organization team; sign volunteers in writing to the organization's internal rules and labor safety regulations; monitor voluntary activities and provide advice to volunteers on issues related to them; Inform the volunteer organization mentors about volunteer attendance according to the Host and Volunteer Organization agreement, but not less than once in one calendar month; to enable volunteers to attend their meetings with the mentor and other activities related to volunteering; to cooperate with the volunteer mentor during the voluntary service and at the end of it to inform the volunteer about the results achieved, the competences gained; in terms of financial capacity, help the volunteer organization to provide volunteering accommodation, meals, provision of activities or other necessary means; to help resolve conflicts between mentors, curators and volunteers or volunteers; to assist the volunteer organization, as appropriate, in providing administrative assistance to the volunteer; periodically organize meetings with volunteers to discuss issues related to volunteering. It is recommended that meetings be organized on a regular basis, at least once in 14 calendar days; Under the terms of the contract, help the volunteer develop the competencies required to carry out the activities; motivate the volunteer to participate in the assessment of competencies, to enable the volunteer to perform the tasks assigned, to present them to the curator and to discuss and evaluate the newly acquired / refined competences / achievements.

Functions of the volunteer organization: To advise young people who apply for volunteering, Host Choice and other volunteering issues. monitor and coordinate the volunteering activities of volunteers in host organizations and counsel volunteers; to monitor the activities of volunteers in the host organizations and the development of their competences, in accordance with the approved competencies acquired by the legal acts regulating the quality of the activities of the host organizations, in assessing and evaluating volunteering activities; to enable the volunteer to assess the competences acquired during volunteering, to perform the necessary tasks; to issue a voluntary service and a document certifying competences / achievements gained by a volunteer; to manage administrative expenses of volunteer expenses; Ensure proper administration of voluntary

documents; to provide individual consultations with volunteers on issues related to the curators of the host organizations; consult and communicate with mentors and partners of other volunteer organizations; at the beginning and at the end of the volunteering, to evaluate the perspectives for gaining, gaining, refined competences / achievements, the results of volunteering and the use of acquired competence.

Functions of the Youth Department: to provide methodological assistance, recommendations to municipalities, volunteer organizations and host organizations, other state and municipal institutions and bodies, other natural and legal persons on issues related to the implementation of the voluntary service; organize accreditation of host organizations and voluntary organizations; to analyze the changes in the host organizations, the areas in which they operate, and their opportunities and the need for volunteers to be accepted; to organize and fulfill the recognition of volunteer competence; to analyze the number of young volunteers, achievements, qualitative and quantitative indicators of volunteering; with financial resources, to fund the activities of volunteer organizations; To promote the possibilities of youth voluntary service in Lithuania.

Responsible authority

The Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor is responsible for implementation the provisions of the Description.

Revisions/ Updates

There have been no major revisions and updates.

2.4 Youth volunteering at national level

National Programme for Youth Volunteering

The National Programme for Youth Volunteering ([Order on Description of the Organization of the Youth Voluntary Service](#)) defines the principles of organization of youth volunteering in Lithuania, its implementation organization of their work and financing of volunteering activities. The goals within the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) program also determines the importance of voluntarism and sets up the goal of creation the conditions in order to implement the volunteering activities. In addition, The Plan of Measures for the Implementation of the National Youth Policy Development Programme points out the measures, how, when and who has to implement the goal. The [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) together with relevant ministries, ministry departments and the [Department of Youth Affairs](#) is implementing the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) through Action Plan for the periods of [2014-2016](#) which has the objective 4.2. „to encourage young people to actively participate in the local community, non-governmental organizations and voluntary activities“. This objective is implemented through action 4.2.1. - „the implementation of sports programs and projects aimed at children and young people and action“; and action 4.2.2. – „the development of young people and local communities in partnership, taking into account the concerns of young people, the needs and involvement of young people in the local communities in problem solving processes. There is no available data on youth participation in the Youth volunteering program’s activities.

In 2020 the Parliament approved the amendments to the Law on Medical Practice No. [XIIIIP-4503 \(2\)](#), which aim to create effective legal preconditions for the medical volunteering in Lithuania by legalizing the possibility of voluntary and unpaid medical practice of doctors providing complex palliative care. A doctor (except a resident doctor), has the right to practice medicine on a voluntary basis under the Law on Volunteering in a health care institutions providing inpatient, outpatient and (or) day hospital palliative care. The doctor can practices medicine on a voluntary basis in accordance with the competences established by the Minister of Health. This amendment opened possibilities for young medical professionals to practice their profession on a voluntary basis.

Funding

The volunteers of [Youth Volunteer Service - Discover Yourself](#) project implemented by the [Department of Youth Affairs](#) and the [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) may receive funding for food, accommodation and travel plus a single compensation for complimentary stationery. Volunteering organisers might receive funding for the development of volunteering activities from the following sources: the national budget through projects, EU funding, donors, support from charities, membership fees, charges for services provided, and 2% of income tax.

Characteristics of youth volunteering

There is no official statistics collected on youth volunteering within or outside of the program's measures. Hence, it is difficult to capture trends, effects on specific target groups and main fields where activities take place. Some information is available on the website of the Department of Youth Affairs which presents available information and [data and statistics on volunteering](#). Some data on [volunteering in municipalities](#) is collected by the Department of Youth Affairs on short-term (up to 3 months) or long term volunteering but this data is not very reliable due to data collection issues.

Support to young volunteers

There are special provisions mentioned in the [Law of Volunteering](#) concerning legal obligations of both an organization and a volunteer. However, there are no support measures for young volunteers beyond the level of individual organization. Despite that, the majority of voluntary organizations provide support and training to young volunteers themselves. These organizations provide volunteers with the advice and knowledge that would ensure a successful outcome to their voluntary work. Volunteer support (mentoring, training etc.) is mostly conducted by more experienced or former members of voluntary organizations. Support is highly dependent on resources available to the individual organization. Some organizations measure the effectiveness of their support using questionnaires, having discussions, and observing volunteer work. Larger organizations have well developed training and support plans.

Volunteering opportunities in Lithuania can be found on these platforms:

1. www.cv.lt/savanoriskas-darbas
2. <http://savanoriaujam.lt>
3. <http://www.zinauviska.lt/lt/savanoryste/savanoriauk-lietuvoje>
4. www.buk-savanoriu.lt
5. <http://savanoriai.org>
6. <http://kulturossavanoriai.lt>
7. <http://www.sportosavanoriai.lt>

Volunteering opportunities abroad can be found here:

1. <http://www.zinauviska.lt/lt/savanoryste/tnationaline-savanoryste/visos>
2. http://europa.eu/youth/EU/voluntary-activities/volunteering-opportunities_enwww.saltes.net
3. www.saltes.net

Quality Assurance (QA)

The Department of Youth Affairs issues a national certificate of the volunteer activities coordinated or implemented by the department itself (see these [guidelines](#)). The Department also aims to include volunteering experience into the [youth pass](#) - a European recognition tool for non-formal and informal learning in youth work. Some volunteer organizations have their own standards of quality and quality regulations (e.g. Agency of International Youth Cooperation [guidelines on volunteer services](#)). The standards of quality and self-evaluation activities are included into the framework of the [Youth Volunteer Service - Discover Yourself](#) project implemented by the [Department of Youth Affairs](#) and the [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#). Moreover, examples of good practice exist:

e.g. the [Regulations of Volunteer Activities in Šilalė Municipality](#) have been approved in 2015 where standard procedures of volunteer activities are described (including formal recognition of volunteer work). This document is aimed at improving standard of quality of volunteering in municipality.

[Order Approval of the description of the accreditation procedure for youth volunteer organizations](#) has been adopted in 2019 by the Department of Youth. Applicant organizations can receive 3-year accreditation or re-accreditation for 2 years. Organizations that have been accredited in the Youth Voluntary Service or Discover Yourself projects can apply for re-accreditation. The updated accreditation procedure provides for the development of all organizations, therefore each organization will receive recommendations for the improvement of its activities upon application and meeting with the expert, regardless of the final decision of the expert. In this way, the aim is for youth volunteer hosting organizations to be innovative and responsive to the changing needs of young people.

Accreditation of a youth volunteer host organization consists of 3 stages:

1. Application Submission - Organizations seeking accreditation or re-accreditation must complete an application that provides information about the organization, its activities, and its plans. If the organization intends to host volunteers at more than one location, the application must include all mentors working with the volunteers in the units.
2. Evaluation of the application and meeting - the application of the organization is evaluated by the staff of the Department of Youth Affairs and external experts who meet with the representatives of the organization.
3. Decision and recommendations - After the meeting with the organization, the experts make a decision on accreditation based on the information provided in the application of the organization and during the meeting and prepare recommendations for further development of the organization.

If an organization has already been accredited through a Youth Voluntary Service or Discover Yourself project, it can apply for re-accreditation. During re-accreditation, the organization will also have to submit an application, a meeting with experts will take place, and the organization will receive expert recommendations.

If an organization is already accredited to host volunteers under European Voluntary Service or European Solidarity Corps programs, it may apply for simplified accreditation. During the simplified accreditation, the organization must also submit an application, together with details of the current accreditation, and confirmation that it is familiar with the requirements of the Youth Voluntary Service.

Organizations that will not be granted accreditation will be able to re-apply for accreditation or re-accreditation after the implementation of the recommendations provided by experts after no earlier than 1 month.

If an accredited volunteer-hosting organization wishes to expand its activities to include additional units, it should provide [request](#). Representatives of the unit will also have a meeting with accreditation experts and receive their recommendations.

If there is a change of volunteer tutor within the organization, the organization should submit a free-form request to the Department stating the contact details of the new tutor, the reason for the need to include a new tutor and other information related to the request.

An organization seeking to accept more volunteers from the program submits a free-form application to the Departmental specialist stating the number of volunteers to be accepted. The application is accompanied by a completed description of the quality and supervision procedure for the implementation of the Youth Voluntary Service (No. 2V-164 (1.4) of 4 September 2020) [Annex 1](#), which provides detailed activity plans for a typical volunteer week, with as many plans as the volunteer organization has indicated in the application for acceptance.

Target groups

Lithuanian youth policy is aimed to be inclusive. The National Program on Youth Volunteering aims to include any young person willing to volunteer (see also: [Order on Description of the Organization of the Youth Voluntary Service](#)). The only target group defined in supporting [guidelines](#) on long-term (3-4 month long) volunteering is the group of 15-29 year old persons not in education and not in employment. Moreover, Lithuanian [Agency of International Youth Cooperation](#) provides possibilities for 17-30 year old persons for short-term volunteering (from 14 to 12 months) in sectors of education, social integration, health care, charity, reception of migrants and refugees, environmental protection and prevention of natural disaster. Short-term volunteering is available to all youth.

2.5 Cross-border mobility programmes

EU programmes

Detailed information on participation in the EU programs is not available as participation in these programs often takes place in the framework of cooperation among individual organizations and there is no monitoring of participation of youth in these programs. In general, EU programmes (they may involve volunteering or not) are administered by the [Agency of International Youth Cooperation](#). It is a public non-profit institution established in February 1999 by The State Council for Youth Affairs (currently Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour) and Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT). The main aim of the agency is to ensure the development of international youth cooperation and successful participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programmes for young people. The agency provides information and organizes the participation of youth in the EU volunteering programmes (i.e. European Voluntary Service).

Other Programmes

Detailed information on participation in other programmes is not available as participation in other programmes often takes place in the framework of cooperation among individual organizations.

Legal framework applying to foreign volunteers

There are no special legal requirements, bilateral international agreements or special visa regulations to foreign volunteers. Visa policy and residence permits and other potential conditions that young volunteers will be subjected to will depend on their country of origin. Detailed information can be found on Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania [website](#).

2.6 Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities

Information providers

[Youth Voluntary Service](#) (JST) is an intensive 6-month period program for young people aged 14 to 29, during which young people volunteer 40 hours / month at a selected accredited host organization, meet once a month with a mentor appointed by the volunteering organization and learn to overcome difficulties, translate experience into benefits. The JST program is an opportunity not only to discover a pleasant course of activity, but also to get to know oneself better and to develop general competencies. For organizations, it is an opportunity to become an accredited volunteer-hosting organization, a place where a young person can volunteer. The organization commits the volunteer to make 40 hours. A monthly volunteering plan (schedule) that matches the volunteer's

competencies and is meaningful to both the volunteer and the organization itself. The curator undertakes to train the young person, to educate and support them during the service.

2020 The JST program is recognized with 0.25 entrance points to Lithuanian higher education institutions.

European Solidarity Corps

The European Solidarity Corps is a program of the European Union that gives young people (18-30 years old) the opportunity to volunteer, do internships, work, implement their own projects - to create benefits for local or pan-European communities.

Volunteering projects:

Individual volunteering projects give young people the opportunity for 2-12 months. to work full-time on a voluntary basis in a chosen organization in their own country or abroad.

Group volunteering projects lasting 2 weeks. - 2 months, enables a group of 10 to 40 young people from at least two countries to work full-time in solidarity activities.

3 months of international volunteering under the Erasmus + and European Solidarity Corps programs are also recognized.

2020 3-month international volunteering under the Erasmus + and European Solidarity Corps programs is recognized with 0.25 entry points to Lithuanian higher education institutions.

The [Youth Guarantees](#) website itself offers a free database of over 300 volunteer organizations that offer opportunities to NEETs. Eurodesk Lithuania also provides consultations on volunteer activities. Lithuania operates 22 [Eurodesk Lithuania](#) regional representatives whose aim is to provide information and advice youth issues including volunteering activities in municipalities. [European Voluntary Service Association](#) program [Savanorystes ambasadoriai](#) is also a significant provider of information on youth volunteering opportunities in Lithuania.

Additional information is provided on special websites:

<http://bक्सavanoriu.lt>

<http://www.cv.lt/savanoryste> <http://savanoriaujam.lt> <http://www.sportosavanoriai.lt/> <http://kulturossavanoriai.lt/>

<http://www.zinauviska.lt/lt/savanoryste/kas-tai> <http://www.3sektorius.lt/pilietines-iniciatyvos/savanoriau/> http://ec.europa.eu/lietuva/abc_of_the_eu/duk/savanoryste/faktai_skaiciai_savanoryste_lt.htm http://www.ldb.lt/jaunimui/ieskantiems/Puslapiai/savanoriu_veikla.aspx www.jtba.lt

Key initiatives

In 2011 considerable efforts were made to publicize volunteering and reach general public. A number of campaigns to encourage volunteering were set up on the initiative of the European Commission Year of Volunteering. The European Commission Representation in Vilnius initiative "Nemarinuok laiko" can be mentioned among effective campaigns that included Lithuanian celebrity endorsements. These campaigns received much media coverage and can be considered nationally significant in raising awareness of volunteering. During the period of 2013-2015 [Agency of International Youth Cooperation](#) had project funding to raise awareness on youth volunteering, which included media advertising campaigns. Other initiatives included specific volunteering campaigns by [Jaunimo linija](#) and [Matyk kitaip](#).

2.7 Skills recognition

Policy Framework

[Youth Voluntary Service](#) (JST) is an intensive 6-month period program for young people aged 14 to 29, during which young people volunteer 40 hours / month at a selected accredited host organization, meet once a month with a mentor appointed by the volunteering organization and learn to overcome difficulties, translate experience into benefits. For organizations, it is an opportunity to become an accredited volunteer-hosting organization, a place where a young person can volunteer.

2020 The JST program is recognized with 0.25 entrance points to Lithuanian higher education institutions.

Recognition of a 0.25 entry point is granted only for participation in one of three specific voluntary service programs. The recognition of volunteer programs is reviewed annually at the time of approval [description of the procedure for establishing a competitive order for applicants to the state-funded study places for first cycle and integrated studies and for applicants for study scholarships](#).

2020 the following programs are recognized:

1. International volunteering for 3 months or more under Erasmus + and the European Solidarity Corps; Presented as [Youthpass](#) certificate.
2. Volunteering for 3 months or more in the project "Discover Yourself", according to the Minister of Social Security and Labor in 2013. February 25 order no. A1-73 "[On the Approval of the National Youth Volunteering Program](#)". A Discover Yourself certificate is provided;
3. At least 6 months and 40 hours / month Youth Voluntary Service, according to the 2018 June 22 Orders of the Minister of Social Security and Labour [No. A1-317 "On Approval of the Description of the Procedure for Organizing Youth Voluntary Service"](#). Presented as [JST certificate](#).

Existing arrangements

In order to encourage volunteering, the [Law of Volunteering](#) provides that, taking into consideration the aims and nature of the volunteering activity, it may be recognized as practical work and/or learning experience, or credited as social work under a programme of general education.

2.8 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

The main developments concern the implementation of the 2018 [Order on Description of the Organization of the Youth Voluntary Service](#) defines the principles of organization of youth volunteering in Lithuania on the national strategy level, its implementation organization of their work and financing of volunteering activities.

Ongoing debates

There are on-going debates on the issues related to the competence of the employees dealing with volunteers. Organizations involved in voluntary activities express the need to train competent coordinators/managers in order to facilitate the management of voluntary activities. No training system for volunteers has been established in Lithuania. Training related to volunteer management is mostly provided by some organizations for their own members. There is also a lack of systematic volunteering quality assurance system.

3. EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Youth employment and entrepreneurship is currently a political priority in Lithuania. The youth labour market in Lithuania is difficult and fragile, but according to [OECD](#) report there are indications that it is improving. Moreover, according to [OECD](#) report youth in Lithuania are among the most active in entrepreneurship in the EU. The business ownership rate suggests a high level of entrepreneurship activity among youth in Lithuania e.g. in the 2009-2013 period, 6.9% of youth were new business owners, which is the highest rate among EU countries. The current National Youth Policy Development Programme covers the period 2011 to 2019. It aims to create a sustainable environment and conditions for the development of youth policy. Goals for this period include promoting youth employment, youth entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship and creating more favourable conditions for these activities.

3.1 General context

Labour market situation in the country

In 2020, [the unemployment](#) rate in the country stood at 8.5 per cent, which is by 2.2 percentage points higher than in 2019. The male unemployment rate was higher than that of female and stood at 9.3 per cent, the female one – at 7.7 per cent. Over the year, the male unemployment rate increased by 2.3 percentage points, female – by 2.2 percentage points. The biggest difference between the male and female unemployment rate was recorded in the 25–29 age group (4.3 percentage points). In this age group, the unemployment rate was 10.7 per cent for male and 6.4 per cent for female. There was also a significant difference in the 15–24 age group (4.2 percentage points). In 2020, against 2019, the unemployment rate of young population (aged 15–24) in the country increased by 7.7 percentage points and made up 19.6 per cent. Unemployment rate of young men was 21.5 per cent, that of young women – 17.3 per cent.

Until 1990 Lithuania's industries and agriculture were part of the planned economy of the Soviet Union. Unemployment did not exist. Each person who acquired educational qualification was guaranteed to get a job. After the re-establishment of the independence in 1990 the situation in the labour market changed: the processes of the labour market, such as economic restructuring, the growth of the private sector and the development of market relations, have had a direct influence on employment and, consequently, on the education needs and opportunities of inhabitants (Kogan, Gebel, & Noelke, 2008). The period, from 1990-94, was marked by economic decline, as in all post-communist countries. From 1990 until 1992, the key task of the Lithuanian government was to implement statehood by passing new laws and establishing new institutions. A permanent national currency, the Litas (LTL), was introduced in 1993. The period from 1995-98 was characterised by economic stability and rapid growth. The period from 1999-2000, was characterised by economic recession due to the Russian crisis that hit Lithuania particularly hard due to its strong ties with the Russian economy. The economy returned to a positive growth path in 2000. The fifth period from 2000 onwards was dominated by the EU accession process that ended in Lithuania's EU membership in 2004. Since 2004 when Lithuania became the member of the EU Lithuania's economic potential (GDP per capita) has been one of the lowest in the European Union and was characterised by high dynamic fluctuations. Economic development has been affected by low living standards (in 2011 the poverty and social exclusion rate in Lithuania was above 30%) and low average and minimum wages. This results in the reduced attractiveness of the Lithuanian labour market and in turn encouraged emigration (the emigration rate in Lithuania has been one of the highest in the EU since 2000) and risk of poverty trap (the Gini coefficient was close to 33% in 2011). As a result of high emigration and negative natural population growth, the total number of Lithuanian residents fell from 3.5 million in 2001 to 3 million by the beginning of 2012 (Gruzevskis & Blaziene, 2013). The youth unemployment rate in

Lithuania (15-24 years old) was 19.3% in 2014, down from 35.7% in 2010. The youth unemployment rate approximately doubles the overall unemployment rate. Youth Unemployment Rate in Lithuania increased to 16.50 percent in July from 13.10 percent in June of 2016 (it averaged 22.53 percent from 1998 until 2016, reaching an all time high of 36.20 percent in February of 2010 and a record low of 7.60 percent in June of 2007). Youth unemployment varies greatly by region. Major urban areas (i.e. Klaipėda, Vilnius and Kaunas) have the lowest youth unemployment rates, while youth unemployment rates are higher in rural areas. Youth unemployment is currently a political priority in Lithuania. Labour market participation rates for youth in Lithuania are lower than the EU average. In 2014, the labour market participation rate for youth in Lithuania was 34.2% (the EU average rate was 41.7%). The annual number of young people emigrating from Lithuania has increased steadily during the 2000s, reaching about 10 000 in 2013 – corresponding to about one quarter of total emigration outflows for the year. Lithuanian youth were hit hard by the global economic and financial crisis, with the unemployment rate increasing sharply and peaking to over 35% in 2010 (OECD, 2015). Much as 50% of unemployed individuals are long-term ones and structural by nature (mismatch between skills and qualifications and labour market needs). Although business conditions in Lithuania are continuously being improved by means of tax reductions, liberalisation of labour relations, and promotion of investment, periods of economic growth have been characterised by lack of job growth (Gruzevskis & Blaziene, 2013). Labour market outcomes for Lithuanian youth (aged 15-24) have recovered quickly from the 2007-2009 economic crisis, today they remain poor from an international comparative perspective (OECD, 2015). Low youth employment rates combined with high inactivity rates and a raising proportion of young NEETs in the population suggest that action should be taken to bring youth back to the labour market. Even where youth are in employment, the quality of their job is often poor. Wages are generally low, earning opportunities scarce, and income inequalities high (OECD, 2015). The key features of Lithuanian youth labour marked are: 1) relatively high job quantity, but the share of youth in the working age population is expected to decline in the upcoming years; 2) in 2014, youth have low employment rates (27.6%), high inactivity rates (65.8%) and unemployment rates (19.3%); 3) a rising proportion of the youth (aged 15-29) is NEET: 12.9% in 2014, up from 10.7% in 2005; 4) the incidence of low pay is common: around one fifth of youth earn at the minimum wage or below, and around 61% earn at the median wage or below. This is similar to what is observed among adult workers; 5) Lithuanian youth are usually employed under permanent and full-time contracts (respectively 91.5% and 86.4% of youth in dependent employment); 6) skills mismatches are significant: over 30% of young people are either under- or over-qualified for their jobs (OECD, 2015). The ageing process that is behind these developments has been ongoing for decades, driven by two primary contributing forces: declines in fertility, themselves further strengthened by the significant transformations in family life undergone by the country since the 1990s; and improvements in longevity, resulting from advances in health (OECD, 2015). Key concern relates to the underrepresentation of the youth in the Lithuanian labour market. In the second quarter of 2015, only 27.9% of young Lithuanians were employed, compared to 40% across the OECD and 32.9% across the European Union (OECD, 2015). Lithuanian youth face relatively high inactivity rates (67.2%, versus 53.4% across the OECD and 57.2% across the European Union) (OECD, 2015). Youth with primary education face a much higher risk of unemployment or inactivity than their peers with higher educational attainments and employment rates are also lower among youth with lower levels of education (OECD, 2015). Differences in labour market outcomes for youth are also substantial across municipalities and young women have lower employment rates (24.1% versus 31%), resulting primarily from higher inactivity rates (70.4% versus 61.4%), while their unemployment rates are lower (18.7% versus 19.6%) (OECD, 2015). In Lithuania the share of young NEETs is relatively low by OECD standards, it is increasing rapidly (OECD, 2015). In 2014, 12.9% of young people (aged 15-29) were NEET, up from 10.7% in 2005. Youth with secondary education are significantly more likely to be NEETs than youth with tertiary education, partly reflecting the fact that the latter have greater opportunities to continue studying (OECD, 2015). Youth with primary and secondary education are more exposed to the risk of becoming inactive. Geographical

differences are substantial, alongside gender differences: young women are slightly more likely to be NEET than young men (14.7% versus 13.5%), they are almost twice more likely than men to be inactive and out of school (OECD, 2015).

The quality of jobs for youth in Lithuania is poor. Labour market performance depends not only on the number, but also on the type of jobs that are created. Job quality of young Lithuanian workers is characterised by relatively low earnings and high income inequality; higher unemployment risk combined with low unemployment insurance; as well as insufficient resources at the workplace (OECD, 2015). Lithuanian youth face a high risk of unemployment and have rather low income protection in case of unemployment (OECD, 2015). In the event of unemployment, young workers are comparatively less insured (OECD, 2015). Young workers in Lithuania work less under time pressure or irregular working hours, their physical health is less likely to be affected by their jobs and they are less often subject to work place intimidation while at the same time, around seven out of ten young workers in Lithuania report that they lack work autonomy and learning opportunities, and are unsatisfied with the management practices and work atmosphere in general (OECD, 2015). The incidence of low-pay is widespread amongst Lithuanian youth. Lithuanian youth are usually employed under permanent and full-time contracts and temporary contracts are often thought to be a stepping stone to more stable employment for those youth who have limited skills and experience, although often youth are more likely to get locked into such jobs than prime age workers (OECD, 2015). Far less young people are hired under part-time employment in Lithuania than in OECD and European countries: 13.6% of youth in dependent employment work part-time in Lithuania, compared to an average of 28.9% and 28.4% across the OECD and the European Union respectively (OECD, 2015). In Lithuania informal employment is especially widespread among young workers, who are typically less knowledgeable of labour markets and their functioning and therefore less protected (Okunevičiūtė-Neverauskienė & Pocius, 2008).

Definitions and concepts

The specific terminology related to employment and entrepreneurship in Lithuania captures understandings and aspects of the situation in general and distinctive aspects of youth situation in the labour market. These are as follows: 1) people who are officially registered as unemployed and receive unemployment benefits; 2) official and unofficial unemployment. In general, a person's status in the labour market falls into one of three categories: employed, unemployed or economically inactive. In Lithuania, the unemployment rate measures the number of people actively looking for a job as a percentage of the labour force. Employed persons are individuals with a minimum required age who work during a certain time for a business. The labour force participation rate is the number of persons who are employed and unemployed but looking for a job divided by the total working-age population. The long term unemployment rate refers to the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons (those who are either employed or unemployed) in the labour market. A legal minimum wage exists and is set at the national level. Minimum wage in Lithuania was 380 EUR/month in 2016. The youth unemployment rate is the number of unemployed 15-24 year-olds expressed as a percentage of the youth labour force. Unemployed people are those who report that they are without work, that they are available for work or/and that they have taken active steps to find work in the last four weeks.

The entrepreneurship rate and business ownership rate are developed by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (the entrepreneurship rate is defined as the proportion of the adult population (age 18 to 64) that are actively involved in setting up a business they will own or co-own; this business has not paid salaries, wages or any other payments to the owners for more than three months; the new business ownership rate is the proportion of the adult population that are currently an owner-manager of a new business that has paid salaries, wages or any other payments to the owners for more than three months, but not more than 42 months; both of these rates are computed using a common household survey). According to these two rates, youth in Lithuania are among the most active in

entrepreneurship in the EU (8.3% of youth in Lithuania over the 2009-2013 period were actively involved in the process of setting up a business; this is above the overall rate of 5.2%; it is also essentially double the EU average rate for youth (4.2%) (OECD, 2015). The new business ownership rate also suggests a high level of entrepreneurship activity among youth in Lithuania (in the 2009-2013 period, 6.9% of youth were new business owners, which is the highest rate among EU countries). The new business ownership rate for youth in Lithuania is essentially double the EU average rate (3.5%) for this period (OECD, 2015). Youth self-employment rate in Lithuania appears to be slightly higher than the EU average although self-employment data for youth are limited in Lithuania (OECD, 2015). In 2014, the youth self-employment rate was 4.9%, which was slightly higher than the EU average. Overall, the self-employment rate in Lithuania has diverged with the EU average since 2005. 10.6% of those employed in Lithuania were self-employment in 2014, relative to 14.4% of those in the EU (OECD, 2015).

3.2 Administration and governance

Governance

The Lithuanian government supports entrepreneurship on the belief that it increases economic growth, productivity and competitiveness, and stimulates creativity and innovation. The new National Action Plan on Entrepreneurship Promotion (2014-2020) was developed by the Ministry of Economy in line with the EU Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan. This action plan is the most comprehensive policy document focusing on the needs of SMEs in Lithuania. Youth are highlighted in the National Action Plan under two objectives. The first objective of the Action Plan is to develop a coherent entrepreneurship education system, covering all levels of the education system as well as training outside of the education system. Youth are also highlighted under the third objective, which is to promote and support entrepreneurship for selected target groups (youth and women). Planned actions under this objective include promoting entrepreneurship through Enterprise Lithuania (a non-profit organisation owned by the Ministry of Economy), supporting a national business plan competition, increasing the availability of business counselling, coaching and mentoring. This Action Plan provides a clear indication that entrepreneurship is an important policy instrument for supporting economic and social objectives (OECD Entrepreneurship, 2015). The significance for youth is underlined as the much of the plan is centred on youth. This Action Plan contains two supporting documents. The first identifies actions that will be undertaken to achieve the objectives and indicates a timeline, responsibility for implementation, funding source and key indicators. The second document outlines evaluation criteria to be measured. This approach is comprehensive.

Main actors

Youth entrepreneurship responsibility is shared across four national ministries: Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Agriculture (only in relation to youth entrepreneurship measures in support of young farmers). Ministry of Social Security and Labour with the subordinate institutions, regions, social partners, non-governmental organisations and other institutions concerned performs its mission to balance the labour market, enhance flexibility and security thereof, and improve qualification of employees and their abilities to adapt to the market changes. The Family and Communities Department of the Ministry has the Children and Youth Divisions with the following functions relevant to youth policy: co-ordinate the implementation of youth policy, perform national as well as international obligations in the field of youth policy; implement the measures attributed to the division's competence relevant to the policy, implemented by the European Union, the European Council, and the United Nations, in the field of children's rights protection and youth; co-ordinate the implementation of the state (handed over to regions) children and youth rights protection function.

Ministry of Economy is responsible for economic development and industrial policy, which clearly have a direct impact in supporting youth entrepreneurs. However, these policy efforts are typically of a general nature rather than targeted efforts for youth (OECD, 2015). Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for policies and programmes related to entrepreneurship education, both at the school-level and in vocational training and higher education. This includes development of curricula and teacher training. Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for supporting the development of the agricultural sector. This includes supporting young farmers and entrepreneurship activities related to agriculture.

In addition, several other key organisations interact with the four ministries to support youth entrepreneurship.

The Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour implements the state youth policies and programmes, monitors progress, conducts research related to youth and coordinates state and regional institutions involved in youth policy.

Council of Youth Affairs (Jaunimo reikalų taryba) is a collegial advisory institution, functioning under the Department of Youth Affairs. It includes 12 members: 6 representatives of the state institutions and 6 representatives of youth organisations, who are delegated by the Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT). The Council's central task is to make suggestions to the Department of Youth Affairs on the implementation of youth policy.

LiJOT (Lietuvos jaunimo organizacijų taryba) is the biggest non-governmental, non-profit umbrella structure for Lithuanian national youth organisations. Currently LiJOT has 64 members (non-governmental youth organisations), and represents more than 200 000 young people in Lithuania. The National Youth Affairs Co-ordinator Association (Nacionalinė jaunimo reikalų koordinatorių asociacija) is a nongovernmental organisation that brings together the co-ordinators of youth affairs of the Lithuanian regions, which aspire to frame and implement youth policy in regions. Agency of International Youth Co-operation (Jaunimo tarptautinio bendradarbiavimo agentūra): The Agency of International Youth Co-operation is a public non-profit institution established in February 1999 by the Department of Youth Affairs and LiJOT. The main aim of the agency is to ensure the development of international youth co-operation and successful participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programmes for young people.

Junior Achievement Lithuania (JAL) is a non-profit organisation of which the mission is to train youth in developing a free-market spirit, understanding of business and economics, leadership, entrepreneurship and initiative skills. Apart from building an entrepreneurial culture, the organisation helps to consolidate trust in entrepreneurs within society. It is part of Junior Achievement Worldwide (JAW), although it is not financially or structurally dependent from it. Therefore, it pursues an international practice with modern technology in which theory is complemented with practical activities. JAL is conscious about the importance of context for entrepreneurship and, therefore, has a licence from JAW to modify educating material according to Lithuania's reality. Participation in their programmes is free for students. JAL has more than 150 business consultants that supplement teachers training, have edited more than 200 000 textbooks and reach more than 20 000 students each year (more than 200 000 from 1993 to 2014) in schools within different towns. JAL programmes are taught in 40% of the secondary schools (EACEA, 2012). JAL organises workshops for teachers of all subjects in economics and entrepreneurship aspects (3 000). JAL has a clear division of their programmes in: financial literacy (economics, investment competition, and computer simulation), career development (shadowing an employee, leadership) and entrepreneurship (company and start-up programme, summer camps, business competitions for students of grades 9-12.). The programmes on entrepreneurship aim to promote students' capabilities such as: creative thinking, teamwork, solving of real problems and accountability to achieve their goals. They have evaluated these programmes observing that JAL graduates are better prepared for work, get easier a promotion and more often create their own business.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

Stakeholder consultations are legally required for amendments or drafting new policy. However, the law does not specify that evidence should be collected. Policy-makers can decide whether research findings should be included in policy proposals and how this is done. The institutions that formally participate in the policy-making process usually include dedicated research agencies, evaluation/testing agencies, research and statistical departments, youth organisations, national statistics offices, think tanks and consultants. Likewise, representatives of NGOs, businesses and trade unions, and other interested parties can take part in the public policy-making process by providing comments in the public hearings and in parliamentary committees, to which these actors have free access.

3.3 Skills forecasting

Forecasting system(s)

Since 1995 the Lithuanian Labour Exchange has been annually carrying out labour market forecasts for the upcoming years. The methodology of the labour market forecasting was created jointly with the experts of the Swedish National Labour Market Board and is based on the results of the employer surveys conducted in September/or October. Since 1997 the Labour Exchange has been annually issuing publications "Labour Market Forecast" and since 2003 it has been issuing "Barometer of Opportunities of Getting a Job".

Several independent studies on graduates have been carried out by different bodies. The Ministry of Finance commissioned a study on the successful integration of university graduates into the labour market and its determinants, which lasted from May 2009 to May 2010. The Institute for Labour and Social Research carried out two studies on graduate progression paths in 2003 and 2004, both based on surveys of graduates and employers. In addition, two more specialised studies were conducted on the situation of specialists with higher education (2005/06) and law graduates in the labour market (2007/08). Here too, graduates and employers were questioned. The Public Policy and Management Institute (PPMI) carried out a study on 'Competencies of graduates of Master studies and the needs of the Lithuanian economy', commissioned by the Science Council of Lithuania. It analysed the labour market integration of students who graduated between 2001 and 2005. The PPMI conducted a second study in 2010 in which 2 500 graduates were surveyed. They were questioned about matters such as employment prospects, their opinions on the knowledge and experience gained during their studies, and their salary and career progression.

Research and higher education monitoring and analysis centre ([MOSTA](#)) is a state budgetary institution, an analytical and advisory body that draws up recommendations on the development of the national higher education systems, performs monitoring function, analyses the state of the Lithuanian education system, and participates in the development and implementation of research, education and innovation policies.

Since 2010, information on the courses of study chosen by students has been collected and processed in a central national level student tracking database called the 'Register of Students'. The data is used to track the skills and career progression paths of students during their life-courses. The Register of Students has been commissioned by Statistics Lithuania and the Ministry of Education and Science. It contains information on the prior education of students, their courses of study (e.g. course changes, dropouts and final degrees) and socio-economic characteristics. Data is regularly provided by higher education institutions and aggregated, analysed and circulated by Statistics Lithuania and other statistical offices. The main aim is to collect reliable and up-to-date student data for decision-making bodies. The data also enables individual higher education institutions to draw conclusions about their student population. At present, the register is still at a developmental stage.

Individual universities also maintain their own student tracking databases. Several of them conduct graduate surveys but with no discernible common approach.

Skills development

Lithuania was one of the first EU countries to develop entrepreneurship education strategies at the school level (OECD, 2015). The 2003 Lithuanian national education strategy explicitly notes the importance of entrepreneurship education. This led to the development of two specific strategies “Economic Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education” (2004) and the “National Programme of Youth Entrepreneurship Education and Encouragement 2008-2012” and most recently the [National Action Plan on Entrepreneurship Promotion](#) (2014-2020) which all aim to strengthen the focus on entrepreneurship and financial management at all school levels. At the primary education level in Lithuania, entrepreneurship is integrated within social sciences (i.e. “world discovery”) and also as part of the natural sciences; both of which are compulsory subjects (EACEA, 2012; OECD, 2015). This approach is rare because most countries take a cross-curricular approach that emphasises the transversal objectives of entrepreneurship. Nonetheless, the integration of entrepreneurship within core subject areas demonstrates a very high level of commitment to entrepreneurship teaching in Lithuania and ensures that a large number of young students are introduced to entrepreneurship (OECD, 2015).

At secondary level, “Economics and Entrepreneurship Education” (grades 9-10) is a compulsory subject in the Lithuanian curriculum. Entrepreneurship is also integrated into several compulsory subjects such as social sciences and maths, sciences, technology and ICT. In upper-secondary education, entrepreneurship is integrated in compulsory subjects (social sciences and maths-sciences technology- ICT) and is also an optional subject. Most programmes in secondary schools co-operate with Junior Achievement and through this co-operation, students learn core business management skills. Junior Achievement Lithuania (JAL) is a non-profit organisation of which the mission is to train youth in developing a free-market spirit, understanding of business and economics, leadership, entrepreneurship and initiative skills. Apart from building an entrepreneurial culture, the organisation helps to consolidate trust in entrepreneurs within society. It is part of Junior Achievement Worldwide (JAW), although it is not financially or structurally dependent from it. Therefore, it pursues an international practice with modern technology in which theory is complemented with practical activities. JAL is conscious about the importance of context for entrepreneurship and, therefore, has a licence from JAW to modify educating material according to Lithuania’s reality. Participation in their programmes is free for students. JAL has more than 150 business consultants that supplement teachers training, have edited more than 200 000 textbooks and reach more than 20 000 students each year (more than 200 000 from 1993 to 2014) in schools within different towns. JAL programmes are taught in 40% of the secondary schools (EACEA, 2012). JAL organises workshops for teachers of all subjects in economics and entrepreneurship aspects (3 000). JAL has a clear division of their programmes in: financial literacy (economics, investment competition, and computer simulation), career development (shadowing an employee, leadership) and entrepreneurship (company and start-up programme, summer camps, business competitions for students of grades 9-12.). The programmes on entrepreneurship aim to promote students’ capabilities such as: creative thinking, teamwork, solving of real problems and accountability to achieve their goals. They have evaluated these programmes observing that JAL graduates are better prepared for work, get easier a promotion and more often create their own business.

There is a general consensus that the vocational training (VET) system needs improvement in Lithuanian, which has led to the drafting of the development of the [Action Plan for the Development of Vocational Education and Training 2014-2016](#) which was approved in 2014 (SMM, 2014) . One of the main provisions of this plan is to strengthen the work-based learning (including apprenticeship type of VET organisation). This creates an opportunity to improve entrepreneurship training in VET because work-based learning (including apprenticeship type VET organisation) can be used to provide experience learning about business management and entrepreneurship through active learning.

In Lithuania, entrepreneurship is generally not included in higher education programmes outside of business schools. [The National Programme for Higher Education 2013-2020](#) (SMM, 2013) focuses on the importance of developing job-specific competences in research and educational institutions and on career guidance to help students make a conscious and informed choice of the study and career paths. Implicitly this would include entrepreneurship. However, in practice there is little evidence that higher education institutions are systematically promoting and supporting entrepreneurship (OECD, 2015).

Teachers receive substantial support and training. In Lithuania, implementation guidelines and learning outcomes for entrepreneurship education are included in national curricula and methodological material is available for teachers. These guidelines and materials are the primary support that teachers receive (EACEA, 2012). In addition, Junior Achievement has prepared entrepreneurship textbooks and has trained approximately 3 000 teachers (out of 40 000 teachers). Moreover, the Action Plan for Entrepreneurship for 2014-2020 includes measures to increase the competences of teachers, especially those of vocational education.

Entrepreneurship training outside of formal education is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. Junior Achievement is the most important organisation in providing entrepreneurship training outside of formal education in Lithuania. It adapts international practices to the Lithuanian context, stimulating entrepreneurship through initiatives such as company programmes where students manage their own firms for one year, assuming risks but with lower requirements than normal companies. It also offers simulations, summer camps and innovation camps. In addition, a number of business associations are active in supporting youth entrepreneurship through mentoring, business counselling, delivering seminars and hosting internships to help youth acquire entrepreneurship skills and develop industry contacts (e.g. Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists, Business Employers' Confederation, Youth Business Club). INVEGA, a public loan guarantees institution established under the auspices of the Ministry of Economy, operates one of the most important entrepreneurship supports in Lithuania, the Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund, which provides micro-credit that includes a training offer to financing recipients. Business training (up to 72 hours) and business consultancy (up to 50 hours) are provided to clients by Credit Unions. Youth (up to the age of 29) are one of the key target groups of this programme.

3.4 Career guidance and counselling

Career guidance and counselling services

[The Ministry of Education and Science](#) is responsible for career guidance policy related to the provision of quality career education, information and counselling services for pupils, students, adult learners, etc. The Ministry of Education and Science establishes the procedure for the delivery of career information and careers education in the educational system. It is aimed that all pupils and students should have a possibility to receive services of career guidance in their educational institution, and these services would help them not only to prepare for their future career, but also to plan, develop and assess their career.

[National Education Strategy \(2013-2022\)](#) defines career guidance as one of the four strategic priorities for further development in education. [Law on education](#) (Švietimo įstatymas) defines career guidance as one of the forms of educational assistance. The purpose of career guidance is defined in the law as follows "by measures of career information, career counselling and career education to help a person to choose education and employment, to acquire career planning and management competences and to actively shape his professional career". It also states that career guidance shall be provided in most educational institutions (general education schools, vocational training and other educational institutions, career guidance centres and other) in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Minister of Education and Science together with the Minister

of Social Security and Labour, and in higher education schools – in accordance with the procedure laid down by these schools.

[Law on Vocational Education and Training](#) (Profesinio mokymo įstatymas) declares the accessibility of career guidance services for all citizens and refers to the career guidance being organised in educational institutions in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Minister of Education and Science together with the Minister of Social Security and Labour. It defines career guidance as integral part of VET. [Law on Higher Education and Research](#) (Mokslo ir studijų įstatymas) declares that “a higher education institution must provide career consultations to students”. The Law on Education and Law on Vocational Education and Training is followed by the [Procedure on Implementation of Career Guidance](#) (Profesinio orientavimo vykdymo tvarkos aprašas adopted by the Minister of Education and Science together with the Minister of Social Security and Labour in 2012. This document defines the way career guidance services (namely – career education, career information and counselling) are to be implemented in the educational sector on national, municipality and local (school) level. In the procedure career education aimed at development of career competences is defined as core career guidance service. The procedure does not specify the way career guidance is implemented in the employment sector by territorial labour exchanges as long as it is described in the [Law on Support for Employment](#) and subsequent legal acts. Career education programme ([Ugdymo karjerai programa](#)) was adopted by the Minister of Education and Science in 2012. It defines the career competences that have to be developed by the students at general education schools and VET schools and the way career education should be implemented throughout the curriculum. [Action Plan for Development of Non-formal Adult Education and Further Training 2014-2016](#) (Neformaliojo suaugusiųjų švietimo plėtros 2014–2016 metų veiksmų planas) foresees career guidance services for adults.

Organisation and monitoring of career guidance services in general education schools is managed by local municipalities. The mandate for coordination of career guidance services on national level, development of methodology and evaluation of the needs for training and further professional development of guidance counsellors is given to [Lithuanian Centre of Non-Formal Youth Education](#) (Career Education Unit).

The website of [Open Information, Consultation and Guidance System](#) (AIKOS) is run by [The Ministry of Education and Science](#). It is an open information, counselling, and career guidance system providing a wide range of users with information on education and training opportunities. The aim of [Open Information, Consultation and Guidance System](#) (AIKOS) is to help any person residing in Lithuania to choose a marketable profession, which can be obtained for the first time or through re-training at Lithuanian or European higher and vocational schools, by accumulating, processing, and presenting easily accessible information to a wide range of users. AIKOS also aims to provide qualitative information on the possibilities of distant learning and inform and consult a wide range of users irrespective of their age helping to choose their own path in the sphere of education, training, and occupation and building their professional career.

In employment sector the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) is responsible for career guidance policy related to the provision of quality career information and counselling services for job-seekers (youth and adults) including NEETs. [The Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) establishes the procedure for implementing career guidance in the labour market system, i.e. it coordinates provision of career guidance services to the job seekers, employees, individuals with special needs, individuals who do not study and are unemployed etc. It is considered that all these individuals should have a possibility to receive services that would help them to choose a suitable job, profession; to change their qualification; to develop, assess and, if necessary, to adjust their vocational career plan; and to solve other issues of career guidance, in various structures of the labour market.

[Law on Support for Employment](#) (Užimtumo rėmimo įstatymas) defines that [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) through its territorial offices ensures provision of career guidance services to unemployed. [Law on Social Integration of People with Disabilities](#) (Neįgaliųjų

socialinės integracijos įstatymas) defines career guidance as one of vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour carries the responsibility for the organisation of vocational rehabilitation of people with disabilities. [Interinstitutional Action Plan for the Programme of Raising the Employment 2014-2020](#) (Užimtumo didinimo 2014–2020 metų programos įgyvendinimo tarpinstitucinis veiklos planas) was approved in 2014. In this plan measures to improve the quality and accessibility of face-to-face and online career guidance services, especially for adults and NEETs, are foreseen in order to ensure better matching of qualifications to the labour market needs and easier integration into the labour market. [Action Plan for Implementation of Youth Guarantee Initiative 2014-2020](#) (Jaunimo garantijų iniciatyvos įgyvendinimo planas) was adopted in 2013. In this plan measures aimed at intensified career guidance service provision both in education and employment sector are defined. The plan was updated in May 2014. The Youth Guarantee funding is currently under-utilised for projects related to young entrepreneurship. Projects could be encouraged that combine entrepreneurial education, training, entrepreneurial learning, entrepreneurial experience and microfinance. Such initiatives could be co-ordinated by a one-stop shop (OECD, 2015).

The mandate for coordination of career guidance services on national level is given to [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) (with has its Local Labour Exchange Offices). [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) implement state employment guarantees on labour market, provide assistance for job seekers in finding job, provide employers with necessary skilled labour force, involve registered job seekers into population employment programs (vocational training and retraining, organisation of own business, placement into public works and works financed from the Employment Fund, establishment of new jobs, activities of job clubs) and pay unemployment benefits. The main objective of Lithuanian Labour Exchange is to help registered job seekers to find job according to their qualification and profession. For those who do not have profession or have non-marketable profession or for individuals who find it difficult to integrate into labour market, labour exchange offers to take part in active labour market policy programs e.g. vocational training, public works, works financed from the Employment Fund, starting of own business, job clubs, etc. In youth career guidance (i.e. information and counselling) services for jobseekers are provided by territorial labour exchanges offices and its structural divisions – youth job centres. Youth Job Centres and Local Labour Exchange Offices provide information to job seekers about the situation in the labour market, vacancies and the requirements for applicants, the nature and functions of the job, remuneration conditions, vocational training opportunities and conditions, educational institutions, available qualifications and services provided by the labour exchange. Information services are provided to job seekers individually or in groups, directly or via distance methods.

Youth Methodology Council (Jaunimo metodinė taryba) is a collegial voluntary committee, providing suggestions and recommendations for Lithuanian Labour Exchange, territorial labour exchanges as well as it's youth job centres. The Council is led by the Lithuanian Labour Exchange and is composed of the representatives from the following institutions: Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Social security and Labour, Education Exchanges Support Foundation (i.e. National Lifelong Learning and Erasmus+ Agency), pupil's and student's organisations, Lithuanian Council of Youth Organisations as well as research and social partner's organisations. The main focus of the Council is youth employment and career guidance for young people.

Career guidance (i.e. information and counselling) services for jobseekers (adults and youth) are provided by territorial labour exchanges, and its structural divisions – youth job centres. Career guidance services are funded from diverse resources such as state budget via pupil's basket and own education institution's resources, funds for active labour market measures, funds for unemployed, funds for Youth Guarantee Initiative, ESF funds.

A range of other institutions support the provision of career guidance services in education sector such as Centre of Information Technologies in Education and Euroguidance LT. Career guidance (i.e. career education, information and counselling services) are provided

by general education schools and VET schools which organise provision of career guidance services to pupils according to the Procedure on Implementation of Career Guidance (2012). Majority of public and private HE school's career centres or similar career related divisions provide career guidance services to students. *Career Information Points* are set up at general education and training schools, youth centres, non-formal development institutions. The network of Career Information Points is being continuously expanded. They provide information on career choices, training and employment opportunities in Lithuania and abroad and collect and analyse situation within the labour market.

Pedagogical-Psychological Services institutions are established in municipalities (they report directly to municipality administration). Among the service staff of Pedagogical-Psychological Services there are special educators and social pedagogues, speech therapists and psychologists who perform psychological and pedagogical assessments of the children development, advice parents and teachers on issues related to learning, behaviour, emotions and communication problems of learners with special needs or psychological difficulties, and provide recommendations on their further development.

Another approach to career guidance and counselling services is to use national, regional or city-level events such as "Career Days" and "Start-up Days" that promote and celebrate entrepreneurship, and provide youth with an opportunity to meet and interact with entrepreneurs. Such events are arranged in a co-operation between the local authorities and key stakeholders e.g. [Junior Achievement](#), [INVEGA](#) and [Enterprise Lithuania](#) being the most active in the field. For example Enterprise Lithuania organises events to support start-ups to build connections or attract funding from Silicon Valley or European investors. This risk capital market is not well-developed in Lithuania, so the option of the "Road Show" is pursued which includes taking youth entrepreneurs to other markets. This is an expensive and resource-intensive process when all of the promotion, selection, travel and follow-up are considered. A number of entrepreneurs benefit greatly from this opportunity and this might likely lead to positive outcomes for Lithuania, such as job creation. However, due to the nature of business angel and venture capital investment, high-tech businesses are often favoured excluding non-innovative and agricultural start-ups, therefore these programs sometimes excludes some of youth entrepreneurs in other areas.

The new National Action Plan on Entrepreneurship Promotion (2014-2020 developed by the Ministry of Economy in line with the EU Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan. This action plan is the most comprehensive policy document focusing on the needs of SMEs in Lithuania. Youth are highlighted in the National Action Plan under two objectives. The first objective of the Action Plan is to develop a coherent entrepreneurship education system, covering all levels of the education system as well as training outside of the education system. Youth are also highlighted under the third objective, which is to promote and support entrepreneurship for selected target groups (youth and women). Planned actions under this objective include promoting entrepreneurship through [Enterprise Lithuania](#), supporting a national business plan competition, increasing the availability of business counselling, coaching and mentoring. The significance for youth is underlined as the much of the plan is centred on youth. This Action Plan contains two supporting documents. The first identifies actions that will be undertaken to achieve the objectives and indicates a timeline, responsibility for implementation, funding source and key indicators. The second document outlines evaluation criteria to be measured. [Enterprise Lithuania](#), for example, possesses a list of consultants that were utilised for various business support schemes. Progress has also been made towards developing an accredited body of consultants in order to ensure the efficiency and quality of the business and self-employment support services. This is a very good step towards ensuring the quality of the services delivered to start-ups and businesses and the effective use of government funding (OECD, 2015)

Access to finance is one of the strongest elements of the youth entrepreneurship support system in Lithuania. Although the financial market is small, the national government has a well-developed microcredit programme that is operated by the public agency [INVEGA](#). Youth have preferential access to this support and can also benefit from free training and

assistance in preparing their application for funding. The guarantee institution INVEGA founded by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on 29 November 2001 issues guarantees to credit institutions for microcredits, to new undertakings for loans for the taking up of a new business, to undertakings for loans aimed at business development as well as for loans used to finance the projects of the EU Structural Funds. Beneficiaries of these guarantees are micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) with up to 250 employees, natural persons, who have business certificates.

The Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund (EPF) is a microcredit programme in Lithuania (financed from ESF) managed by [INVEGA](#). The EPF programme contributes to the goals of INVEGA which include the promotion of an entrepreneurial and self-employment culture in Lithuania and sustainable SMEs. EPF provides microloans, up to a maximum of EUR 25 000, to start-up entrepreneurs and the self-employed (those in business for under one year). An unusual and unique feature of the programme is that these microloans are part of a package of complementary support for beneficiaries. This complementary support includes free training, advice and additional financial support (e.g. interest rate subsidies, partial employee subsidies). INVEGA also offers loan guarantees of up to 80% of the value of the loan for those start-up businesses that create jobs and employ staff. The EPF aims to increase start-up entrepreneurship and self-employment in Lithuania and includes priority groups from disadvantaged and under-represented people in entrepreneurship. Included in priority groups are: young people under 29, older people over 50, people who are disabled and people who are unemployed (OECD, 2015).

Career guidance system in Lithuania

The system is made of a range of institutions where professionals provide services to organize activities to help young people to make decisions about studying, studying or working, to acquire career competencies and to manage their personal careers.

The following services are identified in the career guidance system:

- **vocational information,**
- **vocational counseling,**
- **educational careers.**

All its services are closely interlinked and rarely provided separately from each other.

Vocational information is the provision of information needed for career planning, choosing or changing professions, and choosing to study, study or work.

Vocational counseling - providing assistance to persons planning a career, choosing or changing a profession, solving the problems of career disorders.

Career education is a set of consistently applied measures aimed at developing the competencies of a person's career planning, implementation and evaluation, ie career management.

[The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania](#) , [the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania](#), [and the Ministry of Social Security and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania](#) are responsible for orientation in Lithuania .

2003 [Lithuania's vocational guidance strategy](#) was approved, on the basis of which a vocational information and counseling system is being developed in Lithuania. Vocational information, counseling and career development services are provided in various institutions. **More information:**

- [Overview of the orientation system in Lithuania in English](#)
- [Career guidance system in Lithuania \(scheme\)](#)
- [Institutions and services](#)
- [Strategic documents](#)

- [Research "Development of Career Competences in Lithuania"](#)
- [Recommendations on the development of the content and organizational possibilities of career services for adults, appendices](#)

Funding

Career guidance services are funded from diverse resources. In education sector these services are funded by: state budget via pupil's basket (i.e. amount of money dedicated to one student's education) for guidance and cognitive activities) for general education and VET schools (which provide general education alongside VET). Part of overall pupil's basket (approx. 3 EUR per student) is dedicated to career guidance and study visits / activities. Another resources include: 1) state budget and own institution resources of VET schools and HE institutions; 2) ESF funds. In employment sector these services are funded by: 1) Funds for Active Labour Market measures /Funds for unemployed / Funds for Youth Guarantee Initiative (e.g. Lithuania presented a [Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan](#) on 18 December 2013 (updated in May 2014) and was eligible for the [Youth Employment Initiative](#) which has an allocation of 31.78 million euros (in current prices)); 2) ESF funds.

Quality assurance

Provision of career guidance services at general education and VET schools is regulated by the [Procedure on Implementation of Career Guidance](#) (Profesinio orientavimo vykdymo tvarkos aprašas) adopted by the Minister of Education and Science together with the Minister of Social Security and Labour in 2012. No specific standards are being available, except for the higher education institutions which follow the [Framework of Quality assurance of career management services for students](#) (Studentų karjeros valdymo paslaugų srities kokybės gairės). The Framework encompasses description of principles for ensuring the quality of career resources, career practitioners, code of ethics, etc. General education and VET schools are being regularly audited according to the [External Audit procedures for schools implementing secondary education programmes](#) adopted by the [Ministry of Education](#) in 2007 (Mokyklų, vykdančių bendrojo ugdymo programas, veiklos išorinio vertinimo organizavimo ir vykdymo tvarkos aprašas), which include indicators related to the provision of career guidance services at schools.

Counsellors within [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) system are working according to the Quality Standard of Provision of Guidance Services. The standard defines the rules and procedures of providing guidance services for jobseekers. Lithuanian Labour Exchange also has a special Central Department of Internal Audit. This department also contributes to quality assurance of the system. Moreover, a special methodology for evaluation of active labour market measures is in action. The effectiveness of Youth Job Centres is evaluated by analysing quarterly activity reports, action plans, feedback from social partners and public opinion as well as organising monitoring and customer surveys.

Career guidance counsellor is not state-regulated occupation. School career coordinator who works within the general school level is required to 1) have a higher education degree; 2) have at least 3 months working experience with tasks related to activities with school students or counselling; 4) be aware of careers education related legislation, have a good command of ICT related to guidance tasks; 5) be aware of basics of document processing and record keeping; 6) be fluent in Lithuanian language; 7) have at least B2 level command of any foreign language. School career counsellor, who coordinates a group of assigned school career coordinators, is required to: 1) have a higher education degree; 2) have at least 1 year of working experience with tasks of counselling or consulting activities; 3) have a good knowledge of national guidance policies, systems and legislation; 4) have some experience in performing management tasks; 5) have a good knowledge of pedagogy and andragogy and ability to use it in practical work; 6) be aware of basics of document processing and record keeping; 7) have a basic computer literacy qualification according to national standard; 8) be fluent in Lithuanian language; 9) have at least B2 level command of any foreign language, preferably English, French or German. Requirements for counsellors of territorial labour exchanges and it's youth job centres are

these 1) degree of higher or equivalent education; 2) at least 1 year of work experience in the field of employment policy; 3) knowledge of relevant legislation; 4) information management and analytical skills; 5) skills of written and verbal communication, ability to produce official documentation; 6) good command of ICT; 7) knowledge of foreign language at C2 level.

Private companies set up their own requirements and standards for guidance practitioners. To improve the process of quality assurance the Lithuanian Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2014-2020 aims to create a national network of business consultants under the responsibility of Enterprise Lithuania which would be expected to improve the quality of training and consultancy services. Lithuania also needs to strengthen entrepreneurship training that occurs outside of the formal education system in rural areas in terms of availability and quality and ensure that training content is tailored to the needs of the region (OECD, 2015). Lithuania also needs to strengthen entrepreneurship services that occurs outside of the formal education system in rural areas in terms of availability and quality (OECD, 2015).

There are several study programmes for guidance professionals at Lithuanian higher education institutions. E.g. Vytautas Magnus University offers bachelor and master programmes in career counselling and Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Klaipėda University and Šiauliai University offer master programmes of the same profile. At [Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences](#) and at some other higher education institutions short specialised courses (2-4 credits) on career development and career counselling are offered. In education sector courses for further development of school staff (including professionals acting as career counsellors or career coordinators) are being regularly offered by licensed educational institutions.

3.5 Traineeships and apprenticeships

Official guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships

Apprenticeship is one of the priorities of the national strategy on education 2013-2022, one of the measures of the national programme for increasing employment 2014-2020 (Government of the republic of Lithuania, 2013), and the national reform programme 2014 (Government of the republic of Lithuania, 2014). It has an important place in the memorandum of cooperation for implementation of youth guarantee initiative. An interministerial group initiated by the Prime minister of Lithuania worked in 2014 to develop amendments to legal acts necessary to encourage implementation of apprenticeship in the country, however, apprenticeship has not yet gained its position as a clear pathway in Lithuanian VET.

Three ministries – Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Social Security and Labour and Ministry of Economy – are responsible for VET-related issues. With the Ministry of Education and Science having overall responsibility for developing VET policies in the country, the Ministry of Social Security and Labour takes the lead in implementing active labour market policy measures for the unemployed, including the youth guarantee scheme, and the Ministry of Economy takes charge of human resource development and support to enterprises. Within their mandates, the three ministries implement apprenticeship (and apprenticeship-type) schemes to three distinct target groups. The three systems are different in terms of procedures and requirements.

According to the [Law on VET](#) adopted in 1997, apprenticeship in Lithuania is one of the forms of organising VET: 'vocational education shall be organised in school and apprenticeship forms'. An apprentice is contractually linked to the employer and receives remuneration (wage or allowance). [According to the Order Regarding VET Contracts and their Registration Procedure](#) adopted in 2010 by the Ministry of Education and Science and Ministry of Social Security and Labour, two types of contracts are to be concluded before the start of the apprenticeship: 1) an employment contract between a company and an apprentice that regulates training at the workplace; 2) a trilateral contract between the

training company, a VET institution and the apprentice that defines the school-based part of the training programme. An employer assumes responsibility for the company-based part of the programme leading to a qualification. According to the existing regulations, a company needs to ensure that the workplace has adequate equipment, tools and other technology for learning and that safety measures are observed. Companies also are responsible for nominating a competent person to supervise students.

In July 2014, the amendments for changes to the laws regarding employment support, social and health insurance premiums, aimed at encouraging young people between the age of 16 and 29 to find jobs in their home country, were signed. Following these changes, every young person who finds a traineeship offer has the cost of insurance against accidents in the workplace as well as social and health insurance premiums covered from the national budget. The main aim of these changes is to provide help to find a traineeship offer, since until these amendments only the students of universities with which various enterprises and organizations signed a three-party agreement have been able to participate in traineeships, gain professional experience and sometimes – find a job.

Traineeships and apprenticeships are a requirement in higher education programmes. The students of vocational schools, colleges and universities have to participate in traineeships in order to gain professional experience and sometimes – find a job within various enterprises and organizations that have three-party agreements with these vocational schools, colleges and universities. The length of the compulsory traineeship depends on the study program and varies from 2 weeks to 12 months. These traineeships are aimed to develop professional skills and do not focus directly on entrepreneurship skills.

Other apprenticeship-type training in Lithuania is mainly implemented in projects and schemes supported by the European Social Fund and the Youth Guarantee funds. Apart from motivational activities, young people are supported directly to obtain missing skills at the workplace or anchor in the labour market, including through subsidised employment where the state pays their salary.

Other projects help the young unemployed take part in vocational training. These projects are implemented through the labour market training centres rather than VET centres and schools. Some of these measures are actually apprenticeships based on working and training contracts. They are usually short-term, up to six months (linked to funding provisions, learners get a grant) but they take place in the Ministry of Education and Science accredited VET providers and can lead to formal or non-formal qualifications. Within the active labour market policy measures, young and adult unemployed participate in vocational training leading to formal qualifications through bipartite agreements with territorial [public employment services](#), and tripartite agreements with territorial public employment services and companies.

The Ministry of Economy has its own projects and schemes that include apprenticeship-type models. It has published a detailed proposal for development of apprenticeships and sectoral competences ([Pameistrystės ir sektorinių kompetencijų ugdymas](#), Ministry of economy, 2014) with the aim to promote non-formal apprenticeships to develop sectoral competences in regions. Support is provided to SMES (to compensate training costs on fixed lump sum or cost per working hour basis) and trade/branch organisations. In the latter, training should be provided for young specialists or those on a first employment contract; wages for employees of trade/branch organisations and training procurement as well as training tools costs for member companies are supported.

Some individual companies implement their own apprenticeships: most of them have cooperation with, or are branches of international companies from countries with established apprenticeship systems, such as Denmark and Germany.

Article 36 of the [Order of the Ministry of Education and Science on Procedure for Formal VET](#) adopted in 2012 outlines how apprenticeship training should be organised: (a) the institution or the person providing apprenticeships should have a licence. This implies: institution providing practical training has to be authorised to carry out training activity

(training has to be mentioned in its statute) and registered in the database of formal training providers administered by the Ministry of Education and Science; and relevant persons who will be training apprentice(s) should have completed a course for pedagogical-psychological competences with a duration of 120 hours. This requirement can be waived if a company cooperates with a VET provider; (b) theoretical training of an apprentice can be carried out in the VET school based on trilateral agreement between apprenticeship provider, apprentice and VET school; (c) apprenticeship is organised at the workplace with adequate equipment, tools and other technological as well as safety measures. Article 4 of the [Order Regarding VET Contracts and their Registration Procedures](#) adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science and Ministry of Social Security and Labour in 2010) details the content of the apprenticeship contract and obligations of students, VET provider and company.

According to the [Law on VET](#) adopted in 1997 social partners participate in: (a) the vocational education and [VET Council of Lithuania](#) that advises national education authorities on strategic issues of VET; (b) the central professional committee coordinates strategic issues regarding qualifications system development (including the forthcoming sectoral qualifications standards); (c) sectoral professional committees that work at branch/sector level. Youth organisations are involved in consultations and discussions with policy-makers on issues related to youth and implementation of education reform (such as discussions with the national examination centre on how to improve the examination process), ensuring involvement of young people in the decision-making. Some youth organisations participate in the Ministry of Education and Science working groups; some contribute to implementing the youth guarantee initiative in Lithuania. Parents' organisations involvement in VET is limited.

Provisions in the new Labour Code 2017

In the new Labour Code which came into force on 1 July 2017 apprenticeship labour contract is a new type of employment contracts which should encourage employers to provide employees with work, in case they are seeking an opportunity to acquire professional skills. According to the new Labour Code states that an apprenticeship employment contract may be: 1) an apprenticeship employment contract without concluding a training contract; 2) an apprenticeship employment contract concluded alongside with a training contract on formal or non-formal training governed by legislative acts. Apprenticeship contract must be concluded for a fixed term and the maximum term must not exceed six months, except for an apprenticeship employment contract concluded alongside with a training contract on formal or non-formal training governed by legislative acts, wherein a longer duration of training is defined. The employer must ensure the achievement of the outcomes provided for in the formal or non-formal training programme or provide all conditions to achieve the outcomes in case when the training is carried out in accordance with an apprenticeship employment contract concluded alongside with a training contract on formal or non-formal training governed by legislative acts, wherein a longer duration of training is defined. Upon concluding an apprenticeship employment contract without concluding a training contract, the employer must prepare a non-formal training programme for the whole period of validity of the apprenticeship employment contract. The competences acquired by the apprentice in the course of participation in the training programme, methods of acquiring them, course units, duration of learning, outcomes, and other essential provisions shall be included in the apprenticeship employment contract. The employer must appoint a competent employee of the employer as the training programme supervisor, who shall lead the training process, supervise the performance of the work function, and give guidance and advice to the apprentice. Parties to the apprenticeship contract without concluding a training contract may contractually agree on compensation of the employer's expenses incurred in relation to training by an allocation of not more than 20 per cent of the employee's average wage for such compensation. The execution of an apprenticeship employment contract concluded alongside with a training contract on formal or non-formal training shall be organised by the employer so that to achieve the objectives specified in the training agreement as well

as other conditions of the training agreement. The employer shall appoint an employee(s) to be in charge of the organisation of the working activities and practical training of the apprentice and an employee to be in charge of the coordination of the working activities and practical training (profession expert). The head of the professional training institution shall appoint a profession teacher to lead the workplace practical training of the apprentice. For the actual working time, an apprentice shall be paid the remuneration provided for in the apprenticeship employment contract, which may not be lower than the minimum monthly salary or minimum hourly pay approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. The time spent at the place of employment for acquiring theoretical knowledge and allocated for workplace-based training shall be included in the actual duration of working time when it exceeds twenty percent of the actual working time. The time spent in a training institution shall not be included in the working time and the employer shall not be obliged to pay any remuneration for that time. That time shall not account for more than thirty percent of the duration of the validity of the apprenticeship employment contract.

Promoting traineeships and apprenticeships

Promoting traineeships and apprenticeships is widely discussed in Lithuania today. The interest in apprenticeship programmes has increased significantly in recent years. In Lithuania new apprenticeship programmes are planned. However, there are no clear messages and understanding among stakeholders how it differs from existing VET and why the government tries so hard to implement it. The signed memorandum of cooperation for the implementation of the youth guarantee foresees promoting apprenticeship by disseminating good practice and initiatives, providing financial support to companies training VET students, and providing recommendations on further development of apprenticeship in Lithuania.

Recognition of learning outcomes

The skills young people acquire through participating in traineeships and apprenticeships can be formally recognised if they are part of education institution study program. Another form how skills young people acquire through participating in traineeships and apprenticeships can be recognised as volunteering activity. The Law on Volunteering provides that, taking into consideration the aims and nature of the volunteering activity, it may be recognized as practical work and/or learning experience, or credited as social work under a programme of general education. There is a need expressed by the Department of Youth Affairs to include volunteer activities in the [youth pass](#) - a European recognition tool for non-formal and informal learning.

Funding

Currently there is no mechanism in place for financial support of companies taking up apprentices. This is one of the core pitfalls that prevent a wider spread of apprenticeship-type schemes in the VET system. On the one hand, there are considerable costs associated with having an apprentice in the company, especially if the company is small sized with a few workers. There do not exist any mechanisms that would at least partially compensate the costs associated with apprentice-training. This means that firms not only have to pay salary for the apprentice, but also take an experienced specialist away from his/her duty and cover training material costs.

Quality assurance

Detailed requirements for quality assurance related to quality assurance applied to schemes of traineeships and apprenticeships in Lithuania have not been set yet. There are statements: (1) in the procedures for formal VET organisations it is required that apprentice's workplace, technological equipment, etc. would be in line with the requirements of VET programme; (2) Law on Education defines that teachers implementing VET programme should have participated in a course on pedagogy and psychology. The current system of quality assurance of schemes of traineeships and

apprenticeships in Lithuania covers school-based VET and is carried out by the [Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre](#) (Kvalifikacijų ir profesinio mokymo plėtros centras). The [Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre](#) implements VET quality assurance schemes with the support of a contracted and trained experts from various VET fields. However, the capacity of the [Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre](#) is not sufficient to go beyond minimum requirements. In case of the active labour market policies [territorial employment services](#) can inspect VET providers to check compliance with legal requirements, but they have limited resources and capacity to perform such checks systematically and on a broader scale. Some private business organizations that run traineeships and apprenticeships have their own standards of quality regulations. There are also issues related to the competence of the employees dealing with trainees or apprentices. Organizations involved in traineeships and apprenticeships express the need to train competent coordinators/managers in order to solve problems related to the management of traineeships and apprenticeships.

3.6 Integration of young people in the labour market

Youth employment measures

Supported employment measures include subsidised employment, support for the acquisition of professional skills, public works and job rotation programmes.

The measure “subsidised employment” is regulated by Article 24 of the Law on Support for Employment. Under this measure, employers hiring youth (ages 16-29) who are registered in the Lithuanian Labour Exchange can have 50% of the gross wage reimbursed for a period not exceeding six months. Priority is given to long-term unemployed youth, young parents of two children, and youth originating from families that have two or more family members registered in the Lithuanian Labour Exchange. The compensation equals 50% of the wage and cannot exceed two minimum wages per month (EUR 600 monthly or EUR 3.64 hourly). Employers who fire subsidised workers (within six months after the subsidy period) cannot receive subsidised employment for at least 12 months. In 2014, over 9 700 youth were hired under “subsidised employment” in Lithuania.

The measure “Support for the First Job” (Investicijų ir verslo garantijos), financed by the European Social Fund (ESF), was introduced in Lithuania in 2012 to promote youth employment. According to the measure, employers hiring youth (aged 16-29) with no previous work experience can receive a wage subsidy equal to 23.3% of the gross salary paid to the employee. Compensations are paid on a maximum wage of EUR 492.30 per month, and as a consequence the value of the compensation can in no case exceed EUR 114.70 per month.¹ The wage subsidy is paid for a maximum of 12 months (see, for more details, the webpage of Investicijų ir verslo garantijos UAB, [INVEGA](#), the independent agency in charge with administering the programme). The overall budget for this measure is EUR 9 270 000, and it is estimated that around 20 000 youth in total will benefit from this measure (European Social Fund, 2014). Although the project is going to end in September 2015, a similar project funded by the European Union will be introduced and shall be operational until 2020.

Job rotation programme is organised in cases when unemployed people are hired to temporarily replace employees that are on leave (e.g. parental leave, educational and sabbatical leave). PES provides employer with a wage subsidy of up to 0.5 of the minimum wage for a maximum of 12 months. The programme attracts relatively few participants – 400 people in 2012, which suggests even fewer youth participated in the programme.

The measure “support for the acquisition of professional skills” is also regulated by Article 24 of the Law on Support for Employment. The measure provides partial wage subsidies to employers hiring youth (ages 16-29) who need to acquire new skills. These include: those who have been given a notice of dismissal; long-term unemployed; and those who start a job for the first time. The compensation equals 50% of the wage and cannot exceed

two minimum wages per month (EUR 600 monthly or EUR 3.64 hourly). The duration of the subsidy is five months, while it is 12 months for youth starting a job with a newly acquired qualification. During 2014, over 2 000 youth participated in this programme.

Public works are provided and financed by the Lithuanian Labour Exchange and municipalities. The total duration of public works carried out by a job seeker can in no case exceed six months over a period of 12 months. An employer who hires a job seeker sent by the Lithuanian Labour Exchange to carry out public works is entitled to receive a wage subsidy for the hours worked by the employed person equalling the minimum hourly wage plus a compensation for social security contributions (Nekrošius and Petrylaitė, 2010).

Vocational education and training programmes are active labour market measures provided by the [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#). The following *vocational education and training programmes* are in place: 1) a voucher system, introduced in 2012; and 2) an apprenticeship programme, introduced in 2013. The voucher system is aimed to fund the training for the unemployed. [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) issues a voucher to registered unemployed persons or persons who received a notice of dismissal who can redeem the voucher at vocational education and training (VET) providers approved by [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#). A training contract is signed between [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#), the employer and the participant. The trainee may receive an education grant (50% to 60% of minimum wage for the actual hours spend in training) and may request additional funding to cover costs of accommodation and travel. Typically the employer provides guarantee that the participant will be reemployed for at least six months after completion of the training.

Support for local mobility commuting is provided to the registered unemployed people who found a job in geographical areas other than their current place of residence. Expenses on accommodation and travel costs are covered up to a sum of one minimum wage. Support is provided for a period of up to three months.

Socially useful activities is an employment support programme organised and managed by the municipalities independently from [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#). The programme targets social assistance benefit recipients who have been unemployed for more than six months. Usual duration of the programme is 40 hours per month. Participants do not receive wage but work in return for receiving the benefits.

Main legislation supporting the integration of young people in the labour market:

- 2013 April 22 [Council Recommendation on the establishment of a Youth Guarantee Initiative](#);
- 2020 October 30 [Council Recommendation "A bridge to the labor market. Reinforced Youth Guarantee Initiative"](#), which replaces the 2013 April 22 Council Recommendation on the establishment of a Youth Guarantee Initiative.
- 2014 March 10 [Council Recommendation on the quality framework for traineeships](#).
- 2016 June 21 Employment Law of the Republic of Lithuania No. XII-2470 ([current consolidated version](#)).
- 2014 August 19 Order of the Minister of Social Security and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania "On Approval of the Description of the Procedure for the Implementation of the Youth Guarantee Initiative" No. A1-416 ([current consolidated version](#)).
- 2021 February 4 Order of the Minister of Social Security and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania "[On the Approval of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Youth Guarantee Initiative](#)" No. A1-108.

Flexicurity measures focusing on young people

The actions envisage the drafting of legal acts regulating more flexible employment relations, seek to increase the employment rate of youth and elderly people ([Interinstitutional Action Plan 2014–2016 Implementing the Employment Increasing](#)

[Programme 2014–2020](#)), and are related to the creation of the environment conducive to the promotion of entrepreneurship and the development of business. With regard to the connections of problems, goals, and seeking continuity of actions, the Action Plan also includes actions contributing to the implementation of the National Strategy of Overcoming the Ageing Consequences.

In order to establish greater flexibility in labour relations the new Labour Code came into force in Lithuania on 1 July 2017. It offers to legitimate a conclusion of fixed-term contract if work is of a permanent nature and the parties agree. The Labour Code on the one hand proposes to shorten the notice period of dismissal and to reduce the size of severance pays, more flexibly regulates working time, allows to conclude fixed term labour contracts for permanent jobs, but on the other hand specifically regulate new issues such as promotion of life-long learning, the employee's life-work balance, the protection of personal data and non-discrimination, use of information technologies at work, compulsory remuneration system in workplaces, where the average number of employees is more than 20, minimum monthly wage would be permissible only for unqualified work, more duties for employers to provide works council with information concerning employees' social and economic position, etc. As for the regulation of fixed-term contracts, the essential innovation is established with the possibility to conclude fixed-term contracts in the absence of the objective criterion of temporality. This does not contradict the European Union legislation provided that the maximum total duration of employment relationship and (or) the maximum number of renewals of the contract is determined. In Lithuania it is proposed to use this stipulation in the following way – employment relationships resulting from a fixed-term contract, in the absence of limitation of the number of renewals, may not continue longer than two years. The total duration of successive fixed-term contracts concluded with the same employee for the performance of different work may not exceed five years. Failure to comply with these requirements causes such employment contract become an indefinite-term contract. For the first time the Lithuanian law provides for a severance pay in case the employee's fixed-term contract has lasted for over one year and has expired due to the expiry of its term – such employee shall be paid a severance pay in the amount of one monthly wage. The Parliament also approved, that number of fixed-term contracts cannot exceed twenty percent of all employer's contracts of employment.

Reconciliation of private and working life for young people

There are no specific measures of reconciliation of private and working life for young people as a separate social group; however there are specific measures of reconciliation of private and working life for persons having young children (parents) and pregnant women. Present Labour Code 2017 provides that an employment contract with an employee who is a pregnant woman during her pregnancy and until the child reaches the age of four months may be terminated by agreement of the parties, on the initiative of the employee, on the initiative of the employee during the trial period, without the will of the parties, and upon expiry of a fixed-term employment contract at the end of its term. The fact of pregnancy of the employee shall be confirmed by providing the employer with a medical certificate of pregnancy. From the day when the employer became aware of the pregnancy of the employee to the day when the child reaches the age of four months, the employer shall not be entitled to give the employee who is a pregnant woman a notice of the future termination of the employment contract or to take a decision to terminate the employment contract on any grounds other than those specified in paragraph 1 of this Article. If grounds for the termination of the employment contract have arisen during this period, the employee who is a pregnant woman may be given a notice of the termination of the employment contract, or a decision to terminate the employment contract may be taken only after the end of this period. If an employee is granted a pregnancy or childbirth leave, or a childcare leave during the period until the child reaches the age of four months, the employment contract may be terminated only after the end of such a leave. The main difference in new Labour code adopted in 2017 that fixed term employment contract with a pregnant woman could be terminated upon its expiry. But if an employee is granted a

pregnancy or childbirth leave, or a childcare leave during the period until the child reaches the age of four months, the employment contract may be terminated only after the end of such a leave.

Previous Labour Code provided that employment contracts with employees raising a child (children) under three years of age may not be terminated without any fault on the part of the employee concerned. New Labour Code adopted in 2017 provides, that employment contracts with employees raising a child (children) aged up to three years may not be terminated on the initiative of the employer in case of no fault of the employee. Employment contracts with employees who are on a pregnancy and childbirth, paternity or childcare leave may not be terminated at the discretion of the employer.

Previous Labour Code had provisions that employees raising a disabled child under eighteen years of age or two children up to twelve years are granted an additional day of rest per month (or reduced working hours by two hours per week), while raising three or more children up to twelve years - two days a month (or, respectively, reduced working hours by four hours per week), paid the average wage. Employees working longer than eight hours shifts, request the additional rest period may be summed up every three months. Employees raising a child under 12 years old can have at least half of the working day off on the first day of the school year (usually 1st of September) for which the salary is paid. The New labour Code adopted in 2017 does not have these provisions.

There are no specific initiatives to support gender equality targeting young women or men as a special age group in the labour market. But in order to foster a sustainable change towards better accessing the labour force potential of women a series of public and private initiatives – with legislative and non-legislative focus - have been implemented in Lithuania. In Lithuania, women and men are almost equally represented in the labour market (60.5% of the female and 60.9% of the male population are employed; in comparison to the EU-27 average of 58.5%; moreover the employment rate of women in Lithuania is higher than that of men (see [Country Profile on Gender Equality](#)). [The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania](#) provides the principle of equality for all people and the inherent right to be treated equally with others. Lithuanian Parliament adopted the [Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men](#) on 1 December 1998. The first Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson (hereinafter – Ombudsperson) was appointed on 20 April 1999. The Office of the [Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson](#) was established on 25 May 1999 by the Parliament of Lithuania. In 2005, a new [Law on Equal Treatment](#) came into force. Ombudsperson's mandate was extended and guaranteed the right to file complaints to the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson in cases of discrimination on grounds of age, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnic origin, religion or beliefs. The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson is a budgetary institution financed from the state budget. Ombudsperson, by proposal from the Speaker of the Seimas (Parliament), is assigned for a term of five years by secret voting in Parliament. Ombudsperson is accountable to Parliament and is responsible for the enforcement of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and the Law on Equal Treatment. The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson investigates complaints, carries out investigations on personal initiative and provides consultations regarding submitted inquiries, performs independent researches, related to discrimination and independent surveys on the discrimination state, releases independent reports, provides conclusions and recommendations on any issue related to discrimination with regard to the implementation of both mentioned laws, also provides proposals to the state institutions of the Republic of Lithuania, as well as municipality institutions and offices on further development of legal acts and priorities of equal opportunities policy implementation, carries out preventive and educational activity, including propagation of equal opportunities assurance. The Office also exchanges the possessed information with institutions of the European Union and international organisations with analogical functions. The [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) is responsible for the implementation of the [National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for 2015-2016](#). The Programme aims at addressing, in a consistent, complex and systematic manner, gender equality issues, ensuring gender mainstreaming

in all spheres and tackling specific problems of women and men. The Programme identifies main priorities for gender equality, and specific measures to achieve set goals. [Women Employment Information Centre in Kaunas](#) is a public organisation (non-governmental organisation) working in the area of improving the status of women in Lithuania with the regards to women employment issues, self-employment, enterprise development, women's leadership, influencing public opinion on gender equality. [Lithuanian Coalition of Non-Governmental Organizations for Protection of Women's Humans Rights](#) conducts a number of activities such as projects and seminars on the benefits of gender equality. The Women Committee at the [Lithuanian Labour Federation](#) (LDF) promotes equal opportunities for women and men, better work-life balance, abolishing gender stereotypes etc.

Funding of existing schemes/initiatives

Lithuania is included the Youth Employment Initiative in the Operational Programme for the European Union Funds' Investments in 2014-2020; where its implementation was assigned to specific objective 7.4.1. "Reduce the number of young people between 15 and 29 years of age not in employment, education or training" of Priority 7 "Promoting Quality Employment and Participation in the Labour Market". This specific objective includes two Youth Employment Initiative supported projects which is aimed to provide assistance to 35,000 young people aged 15-29 who are not in employment, education or training until 2018. The primary intervention project "Discover Yourself" (Atrask save) is implemented between Lithuanian Public Employment Service, called the [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#), acting as a leading partner, and [Department of Youth Affairs](#). Each institution coordinates a separate strand of the project targeting different NEET groups. [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#)'s programme is designed for active NEETs who are officially registered with LLE as unemployed whereas [Department of Youth Affairs](#) targets inactive NEETs. The project offers early intervention services that will focus on the development of motivational, social and labour market skills through engaging NEETs in voluntary activities, various trainings, traineeship and apprenticeship experiences as well as providing them with psychological counselling, skills' assessment and other measures to enhance their motivation for work. It is planned that 23,000 unemployed NEETs and 12,000 inactive NEETs will participate in the project 'Discover Yourself', which will be fully launched, most likely, in April 2016. Those participants of the project "Discover Yourself" who do not receive unsubsidised job offer will be offered participation in the secondary intervention project "New Start" (Naujas startas). The project which will be carry outed only by the [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#), plans to involve a total of 11 065 unique NEETs in various active labour market measures. Most of the participants of this project will be involved in vocational training (around 9 000). Other participants will receive subsidised jobs or a package of several services (for example, vocational training and subsidised job) depending on their needs. The project 'New Start' will provide an opportunity to support the most disadvantaged participants of the first YEI project for a longer period of time than just 4 months.

The measure "subsidised employment" is regulated by Article 24 of the Law on Support for Employment. Under this measure, employers hiring youth (ages 16-29) who are registered in the Lithuanian Labour Exchange can have 50% of the gross wage reimbursed for a period not exceeding six months. Priority is given to long-term unemployed youth, young parents of two children, and youth originating from families that have two or more family members registered in the Lithuanian Labour Exchange. The compensation equals 50% of the wage and cannot exceed two minimum wages per month (EUR 600 monthly or EUR 3.64 hourly). Employers who fire subsidised workers (within six months after the subsidy period) cannot receive subsidised employment for at least 12 months. In 2014, over 9 700 youth were hired under "subsidised employment" in Lithuania.

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month, and as a consequence the value of the compensation can in no case exceed EUR 114.70 per month.¹ The wage subsidy is paid for a maximum of 12 months (see, for more details, the webpage of Investicijų ir verslo garantijos UAB, [INVEGA](#), the independent agency in charge with administering the programme). The overall budget for this measure is EUR 9 270 000, and it is estimated that around 20 000 youth in total will benefit from this measure (European Social Fund, 2014). Although the project is going to end in September 2015, a similar project funded by the European Union will be introduced and shall be operational until 2020.

Job rotation programme is organised in cases when unemployed people are hired to temporarily replace employees that are on leave (e.g. parental leave, educational and sabbatical leave). PES provides employer with a wage subsidy of up to 0.5 of the minimum wage for a maximum of 12 months. The programme attracts relatively few participants – 400 people in 2012, which suggests even fewer youth participated in the programme.

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[Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) implements three ESF projects, where young people are one of the target groups:

1. Project “Trust in Yourself”: intended for young people aged 16-25 who are not in employment nor education, nor engaged in any measures of active labour market policy. In 2014, LTL 2.2 million was used for the implementation of the Programme of Social Rehabilitation and Preparation for Employment in the Labour Market; intended funding for 2015 – LTL 1.4 million.
2. Project “Employment Support”: targeted at young people under 29 to engage them in two measures of active labour market policy: subsidised employment and supporting acquisition of job skills. – In 2014, LTL 12.61 million used for the implementation of activities intended to boost youth employment.
3. Project “Stay in the Labour Market”: targeted at young people under 29 to engage them in three measures of active labour market policy: subsidised employment, supporting acquisition of job skills and job rotation. – In 2014, LTL 20.5 million used for the implementation of activities targeted at young people under 29 (LTL 17.83 million from ESF funds; LTL 2.68 million from the Unemployment Fund).

Quality assurance

The following key sources of primary and secondary data are used to properly evaluate the youth employment measures and schemes implemented in Lithuania: information, provided by administrators of the measures, project managers; related legislative acts and documents; statistical data from EU Structural Fund computerized information management and monitoring system (SFMIS) database, Eurostat and Statistics Lithuania; previously conducted evaluations; surveys; sources and research papers of international institutions, addressing youth employment initiative; statistical data from State Social Insurance Fund Board of the Republic of Lithuania and National Health Insurance Fund under the Ministry of Health. The above mentioned mechanisms of quality insurance of measures implemented in Lithuania help to evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of these measures, with a view to improve the implementation of similar measures in the forthcoming periods and better tailor these measures to meet the needs of youth.

3.7 Cross-border mobility in employment, entrepreneurship and vocational opportunities

Programmes and schemes for cross-border mobility

EU programmes involving programmes and schemes for cross-border mobility are administered by the [Agency of International Youth Cooperation](#). It is a public non-profit institution established in February 1999 by The State Council for Youth Affairs (currently Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour) and Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT). The main aim of the agency is to ensure the development of international youth cooperation and successful participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programmes for young people. The agency provides information about possibilities of participation in European Union programme “Erasmus+” Youth, youth exchanges, European Voluntary Service, youth workers’ mobility, strategic partnerships, structured dialogue projects and their organizational possibilities. Participation in other programmes usually takes place in the framework of cooperation among individual organizations.

Legal framework

General entry and stay, taxation or social security provisions apply to the entire population regardless of age. Information on entry of EU and non-EU citizens to Lithuania and rights to reside, taxation arrangements and social security provisions can be found at the website of [Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania](#). [The Startup Visa](#) is a talent attraction scheme that provides a streamlined entry process to the Lithuanian startup ecosystem for innovative non-EU entrepreneurs to build, grow and compete in our booming international community. Designed for innovative startup founders who wish to establish a startup in Lithuania. They no longer need to fulfil certain capital or employment requirements to obtain a residence permit. If a business idea is deemed suitable by a panel of experts, persons will be able to apply for a temporary residence permit on such basis. [The Startup Visa](#) will allow to live in the country for one year, with the possibility to extend for an additional year, after which general immigration requirements must be met.

3.8 Development of entrepreneurship competence

Policy Framework

Lithuania is one of the first EU countries to develop entrepreneurship education strategies at the school level (OECD, 2015). The importance of entrepreneurship education was explicitly noted for the first time in Lithuanian national education strategy adopted in 2003. The National Strategy of Education 2003-2012 states as a principle to strengthen attention on all ISCED levels to entrepreneurship and finance management. The aim is to reach that every student of lower secondary school would achieve elements of economic literacy. This led to the development of two specific strategies: 1) “Economic Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education” (2004) and the “National Programme of Youth Entrepreneurship Education and Encouragement 2008-2012”, which both aim “to strengthen the focus on entrepreneurship and financial management at all school levels” (EACEA, 2012). The purpose of the [Entrepreneurship Action Plan of Lithuania for 2014–2020](#) is to define actions the implementation of which would ensure consistent growth of the level of entrepreneurship in Lithuania through the development of consistent and continuous entrepreneurship education system, favourable environment for business start-up and development by improving accessibility of public services to business, the image of the entrepreneur in the society and promoting entrepreneurship of target groups and social entrepreneurship with special focus on regions. The objective of the Entrepreneurship Action Plan is to raise the level of entrepreneurship. In order to achieve this objective three tasks were set: 1) to establish a consistent and continuous system of

entrepreneurship education; 2) to create favourable environment for the start-up and development of business; 3) to promote entrepreneurship by ensuring accessibility of public services to business, distinguishing entrepreneurship of target groups (youth, women) and start-ups as well as social and regional entrepreneurship and developing a positive public image of the entrepreneur.

Formal learning

At the **primary education** level in Lithuania, entrepreneurship is integrated within social sciences (i.e. “world discovery”) and also as part of the natural sciences; both of which are compulsory subjects (EACEA, 2012). This approach is rare because most countries take a cross-curricular approach that emphasises the transversal objectives of entrepreneurship (OECD, 2015). Nonetheless, the integration of entrepreneurship within core subject areas demonstrates a very high level of commitment to entrepreneurship teaching in Lithuania and ensures that a large number of young students are introduced to entrepreneurship (OECD, 2015).

At **secondary level**, “Economics and Entrepreneurship Education” (grades 9-10) is a compulsory subject in the Lithuanian curriculum. Entrepreneurship is also integrated into several compulsory subjects such as social sciences and maths, sciences, technology and ICT. In upper secondary education, entrepreneurship is integrated in compulsory subjects (social sciences and maths-sciences technology-ICT) and is also an optional subject. Most programmes in secondary schools co-operate with Junior Achievement and through this co-operation, students learn core business management skills. Junior Achievement Lithuania (JAL) is a non-profit organisation of which the mission is to train youth in developing a free-market spirit, understanding of business and economics, leadership, entrepreneurship and initiative skills. Apart from building an entrepreneurial culture, the organisation helps to consolidate trust in entrepreneurs within society. It is part of Junior Achievement Worldwide (JAW), although it is not financially or structurally dependent from it. Therefore, it pursues an international practice with modern technology in which theory is complemented with practical activities. JAL is conscious about the importance of context for entrepreneurship and, therefore, has a licence from JAW to modify educating material according to Lithuania’s reality. Participation in their programmes is free for students. JAL programmes are taught in 40% of the secondary schools (EACEA, 2012). JAL organises workshops for teachers of all subjects in economics and entrepreneurship aspects (3 000). JAL has a clear division of their programmes in: financial literacy (economics, investment competition, and computer simulation), career development (shadowing an employee, leadership) and entrepreneurship (company and start-up programme, summer camps, business competitions for students of grades 9-12). The programmes on entrepreneurship aim to promote students’ capabilities such as: creative thinking, teamwork, solving of real problems and accountability to achieve their goals. They have evaluated these programmes observing that JAL graduates are better prepared for work, get easier a promotion and more often create their own business.

There is a general consensus that the **vocational training** (VET) system needs improvement in Lithuanian (Lithuanian Monitor for Education, 2013), which has led to the drafting of the development of the Action Plan for the Development of Vocational Education and Training 2014-2016 which was approved in 2014. One of the main objectives of this plan is to strengthen the work-based learning (including apprenticeship type of VET organisation) because implementation of this type of VET organisation is relatively low (Franczak et al., 2011 quoted in OECD, 2015). This creates an opportunity to improve entrepreneurship training in VET because work-based learning (including apprenticeship type VET organisation) can be used to provide experience learning about business management and entrepreneurship through active learning. This active learning could also contribute to career guidance and play a significant role in helping VET students identify opportunities that they could pursue after completion of their studies (OECD, 2015).

In Lithuania, entrepreneurship is generally not included in **higher education** programmes outside of business schools. The National Programme for Higher Education 2013-2020

focuses on the importance of developing job-specific competences in educational institutions and on career guidance to help students make a conscious and informed choice of the study and career paths. Implicitly this would include entrepreneurship. At some universities economics and entrepreneurship are offered as optional study modules for students. However, there is little evidence that higher education institutions are systematically promoting and supporting entrepreneurship except for business schools and business study programmes (OECD, 2015).

Non-formal and informal learning

Entrepreneurship and innovation training outside of formal education is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. Junior Achievement is the most important organisation in providing entrepreneurship and innovation training outside of formal education in Lithuania. It adapts international practices to the Lithuanian context, stimulating innovations and entrepreneurship culture through initiatives such as company programmes where students manage their own firms for one year, assuming risks but with lower requirements than normal companies. It also offers simulations, summer camps and innovation camps. In addition, a number of business associations are active in supporting youth entrepreneurship through mentoring, business counselling, delivering seminars and hosting internships to help youth acquire entrepreneurship skills and develop industry contacts (e.g. Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists, Business Employers' Confederation, Youth Business Club). [INVEGA](#), a public loan guarantees institution established under the Ministry of Economy, operates one of the most important innovation and entrepreneurship supports in Lithuania, the [Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund](#), which provides micro-credit that includes a training offer to financing recipients. The Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund was established at the end of 2009 and continues to operate. The Fund was initiated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, the Ministry of Finance and INVEGA, which is an agency that is responsible for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in Lithuania and facilitating their access to financing. INVEGA is the managing authority of the EPF. The main objectives of the EPF are: to achieve the provision of small loans to start-up self-employed and SMEs at "better than-market" conditions; to increase access to start-up finance for disadvantaged target groups including: – unemployed people; – youth entrepreneurs under 29 years old; – older entrepreneurs over 50 years old; – people with a disability; to achieve a minimum of 30% of training places and 15% of loans to be allocated to people from the priority groups; to increase start-up self-employment and entrepreneurship in the Lithuanian economy; to increase the levels of entrepreneurship and self-employment in the target groups; to encourage the take-up of training and advice by start-up entrepreneurs and those seeking to enter self-employment; to increase the number of sustainable new SMEs and newly self-employed; to reduce unemployment and keep people active in the business and labour market; to contribute to the development of a viable entrepreneurial culture in Lithuania. EPF provides preferential access to youth, seniors, the unemployed and people with disabilities. Available supports include microcredit, loan guarantees, entrepreneurship training and business counselling. For a more detailed description of the objectives and rationale of EPF, detailed explanation how the programme works and the programme's impact see OECD [Good Practice Compendium](#).

Educators support in entrepreneurship education

In Lithuania teachers receive substantial support and training. In Lithuania, implementation guidelines and learning outcomes for entrepreneurship education are included in national curricula and methodological material is available for teachers. These guidelines and materials are the primary support that teachers receive (EACEA, 2012). In addition, Junior Achievement has prepared entrepreneurship textbooks and has trained approximately 3 000 teachers (out of 40 000 teachers). Relative to other EU and OECD countries, this is a high proportion. Moreover, the [Entrepreneurship Action Plan of Lithuania for 2014–2020](#) includes measures to increase the competences of teachers, especially those of vocational education.

3.9 Start-up funding for young entrepreneurs

Access to information

Since 2012 [Lithuanian](#) startup ecosystem had been expanding exponentially. Lithuania has many competitive advantages including: location between east and west, highly qualified IT talent pool, operating cost advantages, as well as expanding and supportive ecosystem. According to [Startup Lithuania](#), the country has been acting as hotspot for local and regional startups. IT sector expansion facilitated creation of new businesses and workplaces but also increased awareness of Lithuanian IT potential since Lithuanian startups were seen scaling up globally. [Startup Lithuania](#) believe that Lithuania has a perfect setting for IT sector to continue exponential expansion. In 2012, [Enterprise Lithuania](#) organized 25 start-up events. The biggest event organized by [Startup Lithuania](#) was [Silicon Valley comes to the Baltic's](#) with more than 1500 participants. Periodically, Startup Lithuania also had hackathons including - [App Camps](#) with 500 participants and 60 teams formed, Startup Weekend with 150 people and 20 teams formed which was held in the highest building in the region – Television tower, 150 meters above the ground level. The ecosystem also had numerous niche sector events such as [GameJam](#) (100 people, 25 games created). In 2012 there had been rising international interest in the region. [Oxygen accelerator](#) from London and [Rockstart accelerator](#) from Amsterdam, both held events on the same day and discussed potential expansion opportunities in Vilnius. Locally, there had been [StartupHighway accelerator](#) which had had a track record of 10 teams accelerated and added more in May 2013. From the investment side, with the [European JEREMIE initiative](#) help Lithuanian Startup ecosystem have had 4 funds operating in Lithuania. These include [Practica Capital](#) (21.7M), [Mes Invest – Business Angel Fund](#) (27.6M), [BaltCap](#) (20M) and [LitCapital](#) (25M) with a total capitalization of EUR 100M to be invested by 2015. [Practica Capital](#) which had operated seed fund of 6M Eur, had made 5 investments locally and made a declaration to do 1 investment per month up to 200k Eur with further 12 investments in the pipeline through 2013. As a result, more funding had been pouring into Lithuanian Startup ecosystem when Baltic Investment Fund had been launched with 200M Eur total capitalization divided across three countries. In addition, other Mega venture capital funds including [Acell Partners](#) had made investments in Lithuanian based startups – like [GetJar](#).

2013 can be considered as a breakthrough year for Lithuanian startups. According to Enterprise Lithuania data, 19 investments totaling EUR 16M reached Lithuanian startups in 2013, while investments in 2007-2012 amounted to EUR 34M, of which EUR 31.5M had been invested into [GetJar](#). 42 startups created 224 jobs in Lithuania. [Enterprise Lithuania](#) has bounded bridges with Silicon Valley as well as other international key startup destinations to attract further investment and exchange of ideas. In 2013, April 18-19 during biggest tech conference in the region – [LOGIN](#), the [Startup Fair](#) was organized for the first time. Best regional startups had an opportunity to pitch to Silicon Valley and European investors. Also, later in 2013 Startup Lithuania did a 3 stop – Roadshow, where best 20 Lithuanian startups had been visiting Stockholm, London and Tel Aviv to present their companies to international investors, entrepreneurs, business angels and Venture capital funds.

The state investments in startups administered by Enterprise Lithuania amounted to EUR 0.35M in 2013, and said startups paid more than EUR 0.5M into the budget in taxes. Average age of startup founders is 29. The youngest startup founder participating in the survey was 17, and the oldest was 46 (see full [overview of Startup Lithuania 2013](#)). Lithuanian Startup Community is expanding and is more and more visible on the global map. [LOGIN Startup Fair](#) was large event with 30 VC funds and accelerators and 65 startups from the region and [International Startup Day](#) was celebrated.

In terms of investment, 2015 might be the record year for LTstartups. [Vinted](#), [Trafi](#), [Vittamed](#) and [TransferGo](#) raised EUR 42M, not to mention several modest injections of up to EUR 0,5M into other companies. In 2015 the start-up ecosystem in Lithuania witnessed new players and initiatives e.g. [project of Vilnius Tech Park has been confirmed](#);

[GreenGarage, a new maker's space has been opened](#); 1st gaming conference [GameOn](#) was held with 7000+ participants; [Startup Lithuania partnered with CrunchBase](#); [HackerGames, a new series of hackathons](#) were organised.

Enterprise Lithuania organises events to support start-ups to build connections or attract funding from Silicon Valley or European investors. This risk capital market is not well-developed in Lithuania, so the next best option is pursued – the “Road Show” takes youth entrepreneurs to other markets. This is an expensive and resource intense process when all of the promotion, selection, travel and follow-up are considered. However, a small number of entrepreneurs stand to benefit greatly from this opportunity and will likely lead to positive outcomes for Lithuania, such as job creation. Due to the nature of business angel and venture capital investment, high-tech businesses are often favoured excluding non-innovative and agricultural start-ups. This therefore excludes the bulk of youth entrepreneurs.

Access to capital

With regard to access to capital for youth entrepreneurship Lithuania can be regarded as an example of good practice. Access to finance is one of the strongest elements of the youth entrepreneurship support system in Lithuania (OECD, 2015). The Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund (EPF) is the principal method of financing youth entrepreneurship. It also supports other key target groups: unemployed, disabled, young people (under 29 years old) and older people (50 years old or older). The EPF supports new businesses by offering soft loans with government guarantees. The beneficiaries are also able to recover up to 95% of interest paid and invest these recovered funds into further growth.

The Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund (EPF) is a microcredit programme in Lithuania (financed from ESF) managed by [INVEGA](#). The EPF programme contributes to the goals of INVEGA which include the promotion of an entrepreneurial and self-employment culture in Lithuania and sustainable SMEs. EPF provides microloans, up to a maximum of EUR 25 year). An unusual and unique feature of the programme is that these microloans are part of a package of complementary support for beneficiaries. This complementary support includes free training, advice and additional financial support (e.g. interest rate subsidies, partial employee subsidies). INVEGA also offers loan guarantees of up to 80% of the value of the loan for those start-up businesses that create jobs and employ staff.

The EPF aims to increase start-up entrepreneurship and self-employment in Lithuania and includes priority groups from disadvantaged and under-represented people in entrepreneurship. Included in priority groups are: young people under 29, older people over 50, people who are disabled and people who are unemployed. The programme has surpassed its targets annually for these disadvantaged groups. Funding for the support package has been achieved through EU ESF monies to create the Holding Fund, which also receives a contribution from the LCCU. ERDF and state funds contribute to the interest rate and the funding of the financial guarantees.

INVEGA selected a consortium of 57 credit unions to allocate LTL 50 million (approximately EUR 14.5 million) to SMEs by 2015. The objective of this financial support was to create 1 000 new jobs by granting 1 200 loans to individuals or SMEs and deliver business training for up to 5 000 people. INVEGA provides two grants to support new entrepreneurs that youth benefit from. First, the Support for the First Job Grant covers 23.3% of wages (up to EUR 115 per month) for enterprises to hire people who are 29 years old or younger into their first job. The total budget for this grant is EUR 9.3 million. This is a youth employment measure but youth entrepreneurs can also benefit from it.

The second is Grants for Entrepreneurship Promotion. This grant is for borrowers under the Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund and can be used to partially cover salaries (up to EUR 7 230.50 by all beneficiaries of the Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund (except social enterprises), but the priority is given to those entrepreneurs who belong to a social priority group, including youth entrepreneurs (29 years old and younger) as well as entrepreneurs starting from unemployment, entrepreneurs with a disability and entrepreneurs over the

age of 50; and up to EUR 5 792.40 by all other entrepreneurs)- these entrepreneurs can get bigger amount of money than others for the funding partial payment of salaries.

The [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) provides two subsidies. First, a targeted subsidy is offered to youth entrepreneurs (or entrepreneurs with a disability) to support business start-up. It provides up to LTL 41 000 (approximately EUR 11 875) and up to 50 hours of training are offered through Enterprise Lithuania, which would be expected to increase their chances of starting a sustainable business. If recipients of this grant close down they may be required to partially or fully repay the grant. If the start-up ceases operations during the first year, 100% of the subsidy must be returned or 80% during the second year and 50% during the third year. The aim of this approach is to motivate the entrepreneurs so that they work to be successful in order to not have to repay the grant. There is merit to this approach, but it is not clear how an entrepreneur that faces disadvantages due to their personal characteristics (i.e. their age or a disability) would be expected to pay back a large sum of money.

The second subsidy is a small grant that can be used towards covering the costs of a business license, social security contributions or medical insurance. The monthly grant is up to LTL 250 (approximately EUR 70), depending on the region. Approximately 4 000 youth entrepreneurs received this subsidy during the first half of 2014.

Despite the availability of these grants for youth entrepreneurs, it is clear that there is a trend towards the use of loans or loan guarantees to support youth entrepreneurs. This is highlighted in the Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2014-2020 which emphasises the role of these instruments under the second objective.

Support is also provided by EPF to entrepreneurs to assist them with preparing the loan application. Each entrepreneur works with a loan manager to complete the required documentation for the loan application. The loan manager presents the application and business plan to the Credit Union Board, who takes the final decision about financing. Another strong point with INVEGA is the speed at which loans are issued. Unsecured loans are issued within 4-6 weeks and secured loans within 8 weeks.

Enterprise Lithuania organises events to support start-ups to build connections or attract funding from Silicon Valley or European investors. Similarly, the “3-Stop Road Show” provides an opportunity to the 20 best Lithuanian start-ups to visit Stockholm, London and Tel Aviv where they present their companies to international investors, entrepreneurs, business angels and venture capital funds. In addition, Enterprise Lithuania organises acceleration events, which aim to promote the quick expansion of high-tech companies.

This risk capital market is not well-developed in Lithuania, so the next best option is pursued – the “Road Show” takes youth entrepreneurs to other markets. This is an expensive and resource-intense process when all of the promotion, selection, travel and follow-up are considered. However, a small number of entrepreneurs stand to benefit greatly from this opportunity and will likely lead to positive outcomes for Lithuania, such as job creation. Due to the nature of business angel and venture capital investment, high-tech businesses are often favoured excluding non-innovative and agricultural start-ups. This therefore excludes the bulk of youth entrepreneurs (OECD, 2015).

3.10 Promotion of entrepreneurship culture

Special events and activities

[INVEGA](#) produces a large number of easily accessible publications related to labour market trends and skills demand. While these are not directly related to entrepreneurship, youth can use these products to help identify areas in the economy with excess demand. In addition, the Ministry of Economy organises an entrepreneurship week, which helps increase the profile of entrepreneurship and serves as an entry point for those interested in learning more about business creation and self-employment. Information dissemination

efforts appear to be sufficient at the national level, but very few examples can be identified at the regional level (OECD, 2015).

Networks and partnerships

Junior Achievement and Enterprise Lithuania actively promote entrepreneurship to youth. Junior Achievement directly reaches more than 20 000 students (15 to 18 years old) each year through its education programmes. This far-reaching organisation is therefore well-placed to shape a positive image for entrepreneurship, both to youth and in the wider business community. Community efforts include the Business Hall of Fame, which aims to promote successful entrepreneurs. One of the most important roles that Junior Achievement has in Lithuania is its teacher training because they are able to raise awareness about entrepreneurship for these important role models to youth.

Enterprise Lithuania is also active in promoting entrepreneurship. One of their missions is to address youth's fear of failure in entrepreneurship. Examples of promotion activities include the participation in entrepreneurship events and the planned national mentoring network.

Entrepreneurship promotion in the media is growing but continues to lag behind other EU countries (OECD, 2015). The SBA Factsheet showed that entrepreneurship's media attention and its social status in Lithuania are both lower than the EU average, despite a year on year increase, respectively from 37% in 2012 to 48% in 2013 and from 53% in 2012 to 57% in 2013 (OECD, 2015)

The bulk of information provision to youth about business creation and self-employment is done by non-government organisations. For example, the Public Enterprise Business Initiative (Viešoji įstaiga "Verslo iniciatyva"), which is a non-governmental organisation, encourages and helps young people to develop businesses in Kaunas as well as other regions. In addition, organisations such as Junior Achievement have a wide reach through their training programmes. As a result, they are well-positioned to provide information to youth. The government uses these partnerships effectively (OECD, 2015).

3.11 Current debates and reforms

Youth face barriers to entrepreneurship in the areas of social attitudes, lack of skills, lack of work experience, under-capitalisation, lack of networks, and market barriers.

Lack of role models: Young people are influenced by important role models such as their parents and teachers, but often they are not very aware of the requirements and opportunities of entrepreneurship. This lack of awareness among role models results in a lack of encouragement and support for entrepreneurship (OECD, 2015)

Lack of experience: A major determinant of business start-up and entrepreneurship performance for youth is prior work experience. However, youth typically lack the necessary human, financial and social capital to successfully start and run a new business. Moreover, relative to older people, youth are much less likely to have managerial or specialised industrial knowledge that would help them in self-employment (OECD, 2015).

Under-capitalisation: Youth tend to have low levels of personal savings and have more difficulty than adults in obtaining external finance (OECD, 2015). Banks and other financiers typically consider credit history, past business performance and collateral when evaluating potential loans. Youth-owned firms are less likely to score well according to such measures (OECD, 2015).

Market barriers: Youth entrepreneurs may face "discrimination" from customers who are sceptical about the reliability or quality of their products or services. Similarly, youth entrepreneurs are more likely to enter industries where barriers to entry are low but competition is very strong. It is important to recognise that each of these areas is inter-related (OECD, 2015).

4. SOCIAL INCLUSION

The main challenges related to the social inclusion of young people in Lithuania are youth unemployment and integration in the labour market, non-formal education and youth entrepreneurship. Socially excluded young people usually come from socially vulnerable families, from families whose parental rights were limited, from orphanages, youth living in remote/rural areas, children of migrant workers and immigrants, children of ethnic minorities, young people with any physical or mental disabilities and unemployed young people. Despite economic growth, increasing household revenues, and falling unemployment, inequality and poverty indicators in Lithuania remain among the highest in the European Union and raise the biggest concerns. Improved general and youth social security and reduced social exclusion remain among the social policy priorities. Lithuania pledges to step up social inclusion of young people, especially those who do not work or study and improve the protection of workers, including immigrants. The main focus has been placed on increasing opportunities for young people who are most distant from the labour market to participate in the implementation of active inclusion measures. Services for activation of voluntary activities of youth and the elderly projects for the implementation of local employment initiatives, strengthening competencies of the disabled, sociocultural services and services of integration into the labour market of the Roma, have been planned for.

4.1 General context

Main challenges to social inclusion

The main challenges related to social inclusion of young people in Lithuania are youth unemployment and integration in the labour market, non-formal education and youth entrepreneurship. Socially excluded young people usually come from socially vulnerable families; from families whose parental rights were limited; from orphanages; youth living in remote/rural areas; children of migrant workers and immigrants; children of ethnic minorities; young people with any physical or mental disabilities; unemployed young people. Youth unemployment rates in Lithuania are generally higher than unemployment for other age groups and young people are twice as likely to be unemployed as the adult population. Employment prospects of the young people are considerably affected by their gender, educational attainment and previous work experience (difficulties to meet the requirements of employers, lack of skills (esp. foreign languages, computer literacy). Lithuania has a rather low number of early school leavers as the majority number of youth of 18-19 years old are studying in general education schools or have an opportunity to acquire secondary education with professional qualification in vocational training schools. The youth unemployment rate has been high in Lithuania even in periods of low unemployment of the total population (according to Eurostat, youth unemployment rate in Lithuania was around 16 percent in 2016 but it averaged 22.50 percent from 1998 until 2016, reaching an all time high of 36.2 percent in 2010 and a record low of 7.60 percent in 2007). Young people face higher risk to become unemployed because of lack of working experience and difficult transitions from education to working life. Mismatches between educational and labour market supply determines a number of over-qualified and under-qualified youth, who are not able to find appropriate employment. Unsuccessful integration into the labour market and lack of employment are one of the most important negative factors influencing the emergence of many other youth problems, i.e. social exclusion, spread of addictive behaviour, incapacity to pay for studies and purchase housing. Consequently, economic emigration is prevalent among young people because of the obstacles in home labour market. According to Eurostat data, there are 80-90 thousand of young persons not in education, employment or training in Lithuania. The majority of young unemployed persons registered in [public employment services](#) do not have adequate professional qualifications or work experience and experience social risk, live in remote localities and/or are in difficult economic and family situation. Many NEETS have

limited social skills or exhibit tendency to asocial behavior. Frequently alongside special needs, many NEETS suffer from emotional and behavioural disorders.

Definitions and concepts

Socially excluded are young people: 1) from families, that are socially vulnerable; 2) from families whose parental rights are limited; 3) from orphanages; 4) living in rural areas; 5) children of migrant workers and immigrants; 6) children of ethnic minorities 7) young people with any physical or mental disabilities; 8) those who are unemployed.

4.2 Administration and governance

Governance

The basic principles governing the social security system in Lithuania are defined in the Constitution of the Republic. In the social protection system and its regulatory framework social security of youth is not distinguished separately. The governance approach to social inclusion is rights-based. The legislation concerning social protection can be divided into the specific areas by the functions of assistance provided: low income, sickness and maternity, health care and risks at work, family/children, disability, old age, unemployment function, and miscellaneous area. Social benefits and health care services depend on the social status of a person. The social guarantees granted are the same to all citizens.

Main actors

The [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) is the main institution implementing the social security and labour policy. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour determines and implements policies regarding social support and social insurance, prepares drafts of legal acts and adopts legal acts within its competency. The [Ministry of Health Care](#) of the Republic of Lithuania determines medical care policies, prepares drafts of legal acts and adopts legal acts within its competency. The [Board of Compulsory Medical Insurance](#), an administrative unit within the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, and the National Patients' Fund are the main institutions in charge of compulsory medical insurance. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour specifies objectives of the State Social Insurance Fund and is in charge of activities of the Lithuanian Labour Exchange. The State Social Insurance Fund is administered and its budget is implemented by the [State Social Insurance Fund Board](#) (SODRA). The State Social Insurance Fund performs the following functions: collects social insurance contributions; registers insurers and insured persons; pays social insurance pensions, sickness and maternity, accident at work and occupational disease insurance benefits. The [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) is an establishment under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour which, in conjunction with subordinate local labour exchanges, implements the labour market and employment support policy. The Lithuanian Labour Exchange performs the following basic functions: registers jobseekers; acts as an intermediary in job search; implements active labour market policy measures.

The role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and social partners in increasing youth social inclusion constitutes a key factor determining the design and implementation of policy to reduce poverty and social exclusion in Lithuania. The principle of the involvement of non-governmental organisations and their opportunities to participate in the policy process has been entrenched in all documents and strategies on the reduction of poverty and social exclusion. Most stakeholders addressing issues of poverty do not differentiate between rural and urban areas. Several stakeholders could be mentioned in this context: The United Nations Development Programme prepares various studies (using both quantitative and qualitative research methodology); Among NGO's, National portal on Poverty issues "skurdas.lt" can be mentioned, where studies, of both quantitative and qualitative research, actions, initiatives and information can be found. Lithuanian Social Research Centre conducts studies on many social issues including youth, labour market,

social exclusion, migration and rural development among others. Almost all political parties declare that they stand for better life of people in rural areas.

Cross-sectoral cooperation

Social policy concerning youth social exclusion is developed in consultation with the EU, national and municipal, governmental and non-governmental actors. The consultations are designed to create, encourage and strengthen various forms of cooperation between actors. The consultations take place through a network of youth organizations, business and civil society representatives. The consultations with LiJOT representatives are taken in meetings on drafting and preparation of legal documents. The open system [TAIS](#) (Legal Acts Information System) includes possibilities to monitor the whole process of legislation adoption. Regional youth affairs councils are also included into policy consultations. Municipality youth affairs coordinators are included in consultations as well as Youth Guarantee coordinators in each of the 60 municipalities. The [tool](#) with the information about each youth centre in municipalities has been created in order to have on-hand information and to make consultations more effective. The EU [Structured Dialogue](#) between policy-makers, young people and their representatives is seen as a promising tool for listening to young people. The following preparatory work is carried out in order to gain adequate understanding of the actual needs of young people: consultations with and collecting information from municipal councils for youth affairs, coordinators for youth affairs, regional youth councils and youth organisations (organisations working with youth), employees of municipality administration, representatives of non-governmental organisations, communities, and other stakeholders (experts, entrepreneurs etc.).

Policy monitoring and evaluation

4.3 Strategy for the social inclusion of young people

Existence of a National Strategy on social inclusion

There is no specific strategy on social inclusion of youth as a special group. However, the [Action Plan for Increasing Social Inclusion for 2014 - 2020](#) mentions youth among other target groups. In 2014, the [Action Plan for Increasing Social Inclusion for 2014 - 2020](#) was revised, distinguishing target groups of residents, revising measures and planning for the funds allocated for the implementation of the measures. In 2020 the [forecast on social exclusion and poverty levels](#) published in 2020 demonstrated that despite COVID-19 pandemic young people are less likely to be at risk of social exclusion and poverty than older persons.

The [National Program for the Development of Youth Policy for 2011 – 2019](#), which was adopted by Lithuania Government in 2010 has many measures to re-engage the young people not in employment, education or training (NEET). The Action Plans for 2011 -2013 and [2014 – 2016](#) of implementing The [National Program for the Development of Youth Policy for 2011 – 2019](#) have measures addressing NEETs as well. Also the [Program for intensive long-term support for unemployed and school drop-outs](#) was approved in 2013. The [National Working Plan for Implementation of Youth Guarantee Initiative](#) was approved in 2013. Measures to ensure access to decent housing for young people at risk of social exclusion exist. As the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) is responsible for the measures, that should be taken to people at risk of social exclusion, so the function of housing is delegated to municipalities according to the [Law on State Support for Rent and Housing](#). There is foreseen, that municipalities should provide the social housing for rent and to support for housing and construction (reconstruction). Measures addressing the social integration of young people with disabilities exist. From 2006 the Department for the Affairs of Disabled at the Ministry of Social Security and Labour provides financial support for disabled people who are studying at institutions of higher education. The following financial assistance measures are given to disabled students (of all age groups): 1. Monthly payment for special needs; 2. Partially covering the tuition fees for the studies.

Rural areas in Lithuania could be characterized by emigration of young people, decreasing birth rate and ageing of population, thus, [Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2014-2020](#) focuses on social integration and elimination of distinctions between rural and urban areas. This Programme aims to strengthened human capital and decrease youth unemployment by providing support to vocational training, advisory services, information actions and young farmers' start-ups.

Scope and contents

The main focus of the [Action Plan for Increasing Social Inclusion for 2014 - 2020](#) has been placed on increasing opportunities of people who are most distant from the labour market to participate in the implementation of active inclusion measures. Services for strengthening competencies of the elderly and the disabled, sociocultural services and services of integration into the labour market of the Roma, activation of voluntary activities of youth and the elderly, projects for the implementation of local employment initiatives have been planned for.

[National Youth Policy Development Program for 2011-2019](#) has the following purposes related to youth social inclusion: 1) to ensure the development of social security, education, and health systems to meet various needs of youth; 2) to develop and coordinate the system of work with youth as well as ensure the development of youth employment infrastructure. The [Program of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania 2012-2016](#) had approved the following priority measures related to youth social inclusion in the field of youth policy for 2012 - 2016: 1) to provide measures and actions aimed to increase youth employment and foster youth entrepreneurship; 2) to define youth work and its principles, to improve activities and functions of the institutions working in the field of youth; 3) to strengthen prevention of youth unemployment expanding and improving vocational information, orientation and counselling, introducing young people to the trends of social and economic development of modern society as well as employment opportunities. [Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2014-2020](#) focuses on social integration and elimination of distinctions between rural and urban areas. Among other objectives it aims to strengthened human capital in rural areas and decrease youth unemployment by providing support to vocational training, advisory services, information actions and young farmers' start-ups.

Responsible authority

The Ministry of Social Security and Labour together with the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, and municipalities are responsible for implementation of the [Action Plan for Increasing Social Inclusion for 2014 - 2020](#) plan measures according to the areas of their competences. The evidence-based assessment and evaluation of the implementation of the [Action Plan for Increasing Social Inclusion for 2014 - 2020](#) is conducted annually and analysis of the assessment and evaluation are available in [public reports](#). These reports present appropriate and detailed analysis of poverty and social exclusion of all groups including youth in Lithuania. They provide general overview and statistical data about poverty and social exclusion in Lithuania as well as comprehensive analysis of the results of the implementation of measures aimed at combating social exclusion, as well as evaluation of the success of the implementation of these measures. Other reliable data sources could be mentioned in order to analyse social exclusion in Lithuania. These include official data presented by [Lithuanian Department of Statistics](#), data collected by universities and research institutes (e.g. [LSTC](#)), non-governmental organizations data. Department of Statistics presents data on poverty rate by socioeconomic group, family type and so on. For analysis of poverty and social exclusion Household Budget Survey as well as The Survey on Income and Living Conditions are carried out regularly by the [Lithuanian Department of Statistics](#) since 2005. [Regional Statistics](#) are also collected by the [Lithuanian Department of Statistics](#).

Revisions/Updates

In 2014, the [Action Plan for Increasing Social Inclusion for 2014 - 2020](#) was revised, distinguishing target groups of residents, revising measures and planning for the funds allocated for the implementation thereof in 2015–2016. The main focus has been placed on increasing opportunities of people who are most distant from the labour market to participate in the implementation of active inclusion measures. Services for strengthening competencies of the elderly and the disabled, sociocultural services and services of integration into the labour market of the Roma, activation of voluntary activities of youth and the elderly, projects for the implementation of local employment initiatives have been planned for.

4.4 Inclusive programmes for young people

Programmes for vulnerable young people

Lithuania is included the Youth Employment Initiative in the Operational Programme for the European Union Funds' Investments in 2014-2020; where its implementation was assigned to specific objective 7.4.1. "Reduce the number of young people between 15 and 29 years of age not in employment, education or training" of Priority 7 "Promoting Quality Employment and Participation in the Labour Market". This specific objective includes two Youth Employment Initiative supported projects which is aimed to provide assistance to 35,000 young people aged 15-29 who are not in employment, education or training until 2018. The primary intervention project "Discover Yourself" (Atrask save) is implemented between Lithuanian Public Employment Service, called the [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#), acting as a leading partner, and [Department of Youth Affairs](#). Each institution coordinates a separate strand of the project targeting different NEET groups. [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#)'s programme is designed for active NEETs who are officially registered with LLE as unemployed whereas [Department of Youth Affairs](#) targets inactive NEETs. The project offers early intervention services that will focus on the development of motivational, social and labour market skills through engaging NEETs in voluntary activities, various trainings, traineeship and apprenticeship experiences as well as providing them with psychological counselling, skills' assessment and other measures to enhance their motivation for work. It is planned that 23,000 unemployed NEETs and 12,000 inactive NEETs will participate in the project 'Discover Yourself', which will be fully launched, most likely, in April 2016. Those participants of the project "Discover Yourself" who do not receive unsubsidised job offer will be offered participation in the secondary intervention project "New Start" (Naujas startas). The project which will be carry outed only by the [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#), plans to involve a total of 11 065 unique NEETs in various active labour market measures. Most of the participants of this project will be involved in vocational training (around 9 000). Other participants will receive subsidised jobs or a package of several services (for example, vocational training and subsidised job) depending on their needs. The project 'New Start' will provide an opportunity to support the most disadvantaged participants of the first YEI project for a longer period of time than just 4 months.

The measure "subsidised employment" is regulated by Article 24 of the Law on Support for Employment. Under this measure, employers hiring youth (ages 16-29) who are registered in the Lithuanian Labour Exchange can have 50% of the gross wage reimbursed for a period not exceeding six months. Priority is given to long-term unemployed youth, young parents of two children, and youth originating from families that have two or more family members registered in the Lithuanian Labour Exchange. The compensation equals 50% of the wage and cannot exceed two minimum wages per month (EUR 600 monthly or EUR 3.64 hourly). Employers who fire subsidised workers (within six months after the subsidy period) cannot receive subsidised employment for at least 12 months. In 2014, over 9 700 youth were hired under "subsidised employment" in Lithuania.

The measure "Support for the First Job" (Investicijų ir verslo garantijos), financed by the European Social Fund (ESF), was introduced in Lithuania in 2012 to promote youth

employment. According to the measure, employers hiring youth (aged 16-29) with no previous work experience can receive a wage subsidy equal to 23.3% of the gross salary paid to the employee. Compensations are paid on a maximum wage of EUR 492.30 per month, and as a consequence the value of the compensation can in no case exceed EUR 114.70 per month.¹ The wage subsidy is paid for a maximum of 12 months (see, for more details, the webpage of Investicijų ir verslo garantijos UAB, [INVEGA](#), the independent agency in charge with administering the programme). The overall budget for this measure is EUR 9 270 000, and it is estimated that around 20 000 youth in total will benefit from this measure (European Social Fund, 2014). Although the project is going to end in September 2015, a similar project funded by the European Union will be introduced and shall be operational until 2020.

Job rotation programme is organised in cases when unemployed people are hired to temporarily replace employees that are on leave (e.g. parental leave, educational and sabbatical leave). PES provides employer with a wage subsidy of up to 0.5 of the minimum wage for a maximum of 12 months. The programme attracts relatively few participants – 400 people in 2012, which suggests even fewer youth participated in the programme.

The measure “support for the acquisition of professional skills” is also regulated by Article 24 of the Law on Support for Employment. The measure provides partial wage subsidies to employers hiring youth (ages 16-29) who need to acquire new skills. These include: those who have been given a notice of dismissal; long-term unemployed; and those who start a job for the first time. The compensation equals 50% of the wage and cannot exceed two minimum wages per month (EUR 600 monthly or EUR 3.64 hourly). The duration of the subsidy is five months, while it is 12 months for youth starting a job with a newly acquired qualification. During 2014, over 2 000 youth participated in this programme.

[Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) implements three ESF projects, where young people are one of the target groups:

1. Project “Trust in Yourself”: intended for young people aged 16-25 who are not in employment nor education, nor engaged in any measures of active labour market policy.
2. Project “Employment Support”: targeted at young people under 29 to engage them in two measures of active labour market policy: subsidised employment and supporting acquisition of job skills.
3. Project “Stay in the Labour Market”: targeted at young people under 29 to engage them in three measures of active labour market policy: subsidised employment, supporting acquisition of job skills and job rotation.

[National Youth Policy Development Program for 2011-2019](#) has the following purposes related to youth social inclusion: 1) to ensure the development of social security, education, and health systems to meet various needs of youth; 2) to develop and coordinate the system of work with youth as well as ensure the development of youth employment infrastructure. This programme is aimed at creating a favourable environment for a fully-fledged life and the self-expression of youth in Lithuania. The Action Plans for 2011 -2013 and [2014 – 2016](#) of implementing The [National Program for the Development of Youth Policy for 2011 – 2019](#) have measures addressing NEETs. The Action Plan also provides for developing non-formal education seeking its integration with formal education; creating favourable conditions for youth and organisations dealing with youth to engage in consistent high-quality activities stimulating more active (self) involvement of youth in organised activities.

The [National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for 2015-2016](#) aims at addressing, in a consistent, complex and systematic manner, gender equality issues, ensuring gender mainstreaming in all spheres and tackling specific problems of women and men. The Programme identifies main priorities for gender equality, and specific measures to achieve set goals aimed at: improving labour market reintegration opportunities for women and men returning to the labour market after childcare leave, promoting equal treatment of women and men in the labour market, equal recognition

and assessment reducing thereby sectoral and vocational exclusion in the labour market on the grounds of gender; integrating the matters of ensuring equal labour market opportunities for women and men in social partnership and dialogue; seeking to reduce the gap between the wages paid to women and men.

National Programme for Social Integration of People with Disabilities for 2013–2019 aimed at creating equal opportunities and improved quality of life for people with disabilities. [The Action Plan of Measures for National Programme for Social Integration of People with Disabilities for 2013–2019](#) provides for developing community services for people with disabilities and improving the quality of their life (analysing the existing system of services and assistance, possibilities to acquire housing, providing proposals on their improvement, financing projects of social rehabilitation services to people with disabilities within the community), improving legal regulation and financing adaptation of the environment for people with disabilities, providing funding for the adaptation of housing and respective surroundings to the needs of the disabled, transportation of pupils with special needs to education and training institutions and ensuring that this need is satisfied; increasing the opportunities for the disabled to study at universities, gain employment and stay in the labour market.

Funding

The measure “Support for the First Job” (Investicijų ir verslo garantijos), financed by the European Social Fund (ESF), was introduced in Lithuania in 2012 to promote youth employment. See, for more details, the webpage of Investicijų ir verslo garantijos UAB, [INVEGA](#), the independent agency in charge with administering the programme. The overall budget for this measure is EUR 9 270 000, and it is estimated that around 20 000 youth in total will benefit from this measure (European Social Fund, 2014). Although the project is going to end in September 2015, a similar project funded by the European Union will be introduced and shall be operational until 2020.

[Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#) implements three ESF projects, where young people are one of the target groups:

1. Project “Trust in Yourself”: intended for young people aged 16-25 who are not in employment nor education, nor engaged in any measures of active labour market policy. In 2014, LTL 2.2 million was used for the implementation of the Programme of Social Rehabilitation and Preparation for Employment in the Labour Market; intended funding for 2015 – LTL 1.4 million.
2. Project “Employment Support”: targeted at young people under 29 to engage them in two measures of active labour market policy: subsidised employment and supporting acquisition of job skills. – In 2014, LTL 12.61 million used for the implementation of activities intended to boost youth employment.
3. Project “Stay in the Labour Market”: targeted at young people under 29 to engage them in three measures of active labour market policy: subsidised employment, supporting acquisition of job skills and job rotation. – In 2014, LTL 20.5 million used for the implementation of activities targeted at young people under 29 (LTL 17.83 million from ESF funds; LTL 2.68 million from the Unemployment Fund).

Quality assurance

[The Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan](#) gives the analysis of the current situation, defines aims, objectives and measures, and establishes [evaluation criteria](#) in [Annex 2](#). The [external evaluation of Youth Guarantee implementation in Lithuania](#) was carried out JSC ‘PPMI Group’ and public entity ‘Public Policy and Management Institute’ in 2015.

4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness

Intercultural awareness

In Lithuanian education system citizenship education is a compulsory separate subject at the secondary level. The curricula of citizenship education aims at developing political literacy, acquiring critical thinking and analytical skills, developing certain values, attitudes and behaviours (sense of national identity, respect, tolerance,), encouraging active participation and engagement at school and community levels. In Lithuanian planning documents tolerance is mentioned in more general terms as one of the values of the National Strategy on Education for 2013-2022. As stated in National Strategy on Education for 2013-2022, education in Lithuania is based on the key values of the nation, Europe and global culture: the unrivalled value and dignity of an individual, love of our fellow, the natural equality of people, the human rights and freedoms, tolerance, and declaration of democratic relations in the society.

Among youth campaigns on diversity and intercultural dialogue in Lithuania I LOVE PANDA campaign can be mentioned which started in 2014. I LOVE PANDA is the national campaign of joy, which is based upon the values of human rights. It aims at developing friendly and respectful cyberspace and mutual understanding between young people online. Panda has been chosen to become the symbol and the ambassador of the campaign and is encouraging everybody to build up as much joy and kindness in their everyday lives as possible. Panda campaign is part of the NISI project "All different – All equal: Human rights, active participation and variety", which is part of NGO Programme Lithuania, funded by EEA Grants. The NGO Programme Lithuania, funded by EEA Grants, is thematically focused on human rights and aims to build capacity of non-governmental organizations. Overall objective of the NGO Programme Lithuania is strengthened civil society development and enhanced contribution to social justice, democracy and sustainable development; and strengthened bilateral relationship between Lithuania and the Donor States – Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein.

There are also online media resources designed for educators, counsellors, cultural animators etc. aimed at promoting intercultural awareness. The [Ugdymo Sodas](#) (Education Garden) website (database) is devoted to video resources and online-lessons for educators, counsellors, cultural animators etc. It is interactive teacher platform in which information and education planning tools and other resources can be found. These resources are available for all general education subjects including citizenship education. Education Garden website is also intended for students (performing tasks), school administration representatives (viewing and handling their school data) and to local governments and the Ministry of Education Professionals (for viewing data and preparing reports on municipal and national level). The [Ugdymo Sodas](#) (Education Garden) website is administered and updated by [Education Development Centre](#) which is the biggest institution affiliate to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania providing educational support in the field of pre-school, primary and general education.

Young people's rights

The [Youth Policy Law](#) in Lithuania enshrines four general provisions of youth rights: 1) enjoyment of all youth rights and freedoms; 2) equal rights and protection from discrimination; 3) a proper social environment; 4) all-round education. The [National Youth Policy Development programme for 2011-2019](#) aims to create conditions that meet youth needs in order to become active young citizens. This programme has five focus areas: 1) Social security, education and health care; 2) Developing youth who are capable of being an active part of diverse society; 3) Systems of youth work and youth employment; 4) Fostering youth organisations; 5) Inter-institutional and cross-sectoral cooperation in developing youth policy. The [Lithuanian Youth Council](#) (LiJOT) was formed in 1992 and is an umbrella organisation with 64 members representing more than 200,000 young people in Lithuania. The LiJOT, "seeks favorable changes for young people by serving as a

platform for dialogue, Lithuanian youth organization interests and initiatives.” LiJOT is a full member of the [European Youth Forum](#) and the Baltic Youth Forum. As the national agency, it coordinates [EURODESK](#) Lithuania and supports Lithuanian engagement in the EU [Structured Dialogue](#) process. A ‘special state subsidy’ has been allocated to the Ministry of Social Security and Labour for ‘Children and Youth Rights’ (see Chapter 1, Youth Policy section on youth policy funding). In Lithuanian education system citizenship education is a compulsory separate subject at the secondary level. The curricula of citizenship education aims at developing political literacy, acquiring critical thinking and analytical skills, developing certain values, attitudes and behaviours (sense of national identity, respect, tolerance), encouraging active participation and engagement at school and community levels.

Key initiatives to safeguard democracy and prevent radicalisation leading to violent extremism

Among the key initiatives to safeguard democracy against and prevent radicalisation which lead to violent extremism in Lithuania the [Public Security Development Programme 2015-2025](#) has provisions aimed at preventing youth radicalization (section 25.2). The [Action Plan of the Public Security Development Programme 2015-2025 Implementing Measures](#) has measures aimed at population views radicalization process monitoring, prevention and deradicalization efficiency of the system to include residential areas, communities, municipalities and non-governmental organizations.

4.6 Access to quality services

Housing

There are no specific housing measures designed for young people, however the [Law of Support for Housing or Rent](#) (Lietuvos Respublikos paramos būstui įsigyti ar išsinuomoti įstatymas) defines the principles of support for housing or rent to individuals and families, sources of funding, forms of support for housing or rent, the rights and duties of the beneficiaries, as well as procedures of renting, purchasing and selling social housing and municipal housing. Subsidies for individuals and families to partially compensate mortgage loan are provided in line with the law of Article 8 where the requirements for beneficiaries are stated i.e. they must: 1) have been left without parental care (care) persons until they reach the age of 35 years, or their families, as well as families with three or more children (adopted children), disabled or families with disabilities; in this case they might apply for 20 per cent state compensated housing credit (or the mortgage balance) ; 2) young families with one or more children (adopted children) and families with one child (adoptive) parents are dead - paid 10 per cent state compensated housing credit (or the mortgage balance).

Social services

In 2006 [Law on Social Services](#) entered into force. The Law describes the services aimed at providing assistance to a person (family) who, by reason of his age, disability, social problems, partially or completely lacks, has not acquired or has lost the abilities or possibilities to independently care for his private (family) life and to participate in society. According to the Law social services are managed, granted and provided so as to ensure that a person (family) can access social services as close to his place of residence as possible. Therefore, a municipality is in charge of the ensuring of provision of social services to residents of its territory by assessing needs, planning, organising and controlling the quality of social services of general interest and social attendance. The big challenge is carefully establish the person’s (family) need for social services in order to provide adequate services. There are no specific entitlements in this law for young people as a special group. The entitlement to the social services depends upon the assessed need.

Health care

Like many other European States Lithuania has put in place the compulsory health insurance system which means that residents of Lithuania are obliged to obtain health insurance coverage (i.e. pay compulsory health insurance contributions). With respect to the insured the State guarantees healthcare services compensated by the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund. The principle of solidarity means that the contributions paid by all employed persons, or persons otherwise engaged in active economy activities, as well as the funds of the State budget contribute to the accumulation of the budget of the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund. The conditions are thus created to pay for the healthcare services provided to the insured from the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund. The compulsory health insurance is a guarantee for all insured that when needed their healthcare expenses will be compensated from the budget of the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund, irrespective of the contributions paid by the specific insured individual. The major part of the revenue of the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund is represented by the compulsory health insurance contributions paid by the insured and the contributions paid on their behalf.

Health care services specifically designed for young people as a separate group do not exist, however it is evident that based on the principle of solidarity and universality on behalf of weaker members of the society the burden of the compulsory health insurance is borne by socially stronger and economically more active members of the society. The range of persons insured with State funds is fairly broad. Persons insured by the state: 1) persons who receive any type of pension or relief compensation set by laws of the Republic of Lithuania; 2) unemployed persons registered with local labour exchange offices and persons involved in vocational training measures organised by local labour exchange offices, unless they sign an employment contract; 3) unemployed persons of working age who have statutory compulsory state social pension insurance record required for receiving the state social insurance old-age pension; 4) women who are granted a maternity leave and unemployed women during the period of pregnancy 70 days before the child birth (after 28 pregnancy weeks and over) and 56 days after the child birth; 5) one of the parents/adoptive parents raising a child under 8 years of age, one of the guardians providing guardianship for a child under 8 years of age in the family, also one of the parents/adoptive parents raising two or more minor children, one of the guardians/caretakers providing guardianship for/taking care of two or more minor children in the family; 6) persons under the age of 18 years; 7) pupils of general education schools, full-time students of vocational schools, post-secondary and higher education institutions of the Republic of Lithuania, also citizens of the Republic of Lithuania and foreign nationals and stateless persons permanently residing in the Republic of Lithuania, who are full-time students of higher education institutions of the Member States of the European Union; 8) persons supported by the state and provided with a social benefit; 9) one of the parents/adoptive parents, guardian or caretaker nursing at home a person for whom a disability level is established/disabled child or a person who was recognised as having incapacity for work (before 1 July 2005 – a person with disability of category I) before he reached the age of 24, or a person who before he reached the age of 26 was recognised as having incapacity for work (before 1 July 2005 – a person with disability of category I) because of an illness which occurred before he reached the age of 24, or a person who is identified as being in need of permanent nursing (before 1 July 2005 – total disability); 10) persons who have been recognised as disabled in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts; 11) persons suffering from publicly dangerous communicable diseases which are included in the list defined by the Ministry of Health; 12) participants of the opposition/resistance – volunteer soldiers, participants of fights for freedom, rehabilitated political prisoners and similar persons, deportees and similar persons, also victims of the events of 13 January 1991 or other events injured while defending Lithuania's independence and statehood; 13) persons who contributed to the post-accident management at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant; 14) former inmates of the ghetto and juvenile prisoners kept at fascist forced confinement places; 15) clergymen of traditional religious associations recognised by the state, students of clergy training schools, novices

undergoing monastic formation in novitiates; 16) persons for whom the legal status of participants of the war in Afghanistan is recognised in accordance with the procedure laid down by law; 17) unaccompanied foreign minors; 18) the spouse of the President of the Republic who has not reached the pensionable age and does not have insured income – for the duration of the term of office of the President of the Republic. 19) persons engaged in voluntary hands-on training in accordance with the procedure defined by the Law on Support for Employment.

Financial services

Social services in Lithuania are fee-paying by a person and also partially financed by the state or municipalities. There are no special financial services for youth as a separate category. The amount to be paid for social services is established taking into consideration the type of the services provided to a person (family) and the financial capability of the person (family (income and asset level)). Sources of payment are: a person's (family's) income, property in money, funds of the person's adult children and other earnings. From the 1st of January 2007, after the implementation of new procedure of payment for social services, and pursuant to the methodology for financing social services and calculation of funds, a new procedure of financing social services was applied. Thus currently all social services spring from three main sources: municipal funds, state special targeted grants, allocated to municipalities, and personal contributions paid for social services. This prompted the formation of a mixed social service market and competitive conditions for the social service institutions.

Quality assurance

In 2007 the quality system of social services in Lithuania was introduced. Accordingly, social care services should be provided in comply with social care standards. These standards place the major focus on a human right to privacy, preservation of dignity and honour, harmonisation of emotional needs and the environment created for a person, creation of conditions favourable for the self-expression and the development of interests, strengthening of social ties with a community and relatives, etc. In 2009 the Social Care Standards were supplemented with assessment criteria, thereby establishing the assessment of compliance of provided social care with the social care standards, which are carried out by the Social Institutions Supervision and Audit Department under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. The prices of social care services are not regulated in Lithuania, so theoretically the institution can ask quite a high price for services it provides. The quality of the services does not necessarily mean the demand for these services. In practice cheaper services are more favourable. Moreover, what concerns long term care institutions and social families in future they will be obliged to receive licences which will be granted in case the social care is provided in comply with social care standards.

4.7 Youth work to foster social inclusion

Policy/legal framework

The [Department of Youth Affairs](#), developing open work with youth in Lithuania and aspiring after clarity in this field, i.e. wishing to better define open work with youth, in 2010 worked out a "Conception of open youth centers and spaces" as well as publications "Open youth centers – for the needs of youth", [Practical guide on open youth centers](#). The Conception defines the objectives, tasks, target groups, principles, contractors, and quality requirements of forms of open work with youth. One of the key objectives of the Conception is to establish open youth centers and open spaces as institutional forms of open work with youth, aspiring to encourage young people with a fewer possibilities to engage in meaningful activities, thereby pursuing the diversity and quality of work with youth related services, accessibility for as wide circle of young people as possible, as well as rational use of financial and human resources. The following terms were defined while working out this Conception:

Youth worker is a grown-up person, who has reached the age of 21, acting out of bounds of formal education and training system, family and work activities, aspiring after personal and social improvement of young people through both individual work with individual persons and working with groups or communities, as well as having professional competences for such work. A youth worker is entitled to remuneration for professional work. Professional attitude of youth worker consists of personal guidelines and viewpoint, development and maintenance of relationship, methodical, applicable, as well as structural competences. A youth worker should have an education in pedagogy, psychology, or social science, or should have in such other way acquired competences relevant to social work with youth.

Open work with youth is a work with youth form – the entirety of educational activities and suggestions, having specific principles of operation; it is open for all young people, living in a particular territory, irrespective of their social status; able of attracting youth with a fewer possibilities to be involved in other activities that are available or not available in their environment.

Open youth center is an institution that performs open work with youth and follows the principles thereof, the founders whereof may be municipalities, non-governmental organizations, local or religious communities (may establish individually or jointly) in accordance with the legal forms, provided in Article 2 of the Law on Youth Policy Framework. An open youth center characterizes for having more than one premise (space) for various youth activities.

Open space is a space or premise, intended and accommodated for performance of open work with youth, i.e. could be situated in the institution (cultural, educational, sports, or social) without changing legal status of institution and accommodated for open work with youth applying the available measure or methodical base.

Main inclusive Youth-Work programmes and target groups

The number of organizations and institutions with various similar names (e.g. youth center, youth club, open youth center, mobile youth center, etc.) offer various activities for young people. Pursuant to the principle of subsidiarity, the priority to organize open work with youth is given to non-governmental organizations and religious communities. Local authorities are active where such organizations do not want to assume such activities or do not have due competence through organization of open work with youth through their own institutions. One of the key institutional forms of open work is so called open youth centers / spaces (open youth centre, offenes Jugendzentrum / open youth spaces). Such open youth center and / or space: functions in a particular social environment and aspires that young people, living in such environment and territory, had a place to spend there free time – came to the center; enables youth to meet and socialize with friends, play games, listen to the music, or just be together, does not demand regular visits or any kind of obligations, except compliance with regulations that are mandatory for all visitors; suggests, but not demands, attending various clusters that are framed according to the wishes of young people (computer, DJ, breakdancing, etc.), projects, campaigns; has skilled youth workers, who are ready to speak to youngsters about their problems, consult if they need more serious assistance, orient, and mediate. The same employees assist young people in framing the ideas, encourage and help implement the same, help discussing the experience acquired; keeps in touch and cooperates with the institutions, operating in that residential territory and connected to youth affairs, such as: school, parish, police, youth organization, eldership or community, library, etc. Also aims at socializing with the families of youngsters: send information, organize campaigns, festivals; finances its activities from the funds of local authorities, target programs, sponsors, and own funds as well.

Where implementing youth policy, local authorities aspire to develop and maintain an open work with youth (youth centers and spaces) network, which would be equally developed in individual residential territories, social environments, and would not just be

concentrated in the center of city or district, i.e. so that this form of work with youth was made available for young people in their residential environment.

Youth work providers in the field of social inclusion for young people

The number of organizations and institutions with various similar names (e.g. youth center, youth club, open youth center, mobile youth center, etc.) offer various activities for young people. Pursuant to the principle of subsidiarity, the priority to organize open work with youth is given to non-governmental organizations and religious communities. Local authorities are active where such organizations do not want to assume such activities or do not have due competence through organization of open work with youth through their own institutions. One of the key institutional forms of open work is so called open youth centers / spaces (open youth centre, offenes Jugendzentrum / open youth spaces). Where implementing youth policy, local authorities aspire to develop and maintain an open work with youth (youth centers and spaces) network, which would be equally developed in individual residential territories, social environments, and would not just be concentrated in the center of city or district, i.e. so that this form of work with youth was made available for young people in their residential environment.

Training and support for youth workers engaged in social inclusion programmes

Since autumn 2014, a training programme coordinated by Lithuanian Labour Exchange, under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Education Exchanges Support Foundation and The Department of Youth Affairs, under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour has been delivered to 80 specialists from local labour exchanges and youth job centres to develop their counselling skills for working with complex and unmotivated young people. A new certification system for youth work was introduced to formally recognise the value of youth work as a public service, and youth workers as qualified specialists who put policy into practice. The aim the youth worker certification system was to establish and maintain high-quality work with young people in order to facilitate their personal and social growth, and ensure effective cooperation between experts from public institutions and non-governmental organisations. Within this, a unified list of competences was developed that could be applied to all professionals that work with young people, no matter which sector they belonged to. It provides youth workers with an opportunity to obtain, develop and recognise their competences and skills and further develop their knowledge of different aspects of youth work. Under this project, 23 Lithuanian [public employment services](#) employees were able to gain a certificate in youth work and in total 182 youth workers from different sectors gained qualifications. The training has enabled Lithuanian [public employment services](#) youth counsellors to meet and share knowledge with other youth workers from different sectors. The training has given youth workers the skills, competences and knowledge to meet the needs of individual young people. The training programme was focused on 1) developing the competences of staff who work with young people, 2) new methodological tools assimilation, and 3) practical skills assessment tool management for clients. The programme was delivered over two years and training took place over five days and sometimes on weekends. In addition, the certification system consisted of an evaluation of the current competences, trainings, internships, reflections, evaluation and being awarded a certification. It included five training programmes: 1. Self-perception in the youth work context 2. Understanding of adolescence and youth world 3. Individual work with a young person 4. Working with groups and delinquent behavior 5 Methodologies of youth work. This covered approximately 32 different competencies. Each of these training programmes lasted approximately four to five days and each youth worker was required to undertake a series of internships thereafter to implement their newly developed skills. It is intended that certificated youth workers share their acquired theoretical and practical knowledge with other youth counsellors.

Financial support

In 2015 Department of Youth Affairs was allocated EUR 65000 to implement „Discover Yourself“ project under the Youth Employment Initiative. In 2016 Department of Youth Affairs was allocated EUR 218000 to implement „Discover Yourself“ project under the Youth Employment Initiative. In 2016 Lithuanian Labour Exchange was allocated EUR 1100740 to implement „Discover Yourself“ project under the Youth Employment Initiative.

Quality assurance

The mechanisms to monitor and ensure the quality of the implementation of inclusive youth work exist since 2014 and the system of quality monitoring has been developed. Youth workers are now recognised as qualified specialists and youth work has become standardised and professionalised across Lithuania. [Youth Policy Quality Assessment in Municipalities Methodology](#) has been approved by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour in 2008. This methodology includes general quality criteria on youth work.

4.8 Current debates and reforms

In 2014, the Action Plan for Increasing Social Inclusion for 2014–2020 was revised, distinguishing target groups of residents, revising measures and planning for the funds allocated for the implementation thereof in 2015–2016. The main focus has been placed on increasing opportunities of people who are most distant from the labour market to participate in the implementation of active inclusion measures. Services for strengthening competencies of the elderly and the disabled, sociocultural services and services of integration into the labour market of the Roma, activation of voluntary activities of youth and the elderly, projects for the implementation of local employment initiatives have been planned for.

5. PARTICIPATION

In Lithuanian education system citizenship education is a compulsory separate subject at the secondary level. The curricula of citizenship education aims at developing political literacy, critical thinking and analytical skills, developing certain values, attitudes and behaviours (e.g. sense of national identity, respect, tolerance), encouraging active participation in society. The curricula of citizenship education comprises humanism, tolerance and acceptance of different culture (including religion, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, social background etc.) i.e. the core characteristics of contemporary EU ideas of what is to have a society of equal, supportive and mutually respectful individuals and groups; however, sometimes these ideas are not fully translated into practice. The civic participation domain is usually measured as part young people's involved in a range of groups and clubs (such as youth organisations and cultural or sports organisations), young people's participation in political elections at the local, regional, national level or EU level. Research data shows that young people in Lithuania can be characterized by a higher level of participation in voluntary organizations than older people, they are also more active in civic activities that are based on e-participation and young people in Lithuania have generally stronger belief in their power to influence political processes. However, the main challenges related to youth participation in Lithuania are that Lithuanian youth is characterized by very low level of interest in politics, weak support for political community and by weaker solidarity and philanthropic attitudes than older generations (see also [Ziliukaite](#) 2013). Young people in Lithuania are generally quite prejudiced about different social groups (Roma, Muslims and homosexuals in particular) and report having almost no contacts with those groups. Young people in Lithuania have a strong national identity. Lithuanian scholars often discuss the need for increasing tolerance as being crucial for Lithuania to fulfill its social, economic and creative potential but many examples in policy

and in mass media signal of a lack of consistent political will to integrate participation, tolerance and diversity in every domain of life.

5.1 General context

Main concepts

The [Civic Empowerment Index](#) in Lithuania uses the specific terminology related to civic participation that capture distinctive understandings and aspects of the situation in the country and facilitate the comprehension of its main features. The Civic Empowerment Index consists of the following four dimensions: civic activeness, potential civic activeness, conception of civil society's influence, and civic activity risk assessment. The [Civic Empowerment Index](#) was started by [Civil Society Institute](#) in 2007 as the longitudinal study named aimed at measuring the dynamics of civic and political engagement of Lithuania's population. The [Civic Empowerment Index](#) consists of five components each measuring different aspects of civic and political engagement on the scale from 0 to 100: 1) the index of interest in public affairs reveals how involved people are in following the news about the political, economic and cultural life of the country; 2) the index of actual civic participation is based on the data about the participation of respondents in fifteen civic and political activities during the last twelve months; 3) the potential of civic engagement is measured as an attitude towards organizing or joining activities aimed at solving local or national level problems in three hypothetical situations; 4) the external civic efficacy index shows how much people believe that ordinary citizens can have an influence on the decision-making processes and 5) the index of risks of civic engagement measures to what extent people see active civic and political participation as related to various threats for their personal well-being (see webpage of [Civil Society Institute](#) for a more detailed description of methodology of the [Civic Empowerment Index](#)).

Institutions of representative democracy

Lithuania is a semi-presidential republic. Lithuania declared the restoration of its independence on 11 March 1990 and has maintained strong democratic traditions. On March 11, 1990 it also adopted a provisional constitution - the Provisional Basic Law. The Provisional Basic Law established a framework for the new state, guaranteeing democratic rights and establishing rules of democratic process. However, the government was still structured similarly to its Soviet predecessor: legislative and executive functions were combined under the parliament and the judiciary branch was not independent. The government function was performed by the presidium of the Supreme Council and the chairman of the presidium became the chairman of the parliament and the Head of State. As this soviet model proved to be unsuitable at the end of 1991 the Supreme Council established a commission tasked to prepare a draft constitution. The new constitution was approved by the Supreme Council in October 1992 and approved in a referendum on October 25, 1992. There were intense debates concerning the constitution, especially the role of the president. A separate referendum was held on 23 May 1992 to gauge public opinion on the matter and 41% of all the eligible voters supported the restoration of the President of Lithuania which meant that a semi-presidential system was settled.

The Lithuanian head of state is the President, directly elected for a five-year term and serving a maximum of two terms. The president's main policy functions include foreign affairs and national security. The president is also the commander-in-chief of the military. The President appoints the Prime Minister and, on the PM's nomination, the rest of the cabinet, as well as a number of other top civil servants and the judges for all courts. The judges of the Constitutional Court (Konstitucinis Teismas), who serve nine-year terms, are appointed by the President (three judges), the Chairman of the Seimas (three judges), and the Chairman of the Supreme Court (three judges).

The Lithuanian parliament, the Seimas, is a unicameral institution that has 141 members who are elected to four-year terms. 71 of the members of this legislative body are elected in single member constituencies, and the other 70 are elected in a nationwide vote

by proportional representation. A party must receive at least 5% of the national vote to be eligible for any of the 70 national seats in the Seimas.

The current administrative division of the republic was established in 1994 and modified in 2000 to meet the requirements of the European Union. Lithuania has a three-tier administrative division: the country is divided into 10 counties (apskritis) that are further subdivided into 60 municipalities (savivaldybės) which consist of over 500 elderships (seniūnijos).

Municipalities are the most important administrative unit. Each municipality has its own elected government. The election of municipality councils takes place every four years. The council appoints elders to govern the elderships. Mayors are elected directly since 2015 (before 2015 they were appointed by the municipality council). Elderships, numbering over 500, are the smallest units and do not play a role in national politics. They provide necessary public services close to their homes (e.g. register births and deaths; identify needy individuals or families and distribute social benefits or organise other forms of social support for local residents). Elderships have a potential of becoming a source of local policy initiatives to tackle local problems but they have no real political power. There exist rather strong political pressure to introduce direct elections of elders but these initiatives have not been implemented.

Voters in Lithuania elect members of the parliament, the president, members of the municipal councils and mayors, as well as delegates to the European Parliament. Lithuanian citizens can also vote in mandatory or consultative referendums. Voting in elections is not compulsory.

71 of the members in the 141-seat parliament, elected to a four-year term, are elected in single-seat constituencies, in a majority vote. The remaining 70 members are elected in a nationwide election based on proportional representation. The structure of the elections means that a large number of parties is represented in the parliament and coalition governments are common. To be eligible for election, candidates must be at least 25 years old on the election day, not under allegiance to a foreign state and permanently reside in Lithuania. Persons serving or due to serve a sentence imposed by the court 65 days before the election are not eligible. Also, judges, citizens performing military service, and servicemen of professional military service and officials of statutory institutions and establishments may not stand for election. In addition, the Lithuanian law stipulates that a person who has been removed from office through impeachment may not be elected for four years after their removal.

The head of the state - the president - is elected to a five-year term in a majority vote, with the president eligible for up to two terms in office. To be eligible for election, candidates must be at least 40 years old on the election day and reside in Lithuania for at least three years, in addition to satisfying the eligibility criteria for a member of the parliament. The president is elected in a majority vote if the voter turnout is at least 50%. If the voter turnout is less than 50%, the candidate is declared a winner only if they get the votes of at least 1/3 of all eligible voters. If there are more than two candidates and no candidate wins in the first round, a second round of voting is held in two weeks after the first round. The two leading candidates from the first round are eligible for the second round of voting and the candidate that gets more votes in the second round is declared a winner.

More than 1500 municipal council members are elected in local elections to four-year terms, with the majority of the seats allocated using proportional representation and the mayors elected directly by residents in a majority vote. Each municipality in Lithuania is governed by a municipal council and a mayor, who is a member of the municipal council. The number of members, elected on a four-year term, in each municipal council depends on the size of the municipality and varies from 15 (in municipalities with fewer than 5,000 residents) to 51 (in municipalities with more than 500,000 residents). 1,524 municipal council members were elected in 2015. Members of the council, with the exception of the mayor, are elected using proportional representation. Starting with 2015, the mayor is

elected directly by the majority of residents of the municipality. Ordinary elections take place on a date proclaimed by the parliament no earlier than two months and no later than a month before the end of the current term. To be eligible for election, candidates must be at least 20 years old on the election day and permanently reside in the respective municipality. Persons serving or due to serve a sentence imposed by the court 65 days before the election are not eligible. Also, residents performing military service, and servicemen of professional military service and officials of statutory institutions and establishments may not stand for election.

The Lithuanian representatives in the European Parliament, currently numbering 11, are elected using proportional representation every five years. To be eligible for election, candidates must be at least 21 years old on the election day, citizen of Lithuania or citizen of another EU country permanently residing in Lithuania. Candidates are not allowed to stand for election in more than one country. Persons serving or due to serve a sentence imposed by the court 65 days before the election are not eligible. Also, judges, citizens performing military service, and servicemen of professional military service and officials of statutory institutions and establishments may not stand for election. The seats are allocated to the participating political parties or lists proportionally to the share of vote received. Parties or lists receiving less than 5% of the vote are not eligible to receive any seats, unless the remaining eligible parties received less than 60% of the vote

12 referendums have been organized in Lithuania, initiated by either citizens or the parliament. Of these, only four have seen the referendum question approved in a referendum deemed to have taken place.

Voting in elections is generally open to all citizens of Lithuania who are at least 18 years of age. Citizens of other European Union countries that permanently reside in Lithuania can vote in the Lithuanian elections to the European Parliament. Voting in municipal elections is open to all residents of Lithuania, regardless of their citizenship.

Voting process is organized by the Central Electoral Commission and subordinate electoral bodies and is monitored by local and international observers. The voters vote in a secret ballot and the elections have generally been assessed as free and fair, although allegations of irregularities have been common.

5.2 Youth participation in representative democracy

Young people as voters

The minimum voting age in Lithuania is 18. Voting in elections for the parliament and the president, as well as participation in referendums is open to citizens of Lithuania. Voting in elections to the European Parliament is open to citizens of Lithuania, as well as citizens of other EU countries permanently residing in Lithuania, as long as they only vote in one country. Voting in local elections is limited to permanent residents of the respective municipalities, regardless of citizenship.

To be eligible for the parliament election, candidates must be at least 25 years old on the election day, not under allegiance to a foreign state and permanently reside in Lithuania. Persons serving or due to serve a sentence imposed by the court 65 days before the election are not eligible. Also, judges, citizens performing military service, and servicemen of professional military service and officials of statutory institutions and establishments may not stand for election. In addition, the Lithuanian law stipulates that a person who has been removed from office through impeachment may not be elected for four years after their removal.

To be eligible for presidential election, candidates must be at least 40 years old on the election day and reside in Lithuania for at least three years, in addition to satisfying the eligibility criteria for a member of the parliament.

To be eligible for municipality (mayor or council) election, candidates must be at least 20 years old on the election day and permanently reside in the respective municipality. Persons serving or due to serve a sentence imposed by the court 65 days before the election are not eligible. Also, residents performing military service, and servicemen of professional military service and officials of statutory institutions and establishments may not stand for election.

To be eligible for European Parliament election, candidates must be at least 21 years old on the election day, citizen of Lithuania or citizen of another EU country permanently residing in Lithuania. Candidates are not allowed to stand for election in more than one country. Persons serving or due to serve a sentence imposed by the court 65 days before the election are not eligible. Also, judges, citizens performing military service, and servicemen of professional military service and officials of statutory institutions and establishments may not stand for election.

There are no imminent plans to lower the voting age limit or alter age limits for candidates in presidential, parliamentary or municipality elections.

There are no special provisions for young people in the electoral law or rules. Voter lists or electoral rolls are compiled before each vote by the Central Electoral Commission. The electoral rolls should include every person eligible to vote, and include information about the person necessary to establish eligibility, such as name, surname, personal number, date of birth, passport or other ID number, as well as place of residence. The electoral roll of the Republic of Lithuania then forms the basis for electoral rolls of single-member constituencies and polling districts, that contain information necessary for individuals to vote. Electoral rolls are not public but voters may access information related to themselves in the electoral roll. Before the election, a poll card is sent to each voter, representing an invitation to vote. It may also be accessed and printed online. Citizens of Lithuania who do not reside in Lithuania but are entitled to vote, for example in the elections for the parliament, are entered in electoral rolls for the constituency in the territory where the parliament is situated. Voters who are aboard a ship and will not be able to return to Lithuania to vote, are entered on the electoral roll of the polling district on whose electoral roll the ship's crew is entered. Voters who are in a penal institution and have not declared a place of residence, are entered on the electoral roll of the polling district where the penal institution is situated.

According to the data of the Central Electoral Commission, in 2019 May 12 President of the Republic elections 40 percent of voters were young persons of 18-29 of age. The youth voter turnout map in the most recent municipality and presidential elections can be found [here](#).

The political activity of young people is growing every year. In 2012, only 18 percent of voters between the ages of 18 and 29 participated in the elections, however 2019 presidential election, was attended by almost half (40 percent) of the young voters.

Young people as political representatives

Only general turnout data is available from the [Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Lithuania](#). According to [Žiliukaitė](#) (2013), the data of the electoral behaviour of Lithuania's population reveals that the cohorts of young people whose values were formed after the collapse of communism and during the country's transition to democracy are characterized by the lowest turnout levels in the society. Longitudinal analysis shows that as young adults become older, their level of turnout in the elections remains considerably lower than that of the older generations when they were at the same age; moreover, the Lithuanian youth is characterized by exceptionally low level of interest in politics. The gaps of turnout and interest in politics between the youngest cohorts of voters (up to 29 year old) and the older voters are among the largest in Europe (see [Žiliukaitė](#), 2013 for more detailed analysis).

The proportion of young people among members of political parties is rather low. However the [data](#) of 2020 Seimas (the Parliament) election show the trend towards younger age

dynamics and gender equality. The average age of elected members was 45,8 years (when calculating the averages, the age of the members of the Seimas on the day of the first round of elections (11 October 2020) was taken into account). The youngest member of the 2020 Seimas had become a representative of the Freedom Party - 28-year-old Marius Matijošaitis. The youngest according to the average age of the members elected to the Seimas in the first round of elections is the Freedom Party. The average age of the eight members of this party's list elected to the Seimas is 37.2 years. For comparison the average age of the elected members of Parliament in 2012 was 52,8 years of age. [The proportion of elected parliament members aged 25-35](#) in 2012 parliament was 9.00 percent compared to 12,77 percent in 2008. [The average age of municipality council members](#) was 51,1 years of age. The average age of the elected members of Parliament in 2016 was 51,5 years of age. The youngest person among the elected Parliament members in 2012 was the Labour Party's representative Victor Fiodorovas (male) who was 25 years old when elected in 2012. The second youngest member of parliament was the representative of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party Arunas Dudėnas (male) who was 29 year old in 2012. The third youngest politician elected in 2012 Seimas the representative of the Homeland Union - Lithuanian Christian Democrat Agne Bilotaitė (female) who was 30 years old in 2012. The youngest MPs elected in 2016 were two 26 year-old members of Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union: Rūta Miliūtė (female) and Virginijus Sinkevičius (male).

More information on youth participation can be found in [the study on youth participation](#) published in 2020.

5.3 Youth representation bodies

Youth parliament

Lithuanian Pupil's Parliament (LMP)

Lithuanian Pupil's Parliament (LMP) was established since 1999 and it had been active for seven terms. It is registered as NGO and consists of 95 secondary school students from all over Lithuania. To become member of this parliament a school students must participate in democratic elections, which have two stages. The first stage takes place at the secondary school, the second - in the municipality. The number of members elected in each municipality depend on the size of the municipality.

Lithuanian Pupil's Parliament consists of 6 committees: Human Rights, Culture, Health, Foreign Affairs, Education and Social Affairs. All individual members can choose which committee they want to work at according to their skills and competences. Each committee has a chair who is responsible for coordinating in the work carried out by the committee. All members also belong to their regional group. These groups cover 10 regions (Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Panevezys, Utena, Alytus, Siauliai, Taurage, Marijampole). Region group members ensure communication between all members and encourage youth of their region to get involved in the civic activities. Each region also has a chair that belongs to the Board. LMP Board consists of the chairman and two deputies, the regional presidents. LMP also has three working groups: Public Relations, Psychoactive substance use prevention and control and Child Welfare Working Group. These Groups examine specific issues and areas are not as extensive as the committees. The work of the LMP is overseen by the Ethics and Procedures Commission. Lithuanian Pupil's Parliament represents students' interests; initiates draft laws, amendments and submit them to the Seimas; respond to public issues; adopts resolutions; cooperates with other organizations and institutions in Lithuania and abroad; reports to city and municipality school students. The LMP is supported by the Lithuanian Parliament, the Ministry of Education, the Central Election Commission and the European Law Students' Association Lithuanian National Group (ELSA-Lithuania).

The EU Youth Parliament in Lithuania

European Youth Parliament (EYP) encourages young people independent thinking and encourages the public to actively participate in public life. EYP consists of 37 European countries, national committees, involving thousands of young people volunteering incentives. European Youth Parliament started activities in Lithuania in the beginning of 2013.

European Youth Parliament (EYP) is one of the largest European institutional platforms, whose activities are focused on the political debate, intercultural encounters, political awareness and the exchange of ideas among young people from all over Europe. Youth Parliament (EYP) encourage young people independent thinking and encourages the public to actively participate in public life. EYP Lithuania mission is to encourage young people's awareness, an interest in Lithuania, European policy and prevailing social problems; to provide an opportunity for young people to express their views; to develop their personal abilities; to promote inter-cultural, between religious, ideological and practical exchange.

Youth councils and/or youth advisory boards

The [Lithuanian Youth Council](#) (usually referred to as LiJOT) is the biggest non-governmental, non-profit umbrella structure for Lithuanian national youth organizations and regional unions of youth organizations. Currently LiJOT has 62 members (non-governmental youth organizations) and represents more than 200 000 young people in Lithuania. LiJOT is an organization representing the interests of youth and framing youth policy, the Government's partner forming the constitution of the Council of Youth Affairs. LiJOT is a full member of the European Youth Forum.

The [Agency of International Youth Co-operation](#) is a public non-profit institution established in February 1999 by the Department of Youth Affairs (in those days – the State Council of Youth Affairs) as well as LiJOT. The main aim of the agency is to ensure the development of international youth cooperation and successful participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programs for young people. The main purpose of the Agency of International Youth Co-operation is to ensure due and efficient participation of the Lithuanian youth in the European Union program "Youth in Action" (2007 – 2013) through financial grants for project implementation and quality improvement of projects implemented.

Higher education student union(s)

Lithuanian National Union of Students (LSS)

LSS is independent and non-governmental organization that was founded in 1992. This organization was created by country's most active students' representatives. LSS represents the rights of Lithuanian students and unites higher education institutions' student unions from all over the country. LSS represents and defends Lithuanian students' interests on the highest level. In order to fulfill this mission LSS organizes events and actions both on national and international levels. These actions are taken in order to draw society's attention to current problems, create and improve the education system, promote an intercultural partnership between students and whole academic community and improve society's views on students. LSS broadens and strengthens the contacts with governmental institutions, national and international youth and student organizations as well as other organizations and education institutions.

LSS members are student representative organizations. These organizations are managed by representatives chosen by students. LSS Council which is responsible for outlying the main LSS activities is formed from these representatives. Student representative organizations also delegate representatives to the highest LSS management structure – Conference. The Conference elects LSS president every two years and also evaluates president and his/her bureau work annually.

Lithuanian National Union of Students is an active member of the European Students Union (ESU), the Nordic Union of Students (NOM), the Knowledge Economy Forum (KEF) and

founder of the Student Union of the Baltic States. LSS also cooperates with the Youth Affairs Department of Social Security and Labour ministry, governmental institutions responsible for education politics and other organizations. LSS is an association funded by members' fees, support received from individuals, charities and charitable donations (donated) in accordance to provisions in [Law on Charity and Support Funds](#) as well as donations from non-governmental organizations, international public organizations (associations) and other legally obtained funds.

School student union(s)

Lithuanian School Students' Union (LMS) is a voluntary, non-profit association, uniting Lithuanian school students' councils. LMS represents secondary school students by forming Education and Youth policies, educating school students with urgent issues, joining them in common activities by cooperating with governmental and non-governmental institutions, creating a community for schools and their students. LMS is the main platform of education and youth policy development and implementation for school students, cooperating with government, society, business and education sectors. LMS aims to encourage school students' initiative and collaboration. LMS represents school students by forming an impact of Youth and an Education policy as well by collaborating with governmental and non-governmental institutions; The organization unites school students to solve common problems and collects, analyzes and promotes school student councils guidelines in Lithuania as well as develops international relations between school students and organizes meetings, debates and conferences on relevant topics for students. The organization was founded at the Lithuanian School Student Conference in 1996. On 13-14th of December 1998, at the 2nd Lithuanian School Student Conference it was decided to register the organization in the Ministry of Justice of Lithuania by changing its name to the Lithuanian School Student Union (Lietuvos moksleivių sąjunga or LMS). On 18th of May 1999, the Lithuanian School Student Union got its official status as a non-profit organization. In 2012 – 2016 organization aims to create an umbrella structure for Lithuania secondary school students autonomies, cities/district students councils and students councils information centers. Lithuania secondary school students union consists of the President, Board, Revision Commission and the President Office. Union unites not only secondary school students councils but also volunteers.

Other bodies

Other bodies in Lithuania that are most active and important assemblies of youth representation are [full or observer members](#) of LiJOT.

5.4 Young people's participation in policy-making

Formal Mechanisms of Consultation

A national youth policy is developed in consultation with the EU, national and municipal, governmental and non-governmental actors in the field of youth policy. The consultations are designed to create, encourage and strengthen various forms of cooperation between actors. The consultations take place through a network of youth organizations, business and civil society representatives. The consultations with LiJOT representatives are taken in meetings on drafting and preparation of legal documents. The open system [TAIS](#) (Legal Acts Information System) includes possibilities to monitor the whole process of legislation adoption. Regional youth affairs councils are also included into policy consultations. Municipality youth affairs coordinators are included in consultations as well as Youth Guarantee coordinators in each of the 60 municipalities. The [tool](#) with the information about each youth centre in municipalities has been created in order to have on-hand information and to make consultations more effective. The EU [Structured Dialogue](#) between policy-makers, young people and their representatives is widely seen as a promising tool for listening to young people. The Structured Dialogue has yet to fulfil its full potential: It still fails to reach a wider group of young people with fewer opportunities.

The following preparatory work is carried out in order to gain adequate understanding of the actual needs of young people: consultations with and collecting information from municipal councils for youth affairs, coordinators for youth affairs, regional youth councils and youth organisations (organisations working with youth), employees of municipality administration, representatives of non-governmental organisations, communities, and other stakeholders (experts, entrepreneurs etc.). The main policy themes covered by youth policy are identified through information and statistical (EU and national) data collection: analysis of documents (EU and national strategic documents, youth programs / conceptions, research reports and articles on youth related issues, organizing events (discussions, meetings etc.), analysis of good practices, EU and national document analysis (e.g. EU recommendations in the youth policy) and synthesis, plan preparation and monitoring of implementation. Youth activities and activities of Youth organisations in Lithuania are remarkably well documented and presented. They present a consistent analysis of the background situation and define the approach of each relevant organisation to it. Each ministry also provides reports and uses all necessary statistical and research information.

Youth consultation and counseling is carried out in accordance with the [European Youth Information Charter](#). In 2013 the [Guidelines on Youth Information and Counseling](#) were prepared (updated in 2015) by the [Department of Youth Affairs](#). Currently, Lithuania has 40 Eurodesk Lithuania regional representatives (in Vilnius, Mazeikiai, Rietavas, Plunge, Siauliai, Panevezys, Utena, Molėtai, Birzai, Alytus, Lazdijai, Ukmerge, Gargzdai, Silale, Visaginas, Zarasai, Rokiškis, Radviliškis, Kupiškis and Marijampole).

2021 [The National Youth Policy Action Plan for 2021 is being implemented](#), the aim of which is to identify measures to strengthen the implementation of youth policy at the national level, ensuring interdepartmental cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors. The measures shall be implemented in order to:

- to ensure the development of the social security system that meets the various needs of young people
- to develop a conscious, civic, patriotic, mature, cultural, and creative personality of a young person who is able to be an active part of a diverse society
- develop and coordinate the youth work system and ensure the development of youth employment infrastructure
- to facilitate the consistent and high-quality activities of young people and organizations working with young people in order to increase the involvement of young people in organized activities
- ensure cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors in developing coherent, factual and knowledge-based youth policies

Actors

Youth policy is developed and implemented according to a cross-sectorial approach. In real life this approach is translated into cooperation across different sectors: government, public institutions (health, education, environment, culture, sport, etc.), the public, NGOs, business and media. The main youth actors (e.g. youth representatives, organisations, students associations, youth parliaments and councils, etc.) involved in the consultation processes are described in section 5.3.

Information on the extent of youth participation

On the national level, LiJOT holds structured dialogue consultations in collaboration with the open youth centers and their employees, youth organisations. Information about ongoing consultation process and participation opportunities is available to all young people, especially focusing on the youth that do not belong to youth organisations. LiJOT informally monitors legislation adoption and acts on behalf of youth representatives. LiJOT administers its own database on young people including those from vulnerable groups;

however, the monitoring of the uptake of the consultations' results in EU and national policy remains a challenge. There are no formal mechanisms of data collection/ monitoring of the processes of consultation of young people to policy-making.

At the municipal level any young person in Lithuania has a possibility to participate in the municipal council and the municipal commission meetings and submit proposals to the municipal administration on issues of young people. Young people from vulnerable groups are equally free to engage in these processes. In most cases this option is exercised engaging them in youth organizations, informal groups and pupils' self-governance activities. Youth coordinators in municipalities engage members of vulnerable youth in various events on youth policy. They also coordinate the municipal council youth work, cooperates with youth organizations and youth related information and performing other functions contribute to the engaging young people from vulnerable groups in the youth policy decision-making. Policy measures for involvement migrant youth in youth policy and activities is not yet well developed, but the LiJOT and youth coordinators in municipalities are aware of the challenges faced by migrant youth and discuss these issues in conferences and meetings. For example charity fund "For the Young" ([Jauniems](#)) implemented the project "Regional youth policy strengthening for civic engagement," in 2015 which included a conference on youth policy makers and NGOs' partnerships.

Outcomes

Lithuania organised a Structured Dialogue on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, including a public consultation, a conference and a round table with ministers in 2015. 'X-Y-Z' project focused on the involvement of NEETs in youth policy processes. Lithuania has prepared a Structured Dialogue communication strategy and uses social media networks to attract non-organized youth and young Lithuanians living in remote areas or abroad. There also exists [Memorandum on Youth Guarantees Implementation Monitoring](#). However, in the interest of accountability and to motivate young people to stay engaged, policymakers at all levels should provide better feedback on their responses through the European Youth Portal and national working groups.

Large-scale initiatives for dialogue or debate between public institutions and young people

Lithuania organised a Structured Dialogue on the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, including a public consultation, a conference and a round table with ministers in 2015. The '[X-Y-Z](#)' project focused on the involvement of NEETs in youth policy processes. Lithuania has prepared a Structured Dialogue communication strategy and uses social media networks to attract non-organized youth and young Lithuanians living in remote areas or abroad. There also exists [Memorandum on Youth Guarantees Implementation Monitoring](#). All 60 Lithuanian municipalities have prepared long-term (2013–2018) strategic documents on youth policy followed by medium-term (2013–2015) action plans and monitoring and control systems for their implementation. The following structures implementing youth policy were involved into the consultations while preparing these plans: municipal council for youth affairs, coordinator for youth affairs, regional youth council or other youth organisations or organisations working with youth, employees of municipality administration, representatives of non-governmental organisations and communities. Approximately 500 local and national events (trainings, discussions, presentations) involving almost 7000 participants were organised drawing up these plans. There are at least 2 long-term aims provided in each plan and at least 2 objectives for each of the aims are indicated. Plans also include partner institutions and indicate a level of their involvement. Plans and action plans also include assessment criteria for each of long-term aims.

5.5 National strategy to increase youth participation

Existence of a national strategy to increase young people's political and civil society participation

No specific national strategy to increase youth participation exist. In December 2010 the Government of the Republic of Lithuania approved the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#). It is the main, overarching, strategic public document integrating the major directions to be followed in the policy making on youth at national level in Lithuania including the encouragement of youth participation in the society. The program also develops a vision on the opportunities for young people to become active and motivated modern state citizens, being able to take responsibility for themselves and create a fulfilling life.

Scope and contents

The [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) prioritises the improvement of the social inclusion of young people, with particular emphasis on young people not in employment, education and training (NEETs), the promotion of cross-sectorial cooperation as the underlying principle of integral youth policy, the exchange of good practices on social inclusion of young people and the promotion of the cooperation in the youth policy field between young people from European Union and Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries.

According to the provisions of the [Program](#) better youth employment opportunities will be ensured by creating favourable conditions for young people to participate in the labour market; economic and social entrepreneurship will be promoted and non-formal education will be developed seeking integration of formal and non-formal education; youth creativity and active participation of young people in society will be encouraged.

Furthermore, the Program's goals are:

- To ensure the development of social security, education and health care systems.
- To develop a conscious, public-spirited, patriotic, mature, cultural and creative young individual, capable of being an active part of a diverse society;
- To develop and coordinate the system of youth work and to ensure the development of youth employment infrastructure;
- To create favourable conditions for consistent and high quality activities of youth organisations and organisations working with youth;
- To ensure inter-institutional and cross-sectorial cooperation in developing coherent, fact and knowledge-based youth policy. Inter-institutional and cross-sectorial cooperation will be developed at the local, national and international level.

The second objective of the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) is to develop a conscious, active and creative youth with the capacity to be active part of society. Such values as patriotism, maturity and education are stressed (see Part II. Section 13). The program aims to address the level of youth participation as reflected in the [Lithuanian civil power index](#): value for youth (in 2009) - 35 out of 100 possible; target value (year 2019) - 55 out of 100 possible.

Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

The [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) is coordinated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. The [Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania](#) is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#). The Ministry is implementing the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) through Action Plans for the periods of [2014-2016](#) and 2017-2019 (not adopted yet). In each of the action plans specific objectives, actions, terms of implementation, budget allocations and responsible

institutions for its implementations are (will be) indicated. Responsible institutions for the implementation of the cross-sectorial Action Plan are the [Ministry of Environment](#), Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Agriculture, the Drug Control Department under the Government of Lithuania, Lithuanian Labour Exchange, and Council of Youth Affairs. These institutions report to [The Ministry of Social Security and Labor](#) about implementation of the action plan every year until February 1.

Revisions/Updates

The National Youth Policy Development Program for 2011-2019 underwent a few revisions and updates since its introduction. Firstly, the 2014-2016 Action Plan of the National Youth Policy Program for 2011-2019 development program has been reviewed and more focus given on youth employment and volunteering as well as the development of youth centers and open spaces, regional youth policies and non-formal education. The 2015-2017 Plan for the Regional Youth Policy Strengthening has been approved and implemented.

5.6 Supporting youth organisations

Legal/policy framework for the functioning and development of youth organisations

The Law on Youth Policy Framework establishes the terms of youth organization, youth council, as well as organization working with youth, and acknowledges the importance and contribution thereof into education of personality of a young person. In accordance with Article 2 of the Law on Youth Policy Framework: **Youth organization** means a public organisation or association, registered in the manner prescribed by laws and other legal acts, in which young people or public youth organisations comprise not less than 2/3 of its members **National youth council** means a youth organisation the principal purpose of which is to unite youth organisations of Lithuania and to represent them. **Regional youth council** means a youth organisation the principal purpose of which is to unite youth organisations functioning in a territorial administrative unit of the Republic of Lithuania, and to represent them. **Organization working with youth** means a public legal person one of the purposes of which is youth-oriented activity which meets their needs. Article 9 of the Law on Youth Policy Framework indicates the key functions of youth organizations: 1) to attend to and satisfy common needs and interests of young people or needs and interests of individual youth groups; 2) to foster civic responsibility and respect for the family; 3) to carry out informal education of young people; 4) to organise employment, sport, tourism, cultural and professional activities of young people; 5) to promote international co-operation of young people; 6) to foster voluntary youth work; 7) to carry out other activities which are in compliance with the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, international agreements of the Republic of Lithuania, laws, and other legal acts. Youth organizations represent the interests of youth as well as frame youth policy through regional unions of youth organizations (round tables) and national youth organizations as well as regional unions of youth organizations – through LiJOT. According to the Youth Situation Research data, ordered by the Department of Youth Affairs in 2007, the activities of youth organizations involved 12 percent of 14-29 year old people from Lithuania.

Public financial support

One of the instruments to finance youth organizations is national funding competitions. National funding competition regulations for youth organizations are published in the Youth Affairs Department [website](#). Youth organizations can participate in these competitions according to the funding scheme which best suits their project idea. Other sources of financing of youth organizations are diverse: municipal budgets, international funds, program funds, membership fund, and private funds exist. Each funding scheme may have specific requirements for the applicants and their projects.

Public funding schemes through which youth organisations receive financial support include [National Organization funding](#) scheme, [Regional organization funding](#) scheme, [Open youth centers / Youth Open Space funding](#) schemes, [Lithuanian-Polish Youth Exchange](#) scheme, [Youth Entrepreneurship funding](#), [Foreign Lithuanian youth funding](#) scheme, [Social Responsibility Education](#) scheme and [Youth Coordination Activities](#) funding. The type of activities supported by the mentioned public funding schemes are described in detail in the [funding call documentation](#) and themes and objectives of each funding scheme.

Initiatives to increase the diversity of participants

Through its policy decisions, Lithuania seeks to bring about social inclusion for people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Social inclusion has been the priority of the Trio Presidency Countries of Ireland, Lithuania and Greece in 2012-2013, resulting in three Council Conclusions and one Council Resolution. The Trio Presidency countries each chose a specific priority as their contribution to the overall topic of social inclusion: quality youth work, raising opportunities for young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs), and youth entrepreneurship respectively. [The LT council conclusion on enhancing the social inclusion of NEETs](#) emphasises the use of the Erasmus+ programme to address young people with fewer opportunities, especially those in a NEET situation.

5.7 “Learning to participate” through formal, non-formal and informal learning

Policy Framework

Citizenship education is one of the most important advances Lithuanian Strategy "Lithuania 2030" The importance of civic education is stressed in the [Law on Higher Education and Studies](#) (see also: [unofficial translation](#)) The implementation of civic education in educational institutions is defined by the National Curriculum for Primary and Lower Secondary Education where 'Social and civic education' is defined as an area that should be implemented across all disciplines, activities of non-formal education and school self-government. As a cross-curricular dimension means that all teachers must contribute to implementing the related objectives as defined in national curricula. According to the national curriculum, at least five hours of social activities for pupils per year are compulsory in lower secondary education.

Formal learning

In Lithuanian education system citizenship education is a compulsory separate subject at the secondary level. In Lithuania, schools are free to choose how to allocate the two weekly hours of citizenship education; it can be spread over two years, teaching one hour per week; or taught for one year with two hours per week. In addition to these general objectives, the national curricula emphasises citizenship education in sections on cross-curricular themes, key competences or within learning content areas. In Lithuania, the 2011 curriculum for primary and lower secondary education defines 'Social and civic education' as an area that should be implemented across all disciplines, activities of non-formal education and school self-government. As a cross-curricular dimension, all teachers must contribute to implementing the related objectives as defined in national curricula. Moreover, according to the 2009 national curriculum, at least five hours of social activities for pupils per year are compulsory in lower secondary education. Examples of the social activities specified are 'activities for students self expression' in the field of citizenship education, 'strengthening school community traditions' and 'participating in different kinds of socio-cultural projects'.

The curricula of education aims at developing political literacy, acquiring critical thinking and analytical skills, developing certain values, attitudes and behaviours (sense of national

identity, respect, tolerance,), encouraging active participation and engagement at school and community levels.

Non-formal and informal learning

Lithuania have introduced measures to promote the involvement of pupils and students in school governance. Official regulations and recommendations in Lithuanian Law on Education establish types of arrangements for pupils and students' participation in school governance: 1) school community (including pupils and students) participation in the management of school (in Lithuania school governing bodies (school boards) are the highest management level within a school institution. They are usually chaired by the school head and generally comprise representatives from each of the groups which make up the school population and may include external stakeholder groups and parents); 2) pupil and student's representation on school governing bodies. The election of pupil and student's councils falls within the scope of school autonomy. Pupils and students are entitled to establish self-governing bodies within the school. However, the election of class representatives is not regulated centrally and falls within the scope of school autonomy.

The skills young people acquire through participating in traineeships and apprenticeships can be formally recognised if they are part of education institution study program. Another form how skills young people acquire through participating in traineeships and apprenticeships can be recognised as volunteering activity. The Law on Volunteering provides that, taking into consideration the aims and nature of the volunteering activity, it may be recognized as practical work and/or learning experience, or credited as social work under a programme of general education. There is a need expressed by the Department of Youth Affairs to include volunteer activities in the [youth pass](#) - a European recognition tool for non-formal and informal learning. In order to encourage volunteering, the [Law of Volunteering](#) provides that, taking into consideration the aims and nature of the volunteering activity, it may be recognized as practical work and/or learning experience, or credited as social work under a programme of general education.

Examples of good practice

Living Library Project is an activity of informal education, encouraging social awareness, tolerance and respect for human rights. Living library consists of „Living books“, librarians and readers. Living Books are people from vulnerable social groups, experiencing discrimination or stereotypes in society. „Living books“ have a lot to say about discrimination, social inequality, answer questions concerning lifestyle of different social groups. Librarian meets a reader (a trespasser, participant or targeted audience) that comes to the Living Library. Librarian is a trained person and responsible for preparing audience for reading process, explaining the rules and suggesting to pick a book from catalogue. Process of reading involves sincere conversation between Living book and reader, asking concerning questions and getting straight answers. Reading process becomes comfortable and interactive place for intimate communication with people from socially vulnerable groups. Librarians are observing conversation from aside and intervene if needed. Process of reading is aimed to demolish barriers of uncertainty and fear, develop tolerance and mutual understanding. Worldwide successful method of informal education started in Lithuania in 2007 as a part of European Council campaign „All different – all equal“. From that time on importance and popularity of Living Library is growing in society, non-governmental organizations and educational institutions. Huge effect of Living Library urges us to ensure succession of this method.

Project „Man ne dzin“ („I am not indifferent“) was launched by Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT) in order to encourage young people to come to vote. It is a project was dedicated for the elections of Seimas (parliament). The main goal of this campaign is to especially motivate young people to vote. Well known Lithuanian persons were also invited to promote this campaign

Project MISSION SIBERIA that promotes active citizenship is organised by Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT) and charity fund „Jauniems“. The project involves annual „Mission

Siberia” expeditions during which young people visit places of deportations and concentration camps of Lithuanians in Siberia. The expedition is documented by national TV (LRT) in a format of regular TV documentary series broadcast. The idea of the project was launched in 2005, when the resolution of youth civic engagement was adopted in LiJOT autumn Assembly.

Quality assurance/quality guidelines for non-formal learning

There are no official regulations on standards of quality. Some organizations have their own standards of quality and quality regulations (e.g. Agency of International Youth Cooperation [guidelines on volunteer services](#)). The standards of quality and self-evaluation activities are promoted in the framework of the [Discover Yourself](#) project implemented by the [Department of Youth Affairs](#) and the [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#).

Educators' support

There are online media resources designed for educators, counsellors, cultural animators etc. aimed at promoting intercultural awareness. The [Ugdymo Sodas](#) (Education Garden) website (database) is devoted to video resources and online-lessons for educators, counsellors, cultural animators etc. It is interactive teacher platform in which information and education planning tools and other resources can be found. These resources are available for all general education subjects including citizenship education. Education Garden website is also intended for students (performing tasks), school administration representatives (viewing and handling their school data) and to local governments and the Ministry of Education Professionals (for viewing data and preparing reports on municipal and national level). The [Ugdymo Sodas](#) (Education Garden) website is administered and updated by [Education Development Centre](#) which is the biggest institution affiliate to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania providing educational support in the field of pre-school, primary and general education.

5.8 Raising political awareness among young people

Information providers / counselling structures

Lithuania is a member of EYCA, Eurodesk. However, information provider / counselling structures raising political awareness among young people are in the developing stage. The spread of digital media has a considerable impact on the availability of information for young people in Lithuania. Social networks remain among the most popular websites and compete with news media for visitor attention. Young people aged 15–29 have the highest membership rate (80 percent and above (TNS/Gallup reports). NGO’s provide lots of printed material with various information on youth issues. Some media (youth magazines) which is dedicated for youth by youth, and the information/ brochures/ information leaflets by youth exist.

Youth-targeted information campaigns about democratic rights and democratic values

From 2021 The Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labor started providing recommendations to other ministries on measures or challenges related to youth policy in the field of their management.

However, the majority of citizen voices in Lithuania (including young persons) are still indirect, mostly expressed through personal blogs or petitioning ([Mapping Digital Media](#), 2011). Petition sites (Peticija.lt and E-peticija.lt) seem to be most popular, with some appeals digitally “signed” by tens of thousands of people. In 2007, a site called [www.Neisduok.lt](#) (Don’t Betray) presented a form for a message addressed to the Parliament, President, Government, Constitutional Court, General Prosecutor, and the National Broadcasters’ Council, but the link was not automated. Another initiative— [www.parasykjiems.lt](#) (an equivalent of the British website WriteToThem.com)

promises to automate the communication both by sending messages directly and by helping people find their representatives in the national Parliament, the European Parliament, and local municipalities. The initiative www.KaVeikiaValdzia.lt („What does Government do?“) by the group responsible for the development of the Parasykjiems.lt site has been operating since January 2010. It is KaVeikiaValdzia.lt, developed in close cooperation with MySociety.org in the United Kingdom, and it aims to consolidate all the official documents, laws, and by-laws published by the Government and to make them accessible to the general public. Notable among ongoing projects is a forum for “outstanding journalism” (Gzi.lt), and a site for “positive” news (GerosZinios.lt).

Promoting the intercultural dialogue among young people

No generally accepted concept exists to raise awareness of young persons on the advantages and problems associated with multicultural cooperation in order to emphasize its positive contribution to Lithuanian society.

Promoting transparent and youth-tailored public communication

The program of “[Young Journalists](#)” coordinated by the [Agency of International Youth Cooperation](#) in Lithuania was launched recently, which is be a good example of youth participation in promoting transparent and youth-tailored public communication. This programme is an educational programme for young publicists is a system that identifies talented young journalists, motivates, supports them and provides information to enable them for socially responsible actions. Even during the formation of the future journalists’ writing skills, the objective information based on the experience of the Lithuanian NGOs, vulnerable groups of the society, media experts working in the social field, is provided. Young journalists have the opportunity to interact directly with vulnerable groups of the society, thus learn more and overcome prejudices. The unique structure of the programme helps to touch the essence of the social problems and maintain an objective position in the public life news. During the formation of journalistic skills it enables young generation of socially responsible writing. National educational programme for young publicists seeks to change the portrayal of vulnerable groups of the society and contribute to the objective, ethical and competent media education.

5.9 E-participation

Youth e-participation is one of the priorities of Lithuanian youth NGOs. Lithuania ranks 23rd in embracing innovation and utilizing ICTs to deliver services and engage people in decision-making processes according to [UN E-Government Survey 2016](#) which measures e-government effectiveness in the delivery of basic economic and social services to people in five sectors, namely education, health, labour and employment, finance and social welfare, however information on youth e-participation is not available in this study. The topic of e-voting has been discussed in Lithuania for a long time. The World Lithuanian Community and the commission of the Lithuanian parliament [passed a resolution in 2010](#) to suggest moving forward with internet-based voting, but discussions continue with no decision. In 2015 Lithuania’s parliament has voted against amendments to election laws that would have legalized internet voting, and rejected the possibility of revising them, despite the fact that around sixty-five percent in Lithuania support the implementation of online voting according surveys. Lithuanian youth organizations and the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Lithuania support an introduction of internet based voting. More information on e-participation in municipalities can be found [here](#).

5.10 Current debates and reforms

Youth e-participation is one of the priorities of Lithuanian youth NGOs; however it remains a debated topic. In 2015 Lithuania’s parliament has voted against amendments to election laws that would have legalized Internet voting, and rejected the possibility of revising

them, despite the fact that around sixty-five percent of the residents in Lithuania support the implementation of online voting and the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Lithuania support an introduction of internet based voting.

One more debate regarding youth participation is related to the fact that some youth organisations that receive funding from the state are associated with political parties operating in Lithuania. Therefore, it is difficult to determine the extent to which projects implemented by these youth organisations are aimed at achieving the targets of the youth policy, and to which they are aimed at the propagation of ideologies of the relevant parties ([Report of National Audit Office](#), 2016).

6. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Lithuania is among the leading OECD countries by share of population that has attained at least upper secondary education (2nd place) (OECD 2021). Young people in Lithuania are also among the most active in entrepreneurship: 7.8 per cent of young people in Lithuania (first place in the EU). As of 2018, government expenditure on education (as a percentage of GDP) was 5.2 per cent in Estonia, 4.2 per cent in Latvia and 3.9 per cent in Lithuania (World Bank 2021).

According to the [Law on Education](#) education is an activity intended to provide an individual with a basis for a worthy independent life and to assist the individual in the continuous cultivation of abilities. Every person has an inherent right to learn. Education is a means of shaping the future of an individual, the society and the state, based on the acknowledgement of the indisputable value of the individual, his right of free choice and moral responsibility, as well as on democratic relationships and the country's cultural traditions. Education protects and creates national identity, guarantees continuity of the values that make a person's life meaningful, grant social life coherence and solidarity, and promote development and security of the State. Education serves its purpose best when its advancement leads the overall development of society. Education is a priority area of societal development that receives state support. The long-term objectives of education and financing priorities are set out in the [National Education Strategy 2013–2022](#). The [Law on Education](#) sets up the aims of the Lithuanian education, principles of the education system, the basics of the education system structure, education activities, and education relations, state's commitments in the education policy. Lithuanian education system is decentralized and universally accessible. Primary, basic and secondary education is compulsory for children between 7 and 17 years of age. Lithuania has a binary system of higher education with university institutions (akademija, seminarija and aukstoji mokykla) and professionally oriented institutions (colleges). University institutions primarily provide academic education, while the colleges focus on non-academic education. The language of instruction is primarily Lithuanian. Nevertheless, measures have also been taken to protect minority languages (Russian and Polish) and in some cases education can also be provided in Russian and Polish. There are both state institutions and private institutions. Private institutions must have a government license to operate. The programmes offered by all education institutions are listed in the Register of the Ministry of Education and Science [AIKOS](#).

6.1 General context

Main trends in young people's participation in education and training

As stated in the [Education and Training Monitor 2016 Lithuania](#), Lithuania has the highest tertiary educational attainment rate in the EU, but the quality and innovation outcomes of

higher education, in particular the quality of teaching and provision of soft skills, and practical training in higher education remain challenges. Lithuania has a very low early school leaving rate, but pupils' reading and maths skills are below the EU average. The participation rate in early childhood education and care is low when compared to the EU average, and there are significant disparities between urban and rural areas. The Government has taken several measures to increase participation rates and quality. Only a small percentage of adults older than 25 participate in lifelong learning. The vocational education and training remains an unattractive option for young persons and their parents, there is a need to improve its quality and cooperation with businesses. Lithuania has also witnessed considerable emigration of the general population and young people in particular in recent years. In Lithuania, teacher salaries have to be calculated by applying coefficients which vary depending on experience and teaching category. They were increased by 7 % for teachers in early childhood education and care; by 5 % for **young teachers, who still do not fall into any pedagogical category**; by 3 % on average for other educators; and by 2.5 % for pedagogical employees such as special pedagogues, psychologists and social pedagogues. As stated in the [Education and Training Monitor 2016 Lithuania](#), reforming the teaching profession is one of the main challenges in Lithuania. There is a need to strengthen the overall quality of teaching (to tackle the low performance in PISA and national tests); make the **teaching profession attractive to young talented people** (due to the low numbers of candidates for initial teacher training); and tackle potential teacher shortages in science subjects (Lithuania has the oldest teaching staff in mathematics and physics). Most teachers indicate that they need special knowledge to work with children who have special needs and with those who lack the motivation to learn. When assessing preparedness for working life, **young teachers** rate their theoretical knowledge of a particular subject as very good; however, they feel they lack pedagogical competencies, such as the ability to individualise teaching and differentiate education [Education and Training Monitor 2016 Lithuania](#).

Organisation of the education and training system

Primary, basic and -upper-secondary education in Lithuania is free of charge and compulsory from the age of 6 or 7 to 17 years (covering "primary" and "basic" education), as stated in the national [Law on Education](#). The pre-school programme for children aged from 5 to 6 at nursery schools, school nursery schools and primary school is conducted by qualified teaching staff and is voluntary. School begins at the age of 6 - 7, ten class system for primary and lower secondary education. The 4-year primary school is followed by 6 years of basic education. If a pupil is successful in the final examination, this concludes with a basic education certificate usually at the age of 15-16. After completion of basic education, a two-year course of upper secondary education may be embarked upon. It is also possible to transfer to an upper secondary school upon completion of class 8, this school then continuing until class 12. In classes 11 and 12, pupils are permitted to select subjects in a targeted way in accordance with their personal interests and strengths.

Vocational education and training can be completed in vocational schools by young people from the age of 14. The training comprises the imparting of both theoretical and practical knowledge. Four types of vocational training programmes can be distinguished. Type 1 For young people from the age of 14 who have not gained a basic education leaving certificate which forms the basis of vocational education and training. This framework also affords the opportunity of gaining the lower secondary school leaving certificate. Type 2 3-year vocational education and training for those who have gained the basic education leaving certificate. They acquire a VET qualification (skilled worker status). Type 3 For those who have passed the upper secondary school leaving certificate, 1 to 2 years of vocational training. Type 4 For those who have passed the upper secondary school leaving certificate, 3 to 4 year course of training comprising higher education and occupational qualification. Some modules correspond to bachelor level, and credit for these may be transferred to a later course of higher education study. Vocational education and training, however, is not very popular with young Lithuanians.

Lithuania has academic (universities) and non-academic institutions of higher education (colleges). Students gain entry via selection procedures which mostly involve consideration being accorded to marks obtained in the upper secondary school leaving certificate. Higher education is based on the European credit system. The duration of the course of study leading to the acquisition of a Bachelor degree (basic higher education study) is 3.5 to 4 years (with some exceptions e.g. medical studies which might take longer). This can be followed by a one or two year vocational qualification diploma, such as a teaching qualification or a Masters degree which in turn can be followed by a 4-year doctoral studies.

Main concepts

As stated in the [Law on Education](#), education is an activity intended to provide an individual with a basis for a worthy independent life and to assist the individual in the continuous cultivation of abilities. As stated in the [Law on education](#), the education system of Lithuania comprises the following: 1) formal education (primary, basic, secondary education, formal vocational education and training and higher education studies); 2) non-formal education (pre-school, pre-primary, other non-formal education of children (as well as the teaching supplementing the formal education) and of adults); 3) informal education; 4) educational assistance (vocational guidance, informational, psychological, socio-pedagogical, special pedagogical and special assistance of education, healthcare at school, consultation, in-service training of teachers and other assistance). The [Law on Education](#) provides detailed explanations of the following concepts.

6.2 Administration and governance

Cross-sectorial cooperation

In general the [Department of Youth Affairs](#) within the the Ministry of Social Security and Labour is primarily responsible for youth and/or youth programming and this includes cross-sectorial mechanisms of cooperation. The [Department of Youth Affairs](#) coordinates and organizes committees on monitoring specific policy measures while the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) through Action Plan for the period of 2017-2019. In this Action Plan specific objectives, actions, terms of implementation, budget allocations and responsible institutions for its implementation are indicated. Collaboration between ministries and stakeholders does exist to varying degrees and on different levels. Intersectoral committees have successfully been set up to manage ongoing policy processes. In general, the The Ministry of Social Security and Ministry of Education and Science handles youth and education issues. The institutional landscape in the field of youth and education is large. There is a lot of institutions in municipalities taking care of specified tasks and activities that relate to youth and education. Stakeholder consultations are legally required for amendments or drafting new policy. However, the law does not specify that evidence should be collected. Policy-makers can decide whether consultations with stakeholders and research findings should be included in policy proposals and how this is done. The Ministry of Education provides databases (e.g. Education Management Information System). These databases are available to external bodies, although they need to apply for access. Databases are not accessible to the public. The institutions that formally participate in the policy-making process usually include dedicated research agencies, evaluation/testing agencies, research and statistical departments, youth organisations, national statistics offices, think tanks and consultants. Likewise, representatives of businesses and trade unions, professional lobbyists and other interested parties can take part in the public policy-making process by providing comments in the public hearings and in parliamentary committees, to which these actors have free access.

Governance

The governance of education includes many actors and stakeholders. The Government of Lithuania implements the laws, decrees of the President and resolutions of the Seimas regulating education, long-term state education programmes, the Government Programme in the field of education, approve its implementation programmes. It also co-ordinates the activities of the Ministry of Education and Science, other ministries and government agencies on the issues of education; The Government can establish reorganise, liquidate and restructure state colleges, educational institutions the legal form of which is a public establishment, when necessary – education management entities – government agencies, found institutions under the Ministry of Education and Science and assign to this Ministry the exercising of the rights and duties of the owner of the institution under the Ministry (with the exception of the adoption of decisions on reorganisation and liquidation of such institutions); The Government also charges its subordinate executive bodies with the task of drafting of the National Education Strategy; be responsible for its implementation as well as for the implementation of the Government Programme in the field of education. [The Ministry of Education and Science](#) 1) participates in the shaping, implementation and ensuring of the state education policy; 2) bears responsibility for education quality; 3) submits proposals and draft resolutions to the Government: regarding preparation and improvement of laws and other legal acts; funding of education, material base of schools, disposal of the property of schools; 4) in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Government or an institution authorised by it, keeps the Register of Studies, Training Programmes and Qualifications, to establish and to keep registers of qualification development programmes and events, educational and scientific institutions, licences, forms of education certificates, diplomas, certificates of education and qualification certificates, learners, students, teachers, as well as to establish and maintain information systems of state education; The co-ordinate activities of education departments of municipal administrations in the implementation of the state education policy, to submit their general regulations for Government approval; to set qualification requirements for heads and specialists of education departments of municipal administrations. [The Ministry of Education and Science](#) also coordinates the development of a network of vocational training schools and general education schools designated for learners with special educational needs within the country (region) and organises and coordinates accreditation of general education curricula as well as issues licences to execute formal vocational training programmes in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Government. [The Ministry of Education and Science](#) maintains contacts with appropriate institutions of foreign countries and international organisations, promotes independent co-operation of the country's schools and organisations with respective schools and organisations of other countries, provides funding or otherwise encourage activities of Lithuanians residing abroad in the areas of education and studies and represents the Republic of Lithuania in foreign countries or at international organisations. [The Ministry of Education and Science](#) carries out the performance review of principals, deputy principals responsible for education, chiefs of teaching organising divisions of schools in which the Ministry exercises in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts the rights and duties of the State as the owner or stakeholder, organises the performance review of teachers, educational assistance specialists in schools in which the Ministry exercises in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts the rights and duties of the State as the owner or stakeholder, and approves criteria for pre-school education curricula, a general pre-primary education curriculum, general education, teaching content of formal education (descriptions of primary, basic, secondary curricula, teaching plans) approved by the Minister of Education and Science; criteria for accreditation of secondary education curricula and the description of implementation of the procedure thereof; general criteria for non-formal education programmes of the teaching supplementing the formal education, funded from state or municipal budgets, approved by the Minister of Education and Science. The Ministry also approves the description of the procedure of consecutive learning in accordance with general education curricula, the description of the procedure of pre-school education and the regulations of

in-service training and performance review and performance evaluation every five years of principals, deputy principals responsible for education, chiefs of teaching organising divisions of state (except higher education institutions) and municipal schools, the regulations of in-service training and performance review of teachers, specialists providing assistance to learners, the regulation for training of pedagogues; to take care of teaching of the Lithuanian language and teaching in the Lithuanian language in foreign countries; to analyse whether the use of state budget allocations to education is appropriate, to report to the public on the general state of education in the country and perform other functions prescribed by the laws and the Government. Finally [the Ministry of Education and Science](#) appropriates by tender budget allocations for establishments, enterprises and organisations carrying out education, research, culture and sports programmes, projects. The Ministry of Education and Science annually makes a [Report](#) about the state of the education system in the country and the regions.

The Ministry of Education and Science exercises the state supervision of activities of education providers. The supervision of school activities is exercised by the institution exercising the rights and duties of the owner (a state school – a budgetary institution), the municipal executive institution (a municipal school – a budgetary institution), the institution exercising the rights and duties of the owner (the meeting of the participants) (a state and a municipal school – a public establishment), the owner (the meeting of the participants) (other schools), by engaging external evaluators where necessary. Supervision of the quality of higher education studies shall be exercised in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Law on Higher Education and Research.

Municipal institutions in the area of education management implement the state education policy, set out long-term objectives of education development as well as measures for their achievement. They establish, reorganise and liquidate education subdivisions of the municipal administration; They also develop a network of schools carrying out pre-school, pre-primary, primary, basic and secondary education curricula, children's and adults' non-formal education programmes; create conditions for the implementation of compulsory education of children and initiate that a network of vocational training and adult education providers, which meets residents' needs, would be developed, and shall independently develop a network of non-formal education providers. An executive institution of the municipality 1) analyses the state of education, ensure the fulfilment of the state education policy; 2) organizes pre-school education, pre-primary education, general education, vocational training and vocational guidance, other children's non-formal education, non-formal adult education and organize; 3) coordinate the provision of educational assistance to learners, teachers, family, schools, the implementation of minimum supervision measures of a child; 4) in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts, appoint heads and specialists of education subdivisions of the municipal administration; 5) in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Minister of Education and Science, execute performance review of principals, deputy principals responsible for education, chiefs of teaching organising divisions; 6) organizes performance review of teachers, specialists in educational assistance in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Minister of Education and Science; 7) in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Government, organises and keep an accounting of children living within the municipality; ensure that all children study according to compulsory education programmes; 8) organises testing of learning achievements of learners attending schools located within the municipality; 9) in accordance with the procedure laid down by laws, be responsible that every learner residing within its territory would be transported to and from school, organize free-of-charge transportation of learners to schools in compliance with paragraph 1 and 2 of Article 36 of this Law; 10) provides information to the Ministry of Education and Science and the public about the state of education in the municipality.

Self-governance of a school. The self-governance of a school collegially discuss issues of school activity and funding and, within the scope of their competence as defined in the statutes of the school, adopt decisions, influence decisions of the principal, perform public

supervision of the school's management. The variety and competence of self-governance bodies of the school as well as the principles of their establishment is legalized by the statutes of the school. The school council acts as the school's highest self-governance body, representing the learners, the teachers, the parents (guardians, curators) and the local community. The school council reports for its activity to the members of the school community who have elected the school council. Other school self-governance bodies (teachers', learners', parents' (guardians', curators')) may also function at school. Specific features of self-governance of higher education institutions are set out by the [Law on Higher Education and Research](#).

Municipal education self-governance bodies. Municipal education councils and councils of particular education areas may be set up in order to promote participation of the municipal population in the formation of a municipal education policy and to impact the implementation of this policy. Learners, teachers, parents (guardians, curators), social partners, education providers and/or their associations can be represented in the municipal education council. The municipal education council shall analyse implementation of the overall education policy, approve long-term goals of the education development and draw the public into their implementation.

Members of the school community may participate in education management, and unite into associations, organisations and alliances of various interest groups (learners, students, teachers, parents (guardians, curators), schools, education management level heads) that fulfil tasks and functions for education, culture, scientific research development as set out by their members and provided for in their statutes. In compliance with the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Associations, teachers' associations, societies and alliances can participate in the forming of subject content they teach, in resolving issues of teachers' in-service training. Activities of trade unions at schools are defined by the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Trade Unions.

State education self-governance bodies. The state education self-governance bodies promote the participation of the public in the formation of an education policy and decision-making on matters of education. The Lithuanian Education Council acts as an expert body and provides consultations on strategic issues of education development in Lithuania. Regulations of the Lithuanian Education Council must be confirmed by the Seimas. The General Education Council initiates and approves projects concerning the change of pre-school, pre-primary, primary, basic, secondary education curricula, qualification and professional development of teachers, provision of schools. Its regulations are approved by the Minister of Education and Science. The Lithuanian Vocational Training Council advises on strategic issues of vocational training. The Lithuanian Non-formal Adult Education Council considers the main prospects for development of non-formal education in Lithuania, carry out the analysis of projects for the development of the system of non-formal adult education. The Council of Higher Education is an advisory body for the Ministry of Education and Science in strategic matters of higher education development.

6.3 Preventing early leaving from education and training (ELET)

National strategy

The early school leaving rate in Lithuania remains one of the lowest in the EU (5.5 % in 2015 compared with the EU average of 11 %) and has been declining since 2008 when it was 7.5 %. Thus, Lithuania does not need to have a comprehensive strategy to tackle early leaving. However, the [National Education Strategy 2013–2022](#) has established a national target of maintaining the ELET rate below 8 % by 2022. There is a gender gap - the ELET rate is 6.9 % for males compared with 4 % for females (still one of the lowest in the EU). Early leaving is not officially defined but other similar concepts are used: a) 'not-learning child': a child under 16 years not registered in the student register; b) 'not-attending child': a child included in the student register but who has missed, during a

month, more than half of the lessons prescribed by the compulsory school curriculum without due justification; early school leavers aged 18 –24 with lower secondary or lower education and not in education 4 weeks. Those having started VET programs but not completed with a qualification are considered as VET dropouts.

Formal education: main policy measures on ELET

Lithuania has developed policies to address challenges of ELET. Since 2005, the Education Law placed responsibilities on municipalities to have in place an optimal network of schools. This required the development and agreement of initial plans within all 60 municipalities and has seen considerable reorganisation of the school network, with the total number of municipal schools reducing from 1 429 to 1 107 between 2005 and 2015. Home to school transport was recognised as integral to the reform, with the purchase of almost 700 buses between 2000 and 2014. This was aimed not only to better allocate resources but also to increase quality of teaching which results in better motivation of students to attend school.

The main measures and policies related to early leaving are: increasing the number of children in early childhood education and care (ECEC) as of the age of 4, possible mandatory ECEC attendance for children socially at risk, providing quality ECEC via the 'Development of kindergarten and preschool education' project (2012-2015) (Ikimokyklinio ir priešmokyklinio ugdymo plėtra). This project is supplemented by the 'Promotion of Cohesion' Programme (2007-2013), which aims at a) investing in pre-primary education by updating the curriculum and improving school conditions and b) creating equal opportunities for young children in rural areas through the creation of 'Universal Multifunction Centres in Rural Areas' (Universalių daugiafunkcinių centrų kaimo vietovėse steigimas) for educational and social services within the vicinities;

Lithuania has developed early warning systems to identify and respond to early signs of ELET. Students who, over one month miss more than half of the lessons prescribed by the compulsory curriculum are registered in the 'National Information System on Children's Absenteeism and Pupils' Truancy'. This data is subsequently transmitted to the information systems of other agencies like social welfare, internal affairs or health care. An electronic school diary has been introduced for general education and vocational training schools. It allows parents to see information on their children's recent achievements and progress, directly communicate with teachers and participate in forums on various issues. Some electronic diaries allow schools to send an SMS or e-mail to inform parents if the student is missing school or being late.

Another measure are the youth schools for students aged 12-16 who lack both the motivation to learn and social skills, and who are experiencing learning difficulties. They are engaged in practical activities linked to the basic education curriculum while at the same time receiving social rehabilitation. Youth homes are for pupils aged 12-17 who have completed a course of treatment for and rehabilitation from dependence on psychotropic substances and alcohol, as well as those who have behaviour-related and emotional development disorders and need to improve their mental well-being and motivation for learning linked to the basic education curriculum.

These measures are also in place: 1) supporting low achievers through individual learning plans and educational assistance for students with special educational needs; 2) providing language support for children with a different mother tongue. Teaching in ethnic minorities' languages is also provided in some schools; 3) establishing a procedure for the identification of groups at risk of early leaving with the participation of municipalities, school staff, parents and, if needed, the Child Welfare Commission; 4) developing the 'National Information System on Children's Absenteeism and Pupils' Truancy' (Nesimokančių vaikų ir mokyklos nelankančių mokinių informacinė sistema) as an early warning system for students at risk of early leaving; 5) networking with parents and other actors outside school through projects such as 'Harmonic Family and Sustainable School Community – The Future of Lithuania' (Darni šeima ir tvari mokyklos bendruomenė – Lietuvos ateitis) in order to promote active involvement of parents in educational

activities; 6) identifying school drop-outs and supporting them to re-enter education at the so-called 'Youth Schools' (jaunimo mokyklos), that offer one or two-year schooling for students with learning motivation or social problems. The course may lead to re-entering mainstream education and training; 7) the 'Trust Yourself' project (Pasitikėk savimi), which aims at increasing students' motivation to return to education or to employment. Target groups are persons aged 16-25 years old, who do not have any qualification, do not work or learn and do not participate in the active labour market. Persons below 21 years of age are sent back to education. The authority responsible for developing and implementing the project is the Lithuanian Employment Services in the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. Other bodies are involved such as the Department of Youth Affairs, 10 regional public employment services and 11 NGOs.

Specific targeted measures for groups at risk are focused on students from socially disadvantaged, migrant and minority/Roma backgrounds. The Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania approved the 'Action Plan on Roma Integration into Lithuanian Society 2012-2014'. Its purpose is to promote the participation of Roma in society, to reduce social exclusion, to raise Roma community awareness and to make society more tolerant of Roma people and their culture.

VET teachers receive training on how to work with potential early leavers. Most VET providers have developed student attendance tracking systems and action plans to improve attendance. Since 2011, most VET providers have established child welfare commissions (vaiko gerovės komisija), which involve social pedagogues to work with potential drop-outs, their families and teachers to reduce early leaving.

Other measures include projects that have been implemented that seek to reduce ELET by improving the transition between general education and different types of vocational pathways or between different types of vocational programmes. For example a project 'Alternative Education in the Education System' aimed to identify people who have left education and training early and help them re-enter the system. This project also aimed at creating the conditions to facilitate acquisition of basic education for more students as well as increasing the number of students that continue their education or training after secondary education. Another project 'Providing Wider Possibilities for Choosing a Learning Pathway for Students aged 14-19, Phase II: Deeper Learning Differentiation and Individualisation for Ensuring Education Quality demanded by the Modern Labour World'. This projects aimed at providing wider possibilities to students aged 14-19 by individualising and differentiating the curriculum, increasing its attractiveness, and adjusting it to the labour market needs for the development of professional competencies.

Addressing ELET through non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

Lithuania has policies and measures for enriching the learning experience through the provision of extra-curricular activities. These measures are also reported to impact positively on reducing the number of students leaving education and training early. In Lithuania initiatives to combat early leaving allow schools to put in place activities and programmes to meet students' current needs, such as cultural, artistic, environmental and health education programmes, intercultural education etc.

Cross-sector coordination and monitoring of ELET interventions

The policy areas of employment, youth, social affairs, family, justice, health and housing are involved in cooperating on early leaving, but cooperation mechanisms are not yet established. Multi-agency partnerships at local/institutional level involve school heads, teachers, guidance specialists, psychologists, social workers, therapists, as well as speech and language specialists. Schools are legally obliged to have a school child welfare commission, in which the cooperation of each specialist is regulated by law; however specific cooperation mechanisms between the different policy areas have not yet been established.

6.4 Validation of non-formal and informal learning

Arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning

Non-formal adult education is described in the [Law on Non-formal Adult Education and Continuing Education](#). Informal education is described in the Law on Education as independent adult learning based on a person's knowledge gained from various sources and practice. Competences obtained through informal education can be recognised as part of a completed formal adult education or study programme. The Minister for Education and Science establishes the [Recognition Order](#). Based on this document higher education institutions have to set up their own procedures of how non-formal and informal education can be used towards fulfilment of a higher education study programme.

Information and guidance

Most higher education institutions have set up their own procedures how non-formal and informal education can be used to fulfil their study programmes. For example [Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences](#) and [Mykolas Romeris University](#) provides detailed information on the procedure of assessment of learning outcomes gained through non-formal education and recognition of competences (see [LEU neformaliuoju būdu įgytu kompetencijų vertinimo ir pripažinimo studijų rezultatais tvarkos aprašas](#) and [Procedure of assessment of learning outcomes gained through adults' non-formal education and recognition of competences](#)).

Quality assurance

The assessment of non-formal study achievements and recognition of competences is performed in accordance with the higher education study programme and/or is subject by an expert assessor or a group of expert assessors of the faculty/institute of the HE institution. The assessment procedures and quality criteria are prescribed by each higher education institution. (see for example [LEU neformaliuoju būdu įgytu kompetencijų vertinimo ir pripažinimo studijų rezultatais tvarkos aprašas](#) and [Mykolas Romeris University Procedure of assessment of learning outcomes gained through adults' non-formal education and recognition of competences](#)).

6.5 Cross-border learning mobility

Policy framework

The Law on Education states that parties of the education system have the right to participate in the international dimension of education, international programmes or otherwise collaborate with the counterparts of education systems of foreign countries.

The special attention is given to increase internationalization of higher education in Lithuania. One of the indicators of National Education Strategy for 2013-2022 is the ratio of arriving students from Bologna region and departing students to Bologna region for temporary studies. In 2014 it was approved the Programme for Promotion of the Internationalisation of Higher Education for 2013-2016. The key aim of the Programme is to identify the main directions of high education internationalisation's stimulations in order to increase the quality of higher education, the competitiveness of higher education institutions, supporting the development of Lithuanian (Baltic) studies abroad, and consolidation with Lithuanian emigrants and Lithuanian foreign origin diaspora.

The key institutions engaged in the coordination of pupil, student, teacher and academic staff mobility, cooperation of education and research institutions and creation of partnerships and networks are the [Education Exchanges Support Foundation](#). Many of the programmes realized by Lithuania are the promotion of the European Union (EU) and the Nordic countries mobility programmes.

[The Startup Visa](#) is a talent attraction scheme that provides a streamlined entry process to the Lithuanian startup ecosystem for innovative non-EU entrepreneurs to build, grow and compete in our booming international community. Designed for innovative startup founders who wish to establish a startup in Lithuania. They no longer need to fulfill certain capital or employment requirements to obtain a residence permit. If a business idea is deemed suitable by a panel of experts, persons will be able to apply for a temporary residence permit on such basis. [The Startup Visa](#) will allow to live in Lithuania for one year, with the possibility to extend for an additional year, after which general immigration requirements must be met.

Main cross-border mobility programmes for students in formal education

Since 2014 the EU programme 'Lifelong Learning' and the parts of the programmes have changed to new 'Erasmus+' programme with three parts: mobility for purposes of learning; cooperation for purposes of and exchange of innovation and the best practice; the support for policy reforms. These programmes are administered by the [Education Exchanges Support Foundation](#) which is a national agency entrusted with the administration of Erasmus+ and Lifelong Learning programmes and other initiatives funded by the European Commission (EC) and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania in the field of education and vocational training, which has been successfully operating since 2007.

Promoting mobility in the context of non-formal learning, and of youth work

[Agency of International Youth Cooperation](#) is a public non-profit institution established in February 1999 by The State Council for Youth Affairs (currently [Department of Youth Affairs](#) under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour) and [Lithuanian Youth Council](#) (LiJOT). The main aim of the agency is to ensure the development of international youth cooperation and successful participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programmes for young people.

As part of the European Commission's Training Strategy, [SALTO-YOUTH](#) provides non-formal learning resources for youth workers and youth leaders and organises training and contact-making activities to support organisations and National Agencies (NAs) within the frame of the European Commission's [Erasmus+ Youth programme](#) and beyond.

Since 1992, while encouraging bilateral cooperation with the neighbouring countries and more remote countries in Western and Central Europe, Asia and other continents, the Ministry of Education and Science has been developing cultural cooperation agreements and participating in their preparation for execution.

Cooperation agreements and contracts are signed with the following countries:

- Bulgaria, in the field of education, science, studies and culture (effective from 1997);
- Spain (1997), Greece (1998), Israel (1998), United Kingdom (1998), Finland (1999), Hungary (1999), Poland (2000), Holy See (2000) and Slovenia (2002) in the field of culture, education and science;
- Italy (1998), in the field of culture, education, studies, science and technologies;
- USA (1994), in the field of science and technologies;
- China (1992), in the field of science and technologies;
- China (1993), Venezuela (1993), Romania (1997) and Columbia (2001), in the field of culture;
- Turkey (1999) and Mexico (2003), in the field of education, culture, arts and sport;
- Ukraine (1993), in the field of education, science and culture;

- Uzbekistan (1995), in the field of culture and arts;
- Uzbekistan (1995), in the field of education, science and technologies;
- France (2003), in the field of culture, education, science, technologies and engineering.

A number of other agreements and contracts were signed, including those on exchange of study visits with the Czech Republic (2000) and Sweden (1994); on co-operation between young people and exchanges with Poland (1997); on cultural exchanges and cooperation with Venezuela (1993); on provision of employment for people on study visits to upgrade their professional qualifications and command of the language with Germany (1993). Cooperation with the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) is developed on the basis of both bilateral agreements and multilateral programmes. Together with Sweden, Lithuania is responsible for implementation of the Baltic Region Education Agenda 21 in that region. The Ministry of Education and Science is engaged in bilateral and multilateral cooperation ensuring effective involvement in education programmes and projects of international organisations. Various activities in education, including mobility and placements of specialists, study visits and exchanges are organised. Lithuania and the Swedish Institute for Special Education Development are carrying out a project 'The Development of the Special Teaching Materials Procurement System'. In 2002, five cooperation agreements (with Belarus, Flanders, France, Mexico, Ukraine and the Walloon Region in Belgium) followed by two others (with Serbia and Montenegro) in 2003 were concluded and measures provided for in the bilateral cooperation programmes were implemented. Meetings of the joint advisory commission made up from representatives of the Lithuanian and Belarusian Ministries of Education and Science and of the Lithuanian-Polish bilateral commission concerning textbooks were held. In 2004, the Lithuanian members of the Joint Committee for cooperation between the Governments Lithuania and Italy in the fields of culture, education, studies, research and technologies were appointed. In 2004, a programme for cooperation with Spain in the fields of education and culture for 2004-2008 was approved. In 2005, an agreement regarding mutual recognition of documents granting a right to higher education and also of partial studies, higher education qualifications and degrees in science and arts was concluded between the Governments of Lithuania and Poland. Subject to agreement between the Ministries of Education and Science of Lithuania and the Belarus on cooperation in the field of education, a cooperation programme for 2005-2009 was concluded. A cooperation agreement in the field of education, higher education and scientific research for a period of 2006-2008 was concluded between the Ministries of Education and Science of Lithuania and the Hungary. In 2005, the process of implementation of international agreements and arrangements in the field of research was organised: support was provided to the bilateral cooperation in the field of research and technological development between Lithuania and the Ukraine; financing was granted to the second stage (2005-2006) of Gilliber, the Lithuanian-French integrated action programme in the field of research and experimental activities; funds were allocated for the development of further cooperation (in the field of high energy physics) between the Government of Lithuania and the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN). In 2006, the national project 'Time for Leaders' was developed in consultation with experts from the Leadership Centre at the University of Manchester. In 2008, a bilateral international agreement on a cooperation programme in the field of education was concluded with Slovakia. Cooperation under the DUO-Korea sub-programme in support of exchanges between students, lecturers and researchers of institutions of science and studies for the period 2008-2009 was established with Korea. In 2009, an updated Programme for Cooperation between the Lithuanian and Flemish Governments for 2009–2012 was signed pursuant to the Agreement between the Governments of Lithuania and Flanders. Implementation of the Programme provides a framework for the countries to support the mutual exchange of students and researchers and promote a closer collaboration between institutions of research and higher education. In 2009, the Governments of Lithuania and Germany signed an agreement on the equivalence recognition of higher education qualifications and degrees. In 2009, the Government of t

Lithuania and the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers signed the agreement on the mutual recognition of qualifications granting access to higher education and also higher education qualifications and degrees.

Lithuanian Law on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid was adopted on the 16th May 2013. This law determined the goals of the Lithuanian development cooperation policy, formation, implementation, coordination and financing of the Lithuanian development cooperation, and ways of providing humanitarian aid. On the 3rd November 2016, the new edition of the law was adopted. This edition introduced important changes: strengthening the role of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs in coordination of the Lithuania development cooperation, expanding the number of institutions participating in the development cooperation, gathering the administration of development cooperation projects in a single agency, etc.

This Plan lays down development cooperation policy guidelines for 2017-2019 and sets out concrete measures in order to contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development goals set by the UN 2030 Agenda within the aid recipient countries. The Plan is based on the Lithuanian Law on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, Lithuania's foreign policy priorities, taking into account relevant strategic documents of the UN and EU, and international commitments. The Plan will help to ensure continuous and efficient implementation and coordination of the development cooperation activities and to enhance Lithuania's role as a reliable and responsible donor country in the international community. Information on the submission of applications for development cooperation projects, selection procedures, implementation and information for providers as well as any other project-related information is available in:

- 1) [Description of Procedure for the Implementation of Development Cooperation Activities and Provision of Humanitarian Assistance by State and Municipal Institutions and Agencies, approved by Lithuanian Government Resolution No 129 of the 22nd February 2017;](#)
- 2) [Description of Procedure of the Implementation of the Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme, established by Order No. V-63 of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania on 21st March 2017.](#)

The purpose of [the Inter-institutional Action Plan on Development Cooperation](#) is to set development cooperation policy guidelines for 2017-2019 of Lithuania as well as implementation measures, to ensure continuous and efficient development cooperation activities of Lithuania and to coordinate them, to enhance the role of Lithuania as a reliable and responsible donor country in the region, the European Union, the United Nations, and other international organisations, the international community, and aid recipient countries. The [Inter-institutional Action Plan on Development Cooperation](#) is also aimed at supporting studies of foreign nationals in Lithuania.

Work & Travel USA is the longest-running program of its kind in Lithuania in the context of non-formal education and youth work. Work & Travel USA matches U.S. host employers with international students for short-term, seasonal jobs or work practices and apprenticeships across the United States. Students work for up to four months and use their earnings to travel around the U.S. for up to one month after they finish their commitments. Host employers add new cultures, diversity, and an exciting exchange element to their businesses.

Quality assurance

There are no official regulations on standards of quality of cross-border mobility. Some youth organizations have their own standards of quality and quality regulations (e.g. Agency of International Youth Cooperation [guidelines on volunteer services](#)).

6.6 Social inclusion through education and training

Educational support

Since regaining independence in 1990, Lithuania has clearly stated the importance of education to societal development. The National Education Strategy 2013-2022 includes a focus on education as a foundation for the future and a commitment to increase the level of investment from public funds in education to 6% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2022. Lithuania seeks to improve the quality of education provided to persons with special education needs (SEN) in accordance with the principles of equality of opportunities, accessibility, inclusive education and quality assurance. Further information on educational support is available on Eurydice website:

[Special Education Needs Provision within Mainstream Education](#)

[Separate Special Education Needs Provision in Early Childhood and School Education](#)

[Support Measures for Learners in Early Childhood and School Education](#)

[Guidance and Counselling in Early Childhood and School Education](#)

[Support Measures for Learners in Higher Education](#)

[Guidance and Counselling in Higher Education](#)

[Support Measures for Learners in Adult Education and Training](#)

[Guidance and Counselling in a Lifelong Learning Approach](#)

Social cohesion and equal opportunities

The choice of opportunities for young people in rural areas of Lithuania is rather limited, and inequality in accessibility of education services between cities and the countryside prevails. Regional disparities are large, in big cities wages are higher than in rural areas. Women's wages are lower than men's, which worsens women's life conditions (see [Moterys ir vyrai Lietuvoje 2016](#)), despite that the Law on Equal Treatment, entered in 2005, ensures equal rights for all people in Lithuania in spite of age, sexual orientation, disability, racial or ethnic origin, religion or beliefs. Disposable income of rural residents stands below urban average by one-third. Lithuania's population has been declining (according to 2011 census data, in the period between 1989 and 2011, the country has lost 17.2 of its residents, and the population drop was accelerating over time). High levels of out-migration from rural areas are often followed by side effects such as an ageing population and lower birth rates in the "losing" regions (see [Ubareviciene, 2016](#)). Moreover, higher education institutions in Lithuania are concentrated in the cities and young people may experience exclusion from education due to lower income and remote place of residence. The secondary education in Lithuania has experienced many reforms, due to which (and low birth rates) many small primary and secondary schools in rural areas have been closing down. This may be a reason why the level of ELET (aged 18-24 years old) in rural areas is higher than in cities.

6.7 Skills for innovation

Innovation in formal education

[Lithuanian Innovation Strategy for the year 2010-2020](#) has measures aimed at youth skills for innovation. It is a long-term strategic planning document which sets vision, objectives, goals and results to be achieved in the field of Lithuanian Innovation up to 2020. The purpose of this Strategy is to mobilize and manage state resources effectively: to create competitive knowledge economy based on the latest technologies and qualified human resources. Some of the objectives and goals of innovation development in Lithuania are related to skills for innovation promotion and development: 1) to educate a creative and innovative society; 2) to create education and higher education system which promotes

creativity and innovation; 3) to promote entrepreneurship of education of various levels and private sectors; 4) to promote life-long learning; 5) to develop broad-based innovation; 6) to promote technological, non-technological, social and public innovation; This strategy is implemented by operators within competence indicated in the plan of implementation means of this strategy. Science and studies institutions, municipalities and social and economic partners participate in the implementation of this strategy. The Ministry of Economy together with the Ministry of Education and Science considers problematic areas of Lithuania and respective indicators of European Innovation Scoreboard when preparing plans of implementation means of this strategy. The Ministry of Economy together with the Ministry of Education and Science observes and assesses implementation of this strategy in every calendar year (in the year 2010–2020). They observe tendencies of changes of assessment indicators in innovation area, indicated in this strategy.

[The Lithuanian Innovation Development Programme 2014–2020](#) has been drafted with a view to mobilising the state resources for the improvement of Lithuania's innovativeness and development of competitive economy based on high level knowledge, high technologies, qualified human resources and smart specialisation. The Programme has been drafted having regard to the State progress strategy "Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030" approved by Resolution No XI-2015 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of 15 May 2012, the National Progress Programme 2014–2020 approved by Resolution No 1482 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 28 November 2012, the National Programme for the Development of Studies, Scientific Research and Experimental (Social and Cultural) Development for 2013–2020 approved by Resolution No 1494 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 5 December 2012, the Commission Communication of 3 March 2010 "Europe 2020: a strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth", COM(2010), the Commission Communication of 6 October 2010 "Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative "Innovative Union", COM(2010) 546 and the Commission Communication of 30 November 2011 "Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation", COM(2011) 808. The Lithuanian Innovation Development Programme 2014–2020 pursues a broad concept of innovation, both research-driven innovation and innovation in creative solutions, business models, industrial design, branding and services that add value for users in order to involve all actors in the innovation cycle. Not only major companies, but also micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, innovative business start-ups, business and public associations and natural persons should be involved in the development of innovation. Innovation should be developed not only in a few high-tech areas, but in all sectors, including the public sector, involving citizens, implementing and promoting both research-driven innovation and non-technological, social, organisational and other innovation.

Target 2 of the first objective of [The Lithuanian Innovation Development Programme 2014–2020](#) is to develop creativity, entrepreneurship, innovativeness and practical skills and qualification corresponding to market needs within the system of higher education and studies. It is stated in [The Lithuanian Innovation Development Programme 2014–2020](#) that the system of higher education and studies is of high significance for the development of creativity, entrepreneurship and innovativeness. It is also stated that [The Lithuanian Innovation Development Programme 2014–2020](#) is aimed at stimulating the interest of children and youth in RDI in early stages of education. Also it is stressed that the system of higher education and studies has to prepare youth for continuing creative activity, teach them to independently address arising problems and transfer knowledge to others. The implementation of this target is supported by SR&ED programme which provides for promoting R&D among schoolchildren and students. [The Lithuanian Innovation Development Programme 2014–2020](#) also aims at improving the culture of innovations in Lithuania both within the system of higher education and studies, but also among the public creating the medium conducive to the dissemination of innovation related knowledge, involving technically minded children and youth in the practical development of technologies, disseminating know-how about high technologies, innovations and their benefits for the society, that would contribute to the formation of value-related attitudes

encouraging to engage in innovation. In order to ensure the labour force qualifications correspond to labour market needs and help enterprises to respond to market needs and enhance their innovation skills, special attention is given in the Programme to the improvement of general education, vocational training and study programmes and process, creating conditions for such system of development of technical creativity, entrepreneurship and technical skills in which in addition to educational institutions, business enterprises and their associated structures would participate. It is also stated in [The Lithuanian Innovation Development Programme 2014–2020](#) that private educational initiatives represent one of the ways to fill in the gaps in the system of formal education and provide a good medium for the development of new forms, content and innovativeness of learning. Finally Target 2 of the first objective of [The Lithuanian Innovation Development Programme 2014–2020](#) (to develop creativeness, entrepreneurship, innovativeness and practical skills and qualification corresponding to market needs within the system of higher education and science) has set the target assessment criteria: 1) percentage of students of physical and engineering sciences as percentage of all students is aimed at 27 percent by 2020; 2) percentage of educational institutions implementing programmes promoting creativity and innovative thinking by 2020 should reach 90 percent.

Lithuania is one of the first EU countries to develop entrepreneurship and innovation education strategies at the school level (OECD, 2015). The importance of innovation and entrepreneurship education was explicitly noted for the first time in Lithuanian national education strategy adopted in 2003. The National Strategy of Education 2003-2012 states as a principle to strengthen attention on all ISCED levels to entrepreneurship and finance management. The aim is to reach that every student of lower secondary school would achieve elements of economic literacy. This led to the development of two specific strategies: 1) “Economic Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education” (2004) and the “National Programme of Youth Entrepreneurship Education and Encouragement 2008-2012”, which both aim “to strengthen the focus on entrepreneurship and financial management at all school levels” (EACEA, 2012). The purpose of the [Entrepreneurship Action Plan of Lithuania for 2014–2020](#) is to define actions the implementation of which would ensure consistent growth of the level of entrepreneurship in Lithuania through the development of consistent and continuous entrepreneurship education system, favourable environment for business start-up and development by improving accessibility of public services to business, the image of the entrepreneur in the society and promoting entrepreneurship of target groups and social entrepreneurship with special focus on regions. The objective of the Entrepreneurship Action Plan is to raise the level of entrepreneurship. In order to achieve this objective three tasks were set: 1) to establish a consistent and continuous system of entrepreneurship education; 2) to create favourable environment for the start-up and development of business; 3) to promote entrepreneurship by ensuring accessibility of public services to business, distinguishing entrepreneurship of target groups (youth, women) and start-ups as well as social and regional entrepreneurship and developing a positive public image of the entrepreneur.

At the primary education level in Lithuania, entrepreneurship is integrated within social sciences (i.e. “world discovery”) and also as part of the natural sciences; both of which are compulsory subjects (EACEA, 2012). This approach is rare because most countries take a cross-curricular approach that emphasises the transversal objectives of entrepreneurship (OECD, 2015). Nonetheless, the integration of entrepreneurship within core subject areas demonstrates a very high level of commitment to entrepreneurship teaching in Lithuania and ensures that a large number of young students are introduced to entrepreneurship (OECD, 2015).

At secondary level, “Economics and Entrepreneurship Education” (grades 9-10) is a compulsory subject in the Lithuanian curriculum. Entrepreneurship is also integrated into several compulsory subjects such as social sciences and maths, sciences, technology and ICT. In upper secondary education, entrepreneurship is integrated in compulsory subjects (social sciences and maths-sciences technology-ICT) and is also an optional subject. Most

programmes in secondary schools co-operate with Junior Achievement and through this co-operation, students learn core business management skills. Junior Achievement Lithuania (JAL) is a non-profit organisation of which the mission is to train youth in developing a free-market spirit, understanding of business and economics, leadership, entrepreneurship and initiative skills. Apart from building an entrepreneurial culture, the organisation helps to consolidate trust in entrepreneurs within society. It is part of Junior Achievement Worldwide (JAW), although it is not financially or structurally dependent from it. Therefore, it pursues an international practice with modern technology in which theory is complemented with practical activities. JAL is conscious about the importance of context for entrepreneurship and, therefore, has a licence from JAW to modify educating material according to Lithuania's reality. Participation in their programmes is free for students. JAL programmes are taught in 40% of the secondary schools (EACEA, 2012). JAL organises workshops for teachers of all subjects in economics and entrepreneurship aspects (3 000). JAL has a clear division of their programmes in: financial literacy (economics, investment competition, and computer simulation), career development (shadowing an employee, leadership) and entrepreneurship (company and start-up programme, summer camps, business competitions for students of grades 9-12). The programmes on entrepreneurship aim to promote students' capabilities such as: creative thinking, teamwork, solving of real problems and accountability to achieve their goals. They have evaluated these programmes observing that JAL graduates are better prepared for work, get easier a promotion and more often create their own business.

There is a general consensus that the vocational training (VET) system needs improvement in Lithuania (Lithuanian Monitor for Education, 2013), which has led to the drafting of the development of the Action Plan for the Development of Vocational Education and Training 2014-2016 which was approved in 2014. One of the main objectives of this plan is to strengthen the work-based learning (including apprenticeship type of VET organisation) because implementation of this type of VET organisation is relatively low (Franczak et al., 2011 quoted in OECD, 2015). This creates an opportunity to improve entrepreneurship training in VET because work-based learning (including apprenticeship type VET organisation) can be used to provide experience learning about business management and entrepreneurship through active learning. This active learning could also contribute to career guidance and play a significant role in helping VET students identify opportunities that they could pursue after completion of their studies (OECD, 2015).

In Lithuania, entrepreneurship is generally not included in higher education programmes outside of business schools. The National Programme for Higher Education 2013-2020 focuses on the importance of developing job-specific competences in educational institutions and on career guidance to help students make a conscious and informed choice of the study and career paths. Implicitly this would include entrepreneurship. At some universities economics and entrepreneurship are offered as optional study modules for students. However, there is little evidence that higher education institutions are systematically promoting and supporting entrepreneurship except for business schools and business study programmes (OECD, 2015).

Fostering innovation through non-formal and informal learning and youth work

Entrepreneurship and innovation training outside of formal education is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. Junior Achievement is the most important organisation in providing entrepreneurship and innovation training outside of formal education in Lithuania. It adapts international practices to the Lithuanian context, stimulating innovations and entrepreneurship culture through initiatives such as company programmes where students manage their own firms for one year, assuming risks but with lower requirements than normal companies. It also offers simulations, summer camps and innovation camps. In addition, a number of business associations are active in supporting youth entrepreneurship through mentoring, business counselling, delivering seminars and hosting internships to help youth acquire entrepreneurship skills and develop industry contacts (e.g. Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists, Business Employers'

Confederation, Youth Business Club). [INVEGA](#), a public loan guarantees institution established under the the Ministry of Economy, operates one of the most important innovation and entrepreneurship supports in Lithuania, the [Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund](#), which provides micro-credit that includes a training offer to financing recipients. The Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund was established at the end of 2009 and continues to operate. The Fund was initiated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, the Ministry of Finance and INVEGA, which is an agency that is responsible for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in Lithuania and facilitating their access to financing. INVEGA is the managing authority of the EPF. The main objectives of the EPF are: to achieve the provision of small loans to start-up self-employed and SMEs at “better than-market” conditions; to increase access to start-up finance for disadvantaged target groups including: – unemployed people; – youth entrepreneurs under 29 years old; – older entrepreneurs over 50 years old; – people with a disability; to achieve a minimum of 30% of training places and 15% of loans to be allocated to people from the priority groups; to increase start-up self-employment and entrepreneurship in the Lithuanian economy; to increase the levels of entrepreneurship and self-employment in the target groups; to encourage the take-up of training and advice by start-up entrepreneurs and those seeking to enter self-employment; to increase the number of sustainable new SMEs and newly self-employed; to reduce unemployment and keep people active in the business and labour market; to contribute to the development of a viable entrepreneurial culture in Lithuania. EPF provides preferential access to youth, seniors, the unemployed and people with disabilities. Available supports include microcredit, loan guarantees, entrepreneurship training and business counselling. For a more detailed description of the objectives and rationale of EPF, detailed explanation how the programme works and the programme’s impact see OECD [Good Practice Compendium](#).

6.8 Media literacy and safe use of new media

National strategy

The national strategy on media and information literacy (MIL) does not exist; however the concept of MIL is included into education policy documents: the Information Literacy Framework Programme for Primary Education, and Information Technology Framework Programme for Basic Education (these are national guidelines prepared by the Ministry of Education and Science on skills and competences for secondary schools) have media literacy integrated. The concept and content of MIL are planned to be fully included in the curricula regulating documents (primary, basic and secondary education standards, educational plans and common programmes) by 2020.

Media literacy and online safety through formal education

The Information Literacy Framework Programme for Primary Education, and Information Technology Framework Programme for Basic Education are supplemented by [methodological help](#) (books, guidelines, lesson plans) for teaching media literacy at secondary schools (all grades) and in non-formal or informal education. This methodological help was the result of the project of Critical Thinking and Media Literacy implemented nationally by [Education Development Centre](#) together with [Nordic Council of Ministers Office in Lithuania](#) and [Ministry of Education and Science](#) and project partners: [Nordic information Centre for Media and Communication Research NORDICOM](#), [Swedish Media Council](#), universities and other national actors in the field of media literacy education. This project aimed to create a platform for a dialogue and cooperation among Lithuanian stakeholders and their Nordic counterparts and to create systemic preconditions for development of media and information literacy education based on the best Nordic experiences in integrating MIL into **general and non-formal** education.

All in all 15 MIL workshops organized for about 600 teachers. MIL was included into agenda of other events, organized by Education Development Centre, attended by 150 teachers; MIL tools were presented to the public during the biggest annual event for schools –

Exhibition/Fair "School". Recommendations for the Ministry of Education and Science on MIL education in schools and school cooperation with the social partners (NGOs, libraries etc.) have been prepared. The Information Literacy Framework Programme for Primary Education, Information Technology Framework Programme for Basic Education has been supplemented with MIL competencies and in cooperation with participating schools, description of pupils' achievements have been prepared and tested in schools. [Special methodological material](#), based on the identified needs within MIL education, organizing innovative forms of competence building, using the best examples of the Nordic countries is available.

Promoting media literacy and online safety through non-formal and informal learning

The Information Literacy Framework Programme for Primary Education, and Information Technology Framework Programme for Basic Education are supplemented by [methodological help](#) (books, guidelines, lesson plans) for teaching media literacy at secondary schools (all grades) and in non-formal or informal education. This methodological help was the result of the project of Critical Thinking and Media Literacy implemented nationally by [Education Development Centre](#) together with [Nordic Council of Ministers Office in Lithuania](#) and [Ministry of Education and Science](#) and project partners: [Nordic information Centre for Media and Communication Research NORDICOM](#), [Swedish Media Council](#), universities and other national actors in the field of media literacy education (see section above: Media literacy and online safety through formal education).

Raising awareness about the risks posed by new media

As the result of the project of Critical Thinking and Media Literacy implemented nationally public awareness was raised by promoting the concept of MIL among teachers, students and other stakeholders in the field of education as the concept of MIL in Lithuania is still not so widespread. The [methodological help](#) (books, guidelines, lesson plans) for teaching media literacy at secondary schools (all grades) and in non-formal or informal education are available.

6.9 Awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

Information providers / counselling structures

[The Lithuanian Children and Youth Centre \(LCYC\)](#) is an educational institution that provides help to children, youth, teachers and schools and is governed by the principles of non-formal education. According to the scope of activities and the number of visitors it is the largest non-formal educational institution in Lithuania.

[Lithuanian Association of Non-formal Education](#) creates training and development opportunities for those working with young people and contributes to develop quality of non-formal education. They have special programmes and activities for youth work, youth consultations, youth information, work with street youth. etc.

[The Lithuanian Association of Adult Education](#) (LAAE) is non-governmental and non-profit organization of individuals and organizations and aims to unite the Lithuanian adult educators and the organizations working in this field for common activities, to develop adults ability to participate actively in their professional and public life and to represent the interests of adult educators both in Lithuania and abroad. The Lithuanian Association of Adult Education (LAAE) organizes seminars and conferences, provides consultations, implements national and international projects, collects and disseminates information about adult education (formal and non-formal) and establishes and facilitates the network of [members](#).

The Ministry of Education and Science has licensed 90 institutions to offer non-formal studies. Around 700 institutions are listed in the Register of the Ministry of Economy for adults and others. These include 63 state-owned companies, 288 joint-stock companies, 271 individual companies and 46 foreign investment companies. In addition, special departments for adult training have been set up in the universities. The courses offered include training and retraining, particularly in the fields of pedagogy, psychology, special or additional education etc.

Awareness raising initiatives

[The Manual](#) for non-formal learning opportunities specially targeted at young persons was prepared by the NGO „Jaunimo epicentras“, while implementing the project “Formal Meets Non-formal: Cross-sectorial Cooperation in the Educational Field”, funded by the European Union programme Erasmus Plus. The project was carried out by 7 partners from Latvia, Poland, Romania, Italy, Macedonia, Croatia and Lithuania. 28 participants with different educational and occupational backgrounds (youth workers, youth leaders, teachers, educators working according to the non-formal education principles, etc.) were involved in the training programme and were main contributors to the project.

6.10 Current debates and reforms

Sex education is still in the development stage. The [Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Protection of Minors from the Negative Impact of Public Information](#) was adopted in 2002. It defines the criteria for public information on the mental health, physical, mental or moral development of minors in order to protect them from negative impact. It may discourage education providers discussing sensitive issues (e.g. LGBTQI+, abortion etc.) with young persons.

Lithuania is reforming the teacher profession to improve its attractiveness, the quality of initial teacher training and continuous professional development.

Lithuania has a very low early school leaving rate, but students’ reading and maths skills are below the EU average. According to national tests, almost one fifth of 16-year-olds lack basic knowledge and skills.

Lithuania has the highest tertiary educational attainment rate in the EU, but the quality and innovation outcomes of higher education, in particular the quality of teaching and provision of soft skills, and practical training in higher education remain challenges.

Only a small percentage of adults participate in lifelong learning. As vocational education and training remains an unattractive option for students and their parents, there is a need to improve its quality and cooperation with companies.

7. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Lithuania has experienced many political, social and economic changes during the last decades, shifting from being a highly centralized republic of the Soviet Union to an independent state with a market economy. When Lithuania was part of the USSR, its health care system was reorganized according to the centralised system, which was relatively well funded and the population’s health status was better than in other parts of the USSR. Lithuania moved away from such system funded mainly by local and state budgets to a mixed system, predominantly funded by the [National Health Insurance Fund](#) in the late 1990s. The vast majority of Lithuanian health care institutions are non-profit-making enterprises and are complemented by the private sector facilities, providing mostly outpatient services which are paid for. The [Ministry of Health](#) also runs a few health care facilities and is involved in the running of the two major Lithuanian teaching hospitals. The health insurance is compulsory for all Lithuanian residents. The social and economic

reforms taking place in Lithuania for the last 30 years have been negatively affecting the demographic situation and public health. It is increasingly recognized that greater efforts are needed to prevent ill health and creating wellbeing, especially among those who are most disadvantaged as well as developing e-health services and making health facilities youth-friendly. This process involves developing organizational structures, resources and commitment to improvement in health sector. In the public health policy environment, an increasing emphasis is also placed on developing public health services on the local level.

7.1 General context

Main trends in the health conditions of young people

The health of young people in Lithuania is lagging behind other EU countries. The most recent information on youth health can be found at [Statistical Portrait of the Youth](#) published by [Statistics Lithuania](#). General statistical information (including youth health) is provided by [The Institute of Hygiene](#) as well as Statistics Lithuania section on [Youth in Lithuania](#). The national health monitoring and surveillance system for physical activity was established in 2011 under the leadership of the [Department of Physical Education and Sports](#). Data on physical activity includes frequency, duration and intensity of physical activity and can be disaggregated according to age group and socioeconomic indicators. Areas that require particular attention are the high suicide rate, as well as related psychological and behavioural issues, and high levels of smoking and alcohol consumption among young people as well as the need to increase physical activity and access to health and sex education information. Considerable inequalities in youth health depending on urban or rural residence and the level of education prevail. The large educational and urban / rural and educational inequalities are indicative of a greater social and psychological stress experienced by the rural and low-educated youth because of unhealthy lifestyles and lack of accessibility of health care and preventive measures.

Main concepts

The main concepts related the health conditions of young people include psychological assistance which is provided at secondary schools by psychologists of pedagogical psychological services and healthcare in schools (see [Law on Education](#) Articles 19 and 22). Healthcare in schools services are aimed to protect and improve health of learners, by actively cooperating with their parents (guardians, curators). Healthcare in schools comprises public healthcare activities carried out by specialists of municipal public healthcare institutions or healthcare specialists (see also [Order of the Minister of health on the qualification requirements for healthcare specialists working at schools](#)). Schools may implement only learners' health promotion programmes which are approved by the Ministry of Education and Science, other ministries or municipal institutions. Personal healthcare in schools is designated for learners with special educational needs in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts. Schools can develop and implement health improvement programmes. Such programmes may be supported with funds of state and/or municipal target programmes on public health support, and other funds. Article 6 of the Law on Public Health Care of the Republic of Lithuania ([Lietuvos Respublikos visuomenės sveikatos priežiūros įstatymas](#)) states that public health care functions at pre-school, pre-primary, primary, basic and secondary education programs in pre-school, general education schools and vocational education institutions in the territory of the municipality, public health strengthening, public health monitoring are designated to municipalities. The municipalities carry out independent public health care functions such as: 1) implementing public health measures provided for in the strategic development plans of the municipality and (or) municipal strategic plans approved by the municipal council, taking into account the prevailing public health problems in the municipality; 2) participate in the implementation of state public health programs, interinstitutional activities plans; 3) carry out the health care of children and young people, except for public health care provided by pre-school, pre-primary, primary, basic and secondary education programs in pre-school, general education schools and vocational education institutions

located in the municipality's territory; 4) includes social partners in public health promotion activities. Municipal Public Health Bureaus (Visuomenės sveikatos biurai) are established in each municipality that act as municipal public health care institutions. The functions of the Municipal Public Health Bureaus are established by the Ministry of Health, which among other programmes include municipal public health support programmes for youth. Public health care provided by municipalities is financed from the state budget, the municipal budget, the municipal public health support program, the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund and other funds. In accordance with the procedure established by the Government, the municipalities report annually to the Ministry of Health.

7.2 Administration and governance

Governance

Overall responsibility for general supervision of the health system is held by the [Ministry of Health](#). The ministry is involved in drafting legal acts and issuing regulation for the health sector. It also runs health care facilities and public health institutions and has the overall responsibility of health system performance. In addition, the Ministry of Health develops health care infrastructure and prepares national health programmes. In conjunction with the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Finance, it makes decisions on major investments. The main aims of the Ministry of Health are the development, organisation, coordination and control over the implementation of state policy in four fields: individual health care, public health, pharmaceutical activities and health insurance. Other major functions of the Ministry of Health include drafting legal acts, licensing, implementing state policy in subordinated institutions, formulating and implementing health strategies and programmes, international collaboration, analysing and disseminating information, and handling patients' complaints. In addition, many institutions subordinate to the Ministry of Health have been established in order to carry out regulatory and governing functions. In 2001, the Ministry of Justice established a Prison Health Care Division in charge of overseeing health-care provision in all prisons in cooperation with the Ministry of Health. Also there are the Health service office and Medical Centre under the Ministry of Interior in Lithuania.

The National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) implements the state health insurance scheme. The NHIF mission is to ensure access to health care, for those who are insured (emergency health care is provided for all Lithuanian citizens), by remunerating the costs and using funds. The NHIF coordinates the activities of five existing territorial health insurance funds. The central NHIF office is in charge of budget planning and control, including decisions on the financial reserves, supervision, and audit of the territorial branches. The territorial branches of the NHIF sign contracts with health care providers and pharmacies. The branches also reimburse health care providers and pharmacies, disseminate information, control service provision in the regions, and finance municipal public health programmes. Supervisory boards of territorial NHIF branches have advisory functions and consist of representatives from the Ministry of Health, the central NHIF and the municipalities.

The eight budgetary institutions under the Ministry of Health have specialized functions: State Forensic Psychiatry Agency, National Public Health Surveillance Laboratory, Centre for Communicable Diseases and AIDS, State Mental Health Centre, Centre for Health Education and Disease Prevention, Nursing Training and Specialization Centre, the Lithuanian Medical Library and the Institute of Hygiene. National Health Board Among the national level institutions is in charge of health policy implementation, the National Health Board, which is subordinate to parliament, plays the most active role. The board consists of representatives from municipal health boards, universities, NGOs and public health professionals. The National Health Board coordinates public health policy areas while the municipal health boards implement health policy at the local level.

Starting in 1990 many health administration functions in Lithuania were decentralized from the Ministry of Health to the municipalities. Municipalities are responsible for organizing, and have a wide range of responsibilities in the implementation of local health programmes and public health activities. The municipality board approves health programmes and sets health budgets, while the director of administration ensures health programme implementation. Since 2006 Municipal Public Health Bureaus have provided public health services to municipality residents.

Other public bodies which are responsible for health promotion and primary prevention are institutions under the Ministry of Health which include: the Centre for Health Education and Disease Prevention, and the Institute of Hygiene. Centre for Health Education and Disease Prevention activity areas include noncommunicable diseases and injury prevention, child health, health promotion, physical activity and nutrition, environmental health and health specialist training. The Institute of Hygiene activity areas include: monitoring of health and its factors at the population level; researches on health inequalities and work environmental effect on health; health technology assessment in public health and occupational health; developing and testing innovative interventions in public health; evaluation of health strategies and measures of programmes. The Drug, Tobacco and Alcohol Control Department, under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, is the main institution responsible for tobacco and alcohol control. The State Mental Health Centre, which engages in implementation of mental health policy and public mental health measures, including coordination of primary mental health care and monitoring and strengthening population mental health. Other institutions include the: Communicable Disease and AIDS Centre, Health Emergency Situation Centre, National Public Health Care Laboratory, and State Mental Health Centre.

[Municipal Public Health Bureaus](#) (Visuomenės sveikatos biurai) are established in each municipality that act as municipal public health care institutions. The Bureaus are the main institutions at the local level. Each municipality has to have a bureau or otherwise buy these services from another municipality. The Bureaus, as a public body, are responsible for health promotion, public health monitoring, communicable disease prevention, prevention of non-communicable diseases and injuries, implementation of public health programmes in the municipal community, child and youth health promotion, and evaluations of the effect of the decisions of municipalities on public health. The functions of the Municipal Public Health Bureaus are established by the Ministry of Health, which among other programmes include municipal public health support programmes for youth. Public health care provided by municipalities is financed from the state budget, the municipal budget, the municipal public health support program, the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund and other funds. In accordance with the procedure established by the Government, the municipalities report annually to the Ministry of Health. The functions of the [Municipal Public Health Bureaus](#) may include 1) organizing and coordinating the activities of public health professionals working in general education schools or vocational schools; 2) organizing and coordinating student health promotion activities; 3) training of public health care professionals in schools; 4) providing methodical consultations for health activities to teachers, pupils, their parents (carers, caretakers), and residents of the municipality; 4) organizing public health education courses; 5) providing information, counseling and methodological assistance to the urban communities; 6) the implementation of programs approved by the Lithuanian Health Program, state health programs and approved by the the municipality; 7) drafting reports and analyses; 8) providing health care at schools, help students protect and enhance their health through the organization and implementation of measures for the prevention of diseases and injuries.

Article 6 of the Law on Public Health Care of the Republic of Lithuania ([Lietuvos Respublikos visuomenės sveikatos priežiūros įstatymas](#)) states that public health care functions at pre-school, pre-primary, primary, basic and secondary education programs in pre-school, general education schools and vocational education institutions in the territory of the municipality, public health strengthening, public health monitoring are designated to

municipalities. The municipalities carry out independent public health care functions such as: 1) implementing public health measures provided for in the strategic development plans of the municipality and (or) municipal strategic plans approved by the municipal council, taking into account the prevailing public health problems in the municipality; 2) participate in the implementation of state public health programs, interinstitutional activities plans; 3) carry out the health care of children and young people, except for public health care provided by pre-school, pre-primary, primary, basic and secondary education programs in pre-school, general education schools and vocational education institutions located in the municipality's territory; 4) includes social partners in public health promotion activities.

Among voluntary organizations, the Red Cross Society, the Caritas Federation, the Diabetes Association, the Association of the Blind have been influential in public debates. There are about 80 patients' organizations, 30 of them united in the Council of Representatives of Patients' Organizations. Another umbrella organization is POLA, established in 2011, which unites 12 NGOs working in the area of oncology. The National Tobacco and Alcohol Control Coalition works in the area of tobacco and alcohol use. The Diabetes Association provides mutual aid and assistance to all diabetics; promotes the study, the spread of knowledge and the proper treatment of diabetes; removes all present limitations of diabetics discrimination in their rights to labour, studies, insurance. The Lithuanian Heart Association helps those who are suffering from heart disease, and those who want to avoid it, improves Doctors' professional skills, informs society.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

The need to ensure better and more efficient cross-sectorial dimension in the youth and health field is widely acknowledged. The Inter-institutional Action Plan under the horizontal priority "Health for all" within the National Progress Programme 2014–2020 was adopted by the Government in 2014, with focus for coordinated measures aimed at improvement and development child and youth friendly, high quality, accessible and effective healthcare, with particular focus on public health and inter-sectoral cooperation. In general the [Department of Youth Affairs](#) within the the Ministry of Social Security and Labour is primarily responsible for youth and/or youth programming and this includes cross-sectorial mechanisms of cooperation. The [Department of Youth Affairs](#) coordinates and organizes committees on monitoring specific policy measures while the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) through Action Plan for the period of 2017-2019. In this Action Plan specific objectives, actions, terms of implementation, budget allocations and responsible institutions for its implementation are indicated.

Collaboration between ministries and stakeholders does exist to varying degrees and on different levels. Intersectoral committees have successfully been set up to manage ongoing policy processes. In general, the The Ministry of Social Security and Ministry of Health handles youth and health issues. The institutional landscape in the field of youth and health is large. There is a lot of institutions and health bureaus in municipalities taking care of specified tasks and activities that relate to youth and health. In some areas, clarity is lacking on the potential overlaps and/or redundancies when different actors work in closely similar areas. The cross-sectorial dimension in youth health is implemented through collaboration by the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#), the [Ministry of Health](#), the [Ministry of Education and Science](#), and the [Department of Physical Education and Sports under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania](#). This cross-sectorial dimension includes coordination and implementation of youth sports and health policy measures. [Municipal Public Health Bureaus](#) (Visuomenės sveikatos biurai) are established in each municipality that act as municipal public health care institutions. The Bureaus are the main institutions at the local level. Each municipality has to have a bureau or otherwise buy these services from another municipality. The Bureaus, as a public body, are responsible for health promotion, public health monitoring, communicable disease prevention, prevention of non-communicable diseases and injuries, implementation of public health programmes in the municipal community, child and youth health promotion, and evaluations of the effect of

the decisions of municipalities on public health. The functions of the Municipal Public Health Bureaus are established by the Ministry of Health, which among other programmes include municipal public health support programmes for youth. The coordination and implementation of youth sports and health policy measures is based on the [Interinstitutional Action Plan for the implementation of the state sports development strategy for 2011-2020](#).

7.3 Sport, youth fitness and physical activity

National strategy(ies)

The National Sports Development Strategy (2011-2020) dedicates main attention to the social mission of sport and to the attempt of creating conditions to include all social groups into physical education and sports activity. This strategy covers the majority of activities (sports clubs, sports medicine centers, sports bases, sports management, sports science, media and other areas) and aims to promote healthy lifestyle to the broader society including young persons. The 2011-2020 National Sports Development Strategy has many facets, including: providing recommendations for physical activity levels for the general population; making policy suggestions to improve the infrastructure and urban planning considerations in order to improve opportunities for exercise; and implementing a clearly formulated national campaign for PE and public awareness of physical activity. Many stakeholders are involved in this campaign: the Department of Physical Education and Sports, Lithuanian national radio and television companies, as well as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and local municipal organizations. This multifaceted approach is useful in promoting behaviour change in the population, providing information about physical activity and, crucially, ensuring that projects to promote physical activity are implemented. Youth sports and health policy measures are included in the [Interinstitutional Action Plan for the implementation of the State Sports Development Strategy for 2011-2020](#).

[The Lithuanian Health Program for 2014-2025](#) aims is to achieve the country's population would be healthier and live longer, the health of the population would improve and health inequalities would be reduced. The program has 4 objectives: to create a safer social environment, reduce health inequalities and social exclusion; to create a health-friendly physical work and living environment; to form a healthy lifestyle and its culture; to ensure high-quality and efficient health care focused on the needs of the population. The objectives of this program are to reduce poverty and unemployment, reduce socio-economic differentiation of the population at the national and community level, reduce alcohol and tobacco use, illicit use and availability of narcotic and psychotropic substances, promote healthy eating habits, develop optimal physical activity habits. As emphasized in the document, in order to reduce the consumption, supply and demand of alcoholic beverages, it is necessary to: prevent the production and smuggling of counterfeit alcoholic beverages; to develop unfavorable public attitudes towards counterfeit and smuggled beverages; to reduce the demand for and consumption of alcoholic beverages by applying effective, science-based measures recommended by the WHO, including restrictions on sales outlets, time, and advertising of alcoholic beverages; increase excise duties on alcoholic beverages, in line with changes in real wages and inflation rates, in order to make alcoholic beverages a luxury commodity; increase the age requirement for the purchase and consumption of alcoholic beverages by the age of 20; strengthen liability for breaches of the rules on trade in alcoholic beverages, in particular the ban on the sale of alcoholic beverages to minors, to provide for the immediate revocation of the license to engage in the retail trade in alcoholic beverages at the point of sale where the infringements have been detected, without waiting for a repeated infringement; organize social prevention campaigns for target groups; to inform the public about the health effects of alcohol consumption through NGOs by developing information and education on healthy lifestyles and health; implement early intervention programs in the primary care chain; to develop psychological, medical and social rehabilitation and social integration

services for persons with alcohol dependence; to promote zero tolerance for drink-driving; to organize assistance to family members and relatives of alcohol addicts; The program aims to reduce tobacco use, as smoking remains one of the leading causes of death in Europe. In Lithuania, about 25 percent smoke. population. "2010 daily smoking averaged 34.2 percent. men and 15 percent. women. 30.4 percent of men and 62.2 percent never smoked. women. 19% of men and 12% of women were smokers. From 2000, when the ban on tobacco advertising came into force, until 2010. The proportion of men who smoked decreased 1.5 times, and the number of women who smoked decreased between 1997 and 2001. increased and stabilized between 2002 and 2010. almost unchanged. Educated men and women smoke less often. Women living in rural areas smoke more often than in urban areas. The share of men and women with tertiary education working in smoked premises has decreased, while the share of those with secondary and lower education has not changed. Thus, considerable progress has been made in the area of smoking prevalence and regulation, but the problem of adolescent smoking remains relevant, "the adopted document states. It emphasizes the need to reduce the availability of tobacco products and their substitutes by restricting their trade in electronic communications networks in order to reduce the consumption, supply and demand of tobacco products; expand the smoke-free environment; to increase the protection of minors from their consumption through regulatory measures for tobacco products; to introduce early education programs in schools, including topics on the harms of tobacco use. it is necessary to reduce the availability of tobacco products and their substitutes by increasing their prices and restricting their trade in electronic communications networks; expand the smoke-free environment; to increase the protection of minors from their consumption through regulatory measures for tobacco products; to introduce early education programs in schools, including topics on the harms of tobacco use. it is necessary to reduce the availability of tobacco products and their substitutes by increasing their prices and restricting their trade in electronic communications networks; expand the smoke-free environment; to increase the protection of minors from their consumption through regulatory measures for tobacco products; to introduce early education programs in schools, including topics on the harms of tobacco use.

Promoting and supporting sport and physical activity among young people

In 2010 the Parliament of Lithuania has adopted the National Sport Development Strategy for 2011-2020, which serves as a national policy strategy on physical activity, specifically addressing Sports for All promotion. This is supplemented by the Interinstitutional Action Plan for the Implementation of the 2011-2020 National Sports Development Strategy, and together, these plans aim to create conditions for greater inclusion of youth in sports and physical activity in Lithuania. Three main themes make up the strategy: increasing general public awareness of the benefits of physical activity; promoting healthy lifestyles through physical activity, physical education (PE) and sports; and creating the right conditions for citizens to engage in sports and exercise. More specifically, this includes initiatives to encourage young people to participate in voluntary sports activities; recommendations that establish and implement minimum standards for local sports and health infrastructure; and environmental restructuring to encourage children, adolescents and elderly people to participate in healthy lifestyles and sports. The 2011-2020 National Sports Development Strategy also serves as a national recommendation on physical activity (supplemented by the [Interinstitutional Action Plan for the implementation of the State Sports Development Strategy for 2011-2020](#) for its development). The aim is to promote physical activity among the Lithuanian population, in line with WHO's Global recommendations on physical activity for health (2010), with adults exercising for at least 0.5 hour every day, children exercising for 1 hour every day, and at least 500 000 people participating in national sports development programmes; however, no specific national survey exists for monitoring and surveillance of physical activity in children and youth.

The state and municipalities allocate investments for the development of physical education and sport infrastructure (stadiums, parks, cycling paths etc.). These

investments are allocated in accordance with the procedure laid down by municipal budgets approved by the municipal councils. Investment projects in the field of physical education and sport can be also drawn up in collaboration by the ministries, the Department of Physical Education and Sports, municipalities in compliance with the Programme of the Government, documents of strategic planning and strategic plans of municipalities.

Examples of good practice:

Physical Education and Sports Support Fund

Sports for All activities in Lithuania are mostly financed by the Physical Education and Sports Support Fund. All government organizations and NGOs in the field of sports and physical activity may apply to receive funding to finance their activities.

Lithuanian Physical Education Badge programme

Every year at the beginning and the end of the school year, all schoolchildren can test their physical fitness and their sports-related knowledge by taking physical fitness and theoretical tests (on healthy lifestyle, personal hygiene and sports history). Participants are awarded badges, certificates or elite diplomas according to the test results and performance improvement, signed by the Minister of Education and Science and the Director General of the Department of Physical Education and Sports.

Sunday is a sport's day

"Sunday is a sport's day" is a regular physical activity promotion event organized by the non-profit-making organization "Healthy City" (Sveikas miestas) in the centre of Vilnius. Every Sunday, various sports are presented, and citizens have the opportunity to participate. This physical activity promotion event is sometimes "copied" by other municipalities and various organizations.

National programme to teach children to swim

The main purpose of the long-standing national programme is to teach schoolchildren to swim and to behave safely in and near water. The programme is based on the principle of cooperation, involving school administrations (municipal general education institutions), sports NGOs and higher education institutions. Teachers are invited to integrate topics related to safe conduct in and near water into lessons and extracurricular activities.

Physical education in schools

According to the [Law on Physical Education and Sport](#) physical education and sport exercise is mandatory in the programmes of formal education (with the exception of higher education institutions). Physical education lessons are mandatory not less than three hours per week and organized in compliance with the general programmes of schools of general education of Lithuania, education standards and general requirements for health safety. In higher education according to the [Law on Physical Education and Sport](#) there must not be less than two hours per week of physical education and sport exercise in the first two years of studies.

Physical activity for children of pre-school and pre-primary education programmes is mandatory during the whole period of education by designating not less than one hour per day. In other educational establishments which carry out programmes of non-formal education physical education exercise might be carried out in accordance with the approved teaching plans and (or) curricula. Qualification requirements for teachers to work in the educational establishments referred are laid down by the Law on Education, and for teachers in institutions of higher education – by the Law on Higher Education.

Collaboration and partnerships

The [Department of Physical Education and Sports](#) 1) takes part in shaping the policy of the Republic of Lithuania in the field of physical education and sport, as well as pursue it; 2) draws up a long-term physical education and sports strategy and a development

programme, strategic action plans of the institution, control their implementation; 3) approves a list of strategic sports; 4) disposes of state budgetary appropriations, funds of the Republic of Lithuania Foundation for the Support of Physical Education and Sport as well as other funds received in a legal manner, exercises control over the use thereof; 5) coordinates activities of the entities from the system of physical education and sport in the field of physical education and sport; 6) cooperates with the Lithuanian communities abroad in the field of physical education and sport; 7) sets the qualification requirements for heads of physical education and sports institutions, coaches and specialists, their performance evaluation, granting of categories, the procedure for issuing certificates for physical education and sports activities; 8) promotes the development of the physical education and sport information system and sports science; 9) accumulates and analyses statistical information about physical education and sport.

The [Ministry of National Defence](#) and the institutions from the national defence system within their competence, organizes and ensures physical fitness of soldiers, creates opportunities for soldiers to practice sport and participate in sports competitions. The [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) develops physical education and sport of the disabled as a means of their integration into society, support the initiatives and programmes of physical activity of the family and community. The [Ministry of Transport and Communications](#) regulates the issues concerning the organization and management of qualifications of sportsmen and specialists of aviation sports, flight safety, control of the technical status of aircrafts, flying, motorboat, automobile and motor cycling sports. The [Ministry of Health](#) develops the principles of healthy lifestyle, draw up and coordinate programmes for enhancing physical activity, draws up drafts of legal acts related to enhancement of physical activity, participate in solution of the issues regarding the use of doping in sports, lay down the requirements for health check-ups of sportsmen. The [Ministry of Education and Science](#) within its competence, form and implement the physical education and sports policy in the establishments carrying out the programmes of formal and non-formal education. The [Ministry of the Interior](#) takes care of physical fitness of the officers of the internal service system, creates opportunities for these persons to practice sport and participate in sports competitions. Other Ministries and state institutions within their competence, participates in the formation of a physical education and sports policy, implement it and create conditions for the development of physical education and sport.

The municipal councils form a physical education and sports policy in the municipality. Municipal councils set up and liquidate physical education and sports institutions, may, in accordance with the procedure laid down by themselves, fund the activities of sport education centres, sport clubs and other non-governmental sports organizations which function within the municipal territory but do not carry out public administration functions. Municipal councils may set out the criteria and procedure for awarding grants which would be paid from municipal budgets to sportsmen, as well as the criteria and procedure for awarding bonus payments which would be paid from municipal budgets to members of the municipal teams. Municipalities implement a strategy of the development of sports facilities in the municipality, ensure their accessibility to the residents, in accordance with the procedure laid down by the municipal councils, fund participation of teams in national and international competitions, carry out educational activities, shape a positive attitude of the people residing in their territory towards the importance of physical education and sport to health, approve sports teams of city and (or) district municipalities.

Non-governmental physical education and sports organizations, registered in accordance with the procedure laid down by legal acts, develop Olympic, Paralympic, deaflympics and special Olympics, Sport for All movements in Lithuania, various sports, groups of sports or sport for all. Physical education and sports organizations have the right to unite into associations in accordance with the procedure and for the purposes laid down by laws.

Physical education and sport clubs are the main sports institutions. Sport clubs may be established for sport amateurs and for professional sportsmen. Amateur sport clubs are public legal entities whose purpose is to satisfy public interests in the field of physical education and sport, to unite sport amateurs and sportsmen for physical activity, healthy

lifestyle, development of physical education and sport, to aim at qualitative and quantitative results of physical education and sport. A unit of an educational and scientific establishment uniting sportsmen of one or several sport branches, sport amateurs, sports promoters may also be regarded as a amateur sport club. Professional sport clubs are private legal whose purpose are to develop professional sports as an economic activity, to aim at quantitative and qualitative sport results.

A national sport (sport branch) federation must be recognized by the [Department of Physical Education and Sports](#). The federations 1) organize official national championships; 2) form sports teams of Lithuania and represent Lithuania in international competitions; 3) ensure preparation of Lithuanian teams and their participation in competitions; 4) upon the receipt of permission of the Department of Physical Education and Sports, organize international sports events, international, complex sports competitions in Lithuania.

7.4 Healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition

National strategy(ies)

The national strategic document for the purpose of healthy lifestyle and healthy nutrition promotion is the [Lithuanian Health Programme 2014-2025](#) which aims to create a safer social environment and reduce health inequalities. The programme also aims to create healthy occupational and living environments, promote of a healthy lifestyle and its culture, and ensure high quality and efficient health care for the needs of the population. Most of the tasks of this programme relate to promoting a healthy lifestyle and healthy nutrition among youth, although youth is not distinguished as a separate group. Tasks of this [Programme](#) aim at reducing poverty and unemployment, reducing socio, economic population differentiation in rural areas, creating safe and healthy working conditions, increasing the safety for consumers, creating favourable conditions for leisure, reducing road accidents and injuries, reducing alcohol and tobacco use, and preventing drug and psychotropic substance use and accessibility, promoting habits of healthy nutrition, developing habits of physical activity, ensuring the sustainability and quality of the health system by developing evidence-based health technologies, developing the health infrastructure and improving the quality of healthcare, safety, and accessibility to patient-centred care and developing an electronic health system. [The Action Plan for for 2014-2016 for the Implementation of the National Youth Policy 2011-2019 Program](#) has a goal to develop the healthcare system for young people, improve youth health monitoring, promote health and physical activity, and ensuring the prevention of various forms of addiction.

Encouraging healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition for young people

The Action plan approval for reducing health inequalities in Lithuania 2014-2023 aims to reduce health inequalities in Lithuania. This plan also includes youth group as one of the socio-economic groups. The main purpose of this plan is to reduce health inequalities in certain Lithuanian regions and for different social groups, including youth, of the health disparities. In addition, the plan aims to reduce inequalities in access to health care, and improve the access to disease prevention, health promotion, and primary and specialized health care services.

National progress program for 2014-2020, horizontal priority inter institutional action plan „Health for all“ approved by government of Republic of Lithuania in 2014. The Inter-institutional Action Plan under the horizontal priority “Health for all” within the National Progress Programme 2014–2020 was adopted by the Government in 2014, with focus for coordinated measures aimed at improvement and development child and youth friendly, high quality, accessible and effective healthcare, with particular focus on public health and inter-sectoral cooperation. The Public Health Strategy for 2016-2023, adopted by the Government in 2015 (promotion of healthy life-style and improvement of health literacy

over the life course, development and implementation of integrated public health care models, use of "Health in all policies" approach to improve public health and reduce health inequalities are among priority objectives).

Alcohol and drug control program approved by the government of Republic of Lithuania in 2011. Programme approved by the Ministerial Order include Action plan for Healthy ageing protection in Lithuania 2014-2023 which aims at encouraging all age populations to take care of their health. It is a broad health policy that includes measures against cardiovascular disease, stroke, and diabetes, physical activity, injuries, cancer and many others. This policy also involves health promotion and personal health care.

Health education and healthy lifestyles education in schools

In 2015 the Network of Health Promoting Schools consisted of 390 educational institutions (covering about 20 percent of all educational institutions in Lithuania), 4 vocational training centres, 104 pre-school education institutions and 1 university. The activities of the network of health promoting schools in Lithuania are highly acknowledged in context of global network of health promoting schools. A 'health promoting school' is defined as 'a school that implements a structured and systematic plan for the health and well-being of all pupils and of teaching and non-teaching staff. This is characterized as a whole school approach. The health promoting school is a health promotion program for children organized through formal and non-formal education. In Lithuania schools prepare, implement and self-evaluate 5-years duration programs. Requirements and criteria for programs are approved by the Health Promoting School Recognition committee (7 specialists from health and education fields). There are Health Promoting Schools in almost every municipality in Lithuania and every year to this network joins a growing number of the country's educational institutions. Lithuanian health promoting school network belongs to the Schools for Health in Europe network (SHE network). In these schools, health topics have been integrated into the educational process - lessons and after-school activities. Health promoting schools conducts a long-term targeted and approved health promotion programs. Health promoting school includes various health areas: physical activity and physical education; a healthy diet; tobacco, alcohol and other psychoactive substance abuse prevention; accidents, injuries, stress prevention; violence, bullying prevention; preparation of family and sexuality education; communicable diseases; a culture of consumption. Health promoting school community members participate in joint projects, competitions, training, conferences and share best practices. The School Health Promoting Schools Recognition Procedure (Official Gazette. 2007, Nr.91-3656; 2010 NR.74-3758) approved by the Minister of Health and Minister of Education is intended for all schools wishing to become a Health Promoting School and schools belonging to the health promoting schools network. It provides the procedure of Health Promoting School recognition, the criteria for health promotion programs evaluation procedure, the certificate registration and issuance procedures.

Peer-to-peer education approaches

Information not available

Collaboration and partnerships

The 2011–2020 National Sports Development Strategy serves as a national recommendation on physical activity (supplemented by the Interinstitutional action plan for its development). The aim is to promote physical activity among the Lithuanian population, in line with WHO's Global recommendations on physical activity for health, with adults exercising for at least 0.5 hour every day, children exercising for 1 hour every day, and at least 500 000 people participating in national sports development programmes. The 2011–2020 National Sports Development Strategy has many facets, including: providing recommendations for physical activity levels for the general population; making policy suggestions to improve the infrastructure and urban planning considerations in order to improve opportunities for exercise; and implementing a clearly formulated national campaign for PE and public awareness of physical activity. Many

stakeholders are involved in this campaign: the Department of Physical Education and Sports, Lithuanian national radio and television broadcasting company, NGOs and local municipal organizations. This multifaceted approach is useful in promoting behaviour change in the population, providing information about physical activity and, crucially, ensuring that projects to promote physical activity are implemented.

Raising awareness on healthy lifestyles and on factors affecting the health and well-being of young people

Guidelines for planning and implementation of adult and children life-style surveys (including questionnaires) prepared within the project "Development of the Model for the Strengthening 6 of the Capacities to Identify and Reduce Health Inequalities", according to the order of the Minister of Health, will be used as unified methodology for all Lithuanian municipalities starting from 2016 to perform life-style surveys every 4 years. Lifestyle surveillance is part of the public health surveillance in municipalities. Every 4 years children (5, 7 and 9 graders) and adults (18+) participate in a lifestyle survey. Surveys are simultaneously organized and carried out by the municipal public health bureaus and coordinated by the Institute of Hygiene. 43 lifestyle indicators are measured (23 for adults and 20 for children). Survey questionnaires are prepared by the Institute of Hygiene and consist of questions about nutrition, physical activity, psychoactive substance use (alcohol, smoking, e-cigarettes, drugs), life quality, selfperceived health, social economic status, etc. [Reports](#) in Lithuanian are available.

Physical Education and Sports Support Fund

Sports for All activities in Lithuania are mostly financed by the Physical Education and Sports Support Fund. All government organizations and NGOs in the field of sports and physical activity may apply to receive funding to finance their activities.

Lithuanian Physical Education Badge programme

Every year at the beginning and the end of the school year, all schoolchildren can test their physical fitness and their sports-related knowledge by taking physical fitness and theoretical tests (on healthy lifestyle, personal hygiene and sports history). Participants are awarded badges, certificates or elite diplomas according to the test results and performance improvement, signed by the Minister of Education and Science and the Director General of the Department of Physical Education and Sports.

"Sunday is a sport's day"

This is a regular physical activity promotion event organized by the non-profit-making organization "Healthy City" (Sveikas miestas). In the centre of Vilnius, every Sunday, various sports are presented, and citizens have the opportunity to participate.

National programme to teach children to swim

The main purpose of the long-standing national programme is to teach schoolchildren to swim and to behave safely in and near water. The programme is based on the principle of cooperation, involving school administrations (municipal general education institutions), sports NGOs and higher education institutions. Teachers are invited to integrate topics related to safe conduct in and near water into lessons and extracurricular activities.

7.5 Mental health

National strategy(ies)

In 2007 the Parliament of Republic of Lithuania approved the [National Mental Health Strategy](#). This national strategy covers a wide range of principles, priorities and recommendations. Sections (see 30.5; 30.12) focus specially on the youth and children: to improve the protection and care of children and young people with mental health through targeted preventive, treatment and rehabilitation programs aimed at increasing

the resilience of children, families and communities and preventing the negative consequences of socialization. In the public health programs, the most attention should be paid to addressing the most pressing problems currently under way - prevention of children's mental health, emotional and social development disorders, proper education of parents for the education of parents, prevention of suicide, addiction and violence, and the resolution of youth health problems. The main principles of the strategy are stated as follows: 1) a special focus on human rights of mentally disabled persons; 2) modern services which meet the needs of the patients; 3) a balance within a development of a bio-psycho-social model; 4) support of principles of autonomy and participation; 5) cases of common mental health disorders should be managed by primary and other non-specialist care sectors; 6) mental health promotion and prevention of mental disorders should become an integrated part in the implementation of general health, education and social welfare policies; 7) strengthening of the role of patients and non-governmental sector. The [National Mental Health Strategy](#) acknowledges that mental health promotion and prevention of mental disorders is an integrated part in the implementation of general health, education and social welfare policies. A set of priority programmes are identified, which include programmes aimed at preventing suicides, alcoholism, drug addiction and smoking; programmes that promote mental health of children, youth and old people and programmes aimed at promotion of mental health in workplaces. The [Interinstitutional Action Plan for the implementation of the Mental Health Strategy](#) has measures of the [National Mental Health Strategy](#) implementation. Other policy documents related to the [National Mental Health Strategy](#) include [Children and Youth Socialization Program](#) which focuses on life skills and non-formal education for youth and children and [The Action Plan for 2014-2016 for the Implementation of the National Youth Policy 2011-2019 Program](#) which has a clear goal to develop the healthcare system for young people, improve youth health monitoring, promote health and physical activity, and ensuring the prevention of various forms of addiction.

Improving the mental health of young people

According to the 2020 [Study on Youth Mental Health](#) the network of interdepartmental cooperation has not been formed in Lithuania, there is a need for young persons' support system to ensure the continuity of support services for young people and their mental health monitoring and coordinating the existing network of organizations providing assistance to the individual. There is a need for professionals whose field of activity is focused specifically on youth mental health problems. The complexity of the system and the diversity of functions involved in tackling individual mental health problems among young people might also hinder the effective support to young persons.

Negative attitudes towards people with mental health ailments prevail (48.2% of the population would not want to live in the neighborhood of a person with a mental disability, and 45.2% would not want to work together); Young people avoid solving their mental health difficulties or topics related to personal mental health well-being. The study also reported that more attention is paid in Lithuania to the negative consequences of mental health (intervention), but not the causes that arise from the young person's early childhood, family, school environment etc. Particularly little attention is paid to early prevention - early parenthood education for young families, mother's well-being during and after pregnancy, pre-school strengthening the resilience of children to mental health. Service barriers include limited access to the services a) lack of specialists (child psychiatrists, psychologists); there is no mechanisms to ensure that young people have access to quality service (sufficient number of consultations to achieve change; highly qualified specialist (eg psychotherapist) services are too expensive for young people, etc.); b) telephone support (emotional support) or e-mail. measures insufficient in emergencies (e.g., the need for a youth line increased significantly during a pandemic). Young people fear stigma related to mental health, bullying, distrust psychologist, social pedagogue. Young people do not have the ability to (i) recognize mental health problems and become aware of them and (ii) consult appropriate professionals. The general

education schools do not always have the conditions to ensure the confidentiality of the visits to a psychologist. Legal restrictions also exist - a young person under 16 years of age cannot apply to a psychologist without parental consent.

Reforms now aim to bring mental health care closer to communities through the establishment of mental health care centres within municipalities and the creation of an effective community-level network of social psychiatric structures, with NGOs included in service provision. The implementation of the reforms raises many challenges, however, particularly in relation to the younger population. There are no reliable statistics on the young population prevalence of mental and behavioural disorders in Lithuania because no epidemiological surveys have been carried out among the young or adult populations. Data collected by the [State Mental Health Centre](#) are only available on cases registered by the state mental health institutions.

Establishment of the [Suicide prevention bureau](#) in 2015, as a state institution for in-depth analysis of the suicide situation and root causes, as well as for planning and coordination of complex measures by involving different sectors and social partners in suicide prevention and postvention, is very important step forward in field.

Most important preventive mental health programmes for young people are implemented with the involvement of NGOs. Lithuania has been participating since 1993 in the European network of health promoting schools (ENHPS). Wide spectrum of mental health programmes are offered for teachers and other who work with young people.

Campaigns such as "Childline" and "Stop bullying" are good practice examples of successful initiatives. They aim to create safer school environments for children and promote friendly and respectful communication that does not involve humiliation and bullying. Other projects like "Teenagers in action" are aimed at encouraging involvement of youth volunteers to provide crisis interventions and education for peers. "One-day centres against risk behaviour" have been set up to reach the teenagers at greatest risk of self-destructive behaviour. There is no system of state funding, however, to guarantee sustainability of these preventive programmes.

7.6 Mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks

Policy framework

The [screening programmes](#) exist, but they are aimed for a certain age group or male or female patients. In 2017 five [screening programmes](#) existed, only one of them concerned women aged 25-60 program for prevention of malignant tumors of the cervix (cytological test is carried out once every 3 years, after receiving the results, a biopsy can be performed to allow the diagnosis of the disease confirmed or denied).

Stakeholders

The [Center for Health Education and Prevention](#), is an institution subordinate to the Ministry of Health, is involved in the promotion of healthy lifestyle, the prevention of non-communicable diseases, injuries and accidents, health promotion, public health impact assessment, health education for children and young people, healthy nutrition, food safety, physical activity in other areas of society. Provides compulsory first aid, compulsory hygiene, alcohol and drug injury training and other health education and training services; carry out an environmental impact assessment of the environment; organizes and carries out professional development courses for public health care professionals and other specialists performing or seeking licensed public health care; carries out the assessment of the harmlessness and chemical composition of the imported or manufactured food products in Lithuania in accordance with the documents submitted by the manufacturer and the seller.

The main institution responsible for screening programmes is the [National Health Insurance Fund](#).

Guidance to stakeholders

The main institution responsible for screening programmes is the [National Health Insurance Fund](#). Municipal Public Health Bureaus along with other medical specialists, implement national screening programmes financed by the National Health Insurance Fund. Health care facilities are responsible for informing their own patients including young patients. Thus there is no centralized coordination for screening programmes – every health care facility informs patients in different ways and not all of these ways might be effective for young persons.

Target groups

In 2017 five [screening programmes](#) existed, only one of them concerned women aged 25-60 program for prevention of malignant tumors of the cervix (cytological test is carried out once every 3 years, after receiving the results, a biopsy can be performed to allow the diagnosis of the disease confirmed or denied). Other [screening programmes](#) are aimed for a certain age group or male or female patients older than 50. However, despite the fact, that these programs are intended primarily for people of a specified age, on the decision of the treating physician, if there are medical reasons, all necessary tests are performed and treatment is provided free of charge.

Funding

Information about [funding of the screening programmes](#). The main funding for screening programmes comes from Lithuanian [Compulsory Health Insurance Fund](#) (PSDF). This funding budget is approved annually by the law (the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania). [The Law of Budget Indicators of the Compulsory Health Insurance Fund](#) for 2017 estimates 88618 euros for screening programmes. The bulk of this budget revenue is comprised of compulsory health insurance (PSD) payments by insured persons (more than 60%); the second place in the income (more than 30%) is taken by the state budget contributions and appropriations, the majority of which is the contributions paid for insured persons, which are insured by state (children, students, registered unemployed persons etc.). The health insurance system is based on the principles of solidarity and universality, and therefore compulsory health insurance contributions are a constitutional obligation for all citizens. The amount of the PSD contributions and the payment procedure are established by the Law on Health Insurance of the Republic of Lithuania. Compulsory health insurance means persons who pay compulsory health insurance contributions or are insured by public funds. Persons who did not pay and did not receive state-sponsored insurance may apply to health care institutions and use their services, however, in this case they are required to pay for these services.

7.7 Making health facilities more youth friendly

The project “Development of the model for the provision of youth-friendly health care services in Lithuania” supported by the Norwegian financial mechanism 2009-2014 Programme “Public health initiatives” aimed at creating the model for youth-friendly health care services provision in Lithuania. It was prepared involving a wide range of stakeholders: representatives of youth organizations, NGOs dealing with youth health issues, primary health care institutions (both service managers and providers), emergency centres, academy, social, education and policy sectors. The main function of the model for youth-friendly health care services provision was to combine into a single network existing health care services providers through service delivery algorithms and improve cooperation among them to provide effective and coordinated youth-friendly health services. The model for youth-friendly health care services provision includes: 1) establishment of youth friendly health services Coordinating Centre in municipality and employment of active, motivated and trained coordinator for low threshold, case

management and human rights principles-based health care services; 2) establishment of the National Youth health internet portal <http://www.sveikatostinklas> via which youth and specialists can obtain reliable, systematic, easily accessible information in a clear and attractive form; 3) establishment of institutional and functional network for youth friendly health services based on principle of case management on local level. One of the most important result of the project was a complex cross-sectorial and inter-institutional activity network of youth friendly health services described in 4 protocols (formalized service delivery algorithms in 4 priority areas: mental health, nutrition, reproductive health, prevention of trauma and unintentional accidents). The conference "The model for provision of youth friendly health care services" organized by the project promoter "Health Economics Centre" in April 2015 aimed to present project and the developed model for youth-friendly health care services provision was attended by participants, representing national and local public health institutions, NGOs, youth organizations, academia, experts in field, the WHO Country Office in Lithuania and media. After the model has been developed and validated, piloting activities in Rokiškis district municipality were taking place in 2015. Based on the piloting of the model the methodological guidelines for implementation of the model and provision of youth friendly health services were prepared as assistance tool for other municipalities implementing the model. Consultations on practical aspects of implementation of the model for youth-friendly health care services provision were provided for municipalities. Training on implementation of the model for youth-friendly health care services provision and administration of the portal on municipal level was organized.

7.8 Current debates and reforms

It is widely acknowledged that the patterns of public health have changed, and that there is a constant need for new strategies and structures to reflect this change. It is increasingly recognized that greater efforts are needed to prevent ill health of young people and creating wellbeing, especially among those who are most disadvantaged as well as developing e-health services and making health facilities youth- friendly.

Sex education is still in the development stage. The [Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Protection of Minors from the Negative Impact of Public Information](#) was adopted in 2002. It defines the criteria for public information on the mental health, physical, mental or moral development of minors in order to protect them from negative impact. It may discourage education providers discussing sensitive issues (e.g. LGBTQI+, abortion etc.) with young persons.

According to the 2020 [Study on Youth Mental Health](#) the network of interdepartmental cooperation has not been formed in Lithuania, there is a need for young persons' support system to ensure the continuity of support services for young people and their mental health monitoring and coordinating the existing network of organizations providing assistance to the individual. There is a need for professionals whose field of activity is focused specifically on youth mental health problems. The complexity of the system and the diversity of functions involved in tackling individual mental health problems among young people might also hinder the effective support to young persons.

Negative attitudes towards people with mental health ailments prevail (48.2% of the population would not want to live in the neighborhood of a person with a mental disability, and 45.2% would not want to work together); Young people avoid solving their mental health difficulties or topics related to personal mental health well-being. The study also reported that more attention is paid in Lithuania to the negative consequences of mental health (intervention), but not the causes that arise from the young person's early childhood, family, school environment etc. Particularly little attention is paid to early prevention - early parenthood education for young families, mother's well-being during and after pregnancy, pre-school strengthening the resilience of children to mental health. Service barriers include limited access to the services a) lack of specialists (child

psychiatrists, psychologists); there is no mechanisms to ensure that young people have access to quality service (sufficient number of consultations to achieve change; highly qualified specialist (eg psychotherapist) services are too expensive for young people, etc.); b) telephone support (emotional support) or e-mail. measures insufficient in emergencies (e.g., the need for a youth line increased significantly during a pandemic). Young people fear stigma related to mental health, bullying, distrust psychologist, social pedagogue. Young people do not have the ability to (i) recognize mental health problems and become aware of them and (ii) consult appropriate professionals. The general education schools do not always have the conditions to ensure the confidentiality of the visits to a psychologist. Legal restrictions also exist - a young person under 16 years of age cannot apply to a psychologist without parental consent.

8. CREATIVITY AND CULTURE

It is obvious that Lithuania's economic policies encourage creative work and the development of creative industries. Lithuania promotes creative industries by providing means of financial support, public education, encouraging the youth creativity and cooperation of cultural and arts sectors with business. [Lithuanian Progress 2030 Strategy](#) has provisions to gear the general education system to creativity, citizenship and leadership skills; to develop programmes focused on creativity and personal development, as well as competence assessment and self-assessment framework, putting them in place across all the educational institutions; to reorganize the concentrated examination system to a balanced system of accumulation and recognition of various learning achievements, the system that captures personal experience and recognizes ever-higher achievements in education and to facilitate proper learning environment, establish science laboratories, create arts education tools, wellness areas, etc. in all schools. The main goals of the Strategy for the Promotion and Development of Creative Industries of the Republic of Lithuania are the following: to provide necessary conditions for the efficient development of creative industries (by using the population's creative potential), the sector's contribution to the economy, for building the knowledge-based economy and increasing the competitiveness of creative industries' production in the country and abroad. The [Ministry of Culture](#) underlines the following strategic objectives: to ensure the creativity in the cultural, educational, scientific and economic fields in order to enhance creative industries of Lithuania and to increase the share of these sectors in Lithuania's GDP and employment. The sector of cultural and creative industries in Lithuania is a rapidly developing sector, the development of which requires new professionals, new jobs, and there are more opportunities for creative people to realize their potential. A number of higher institutions offer studies of traditional artistic disciplines. Study programmes related to performing arts, theatre and music and film are offered at [Lithuanian Music and Theatre Academy](#) and [Vilnius Art Academy](#). Moreover, study programmes in art and cultural management as well as creative and cultural industries and communication are offered at [Vilnius Gediminas Technical University Faculty of Creative Industries](#). Lithuanian regions possess active incubators, such as the Creative Business Incubator of Arts Printing House, the Užupis Arts Incubator or Telšiai Arts Incubator and informal arts incubators, such as the ones in Klaipėda, Kaunas, Šiauliai and Anykščiai. While supporting and encouraging the creativity, new artists' ideas and their implementation in both arts incubators and clusters emerge as important means of taking care of cultural and creative activities in various spheres.

8.1 General context

Main trends in young people's creativity and cultural participation

The information, data, and research in young people's creativity are rather fragmented. The most comprehensive [Study on Participation in Culture](#) was carried out in 2017 by the Ministry of Culture in order to determine the level of consumption of cultural products/services of the Lithuanian population, participation in cultural and artistic activities, and to determine the opinion of the Lithuanian population about the availability and quality of cultural products/services. Among the group of young persons cultural participation is rather high, however the issue of whether it is regular enough in order to maintain participation habits at a later stage of life. The exclusion of participation in culture is noticeable on the basis of age, education, nationality, income, and place of residence.

[National Association of Creative and Cultural Industries of Lithuania](#) is an umbrella organization uniting creative industry associations, creative incubators, creative individuals, institutions of higher education, cultural, creative business, and many other organizations. It participates in the formation of culture and higher education and study policy, provides proposals for state and European Union investments in the creative industries sector, financing programs, and measures, emphasize the important contribution of the creative industries sector to the country's economy and public welfare. The association collects information about creative industries, share news about topical issues of creative industries policy, science, and business cooperation, innovations, creative partnerships, order and conduct research, conduct training and promotes networking in the sector in Lithuania, actively participate in regional networking projects in the Baltic Sea region, promote clustering of the sector and act as a cluster of creative industries. In 2021 the study on [Assessment of the cultural and creative industry](#) was published with the most up-to-date general evaluation of the trends.

Main concepts

Creativity, openness, and responsibility are the values to be followed in taking public strategic decisions. It is stated explicitly in [Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#). This Strategy also states that the society's ability to adapt to change, using it for the generation of wealth and as a competitive advantage, is basically determined by the degree of openness and creativity in the society.

8.2 Administration and governance

Governance

Two of the four main objectives of the [Lithuanian Cultural Policy Strategy 2030](#), adopted in 2019 by Lithuanian Government, are targeted to the accessibility of culture and cultural participation. The first objective is to strengthen the cooperation between the state, municipal and non-governmental sectors, reducing cultural exclusion and inequalities. The objective has to be achieved by accomplishing three tasks: to ensure leadership and proportionality of performed functions within the network of cultural institutions; improve the quality and efficiency of the performance of cultural and art institutions by optimally distributing services across their networks; and to ensure the sustainability of cultural human resources and their equal distribution. The second objective is to stimulate creation and participation in culture. It also comprises three tasks: to develop and foster talents by providing the appropriate conditions for creation in different artistic fields; promote the equal accessibility of high quality and various forms of culture for diverse social groups; and promote the participation in diverse creative activities by lifelong development of cultural competencies.

The third goal of the Lithuanian Cultural Policy Strategy 2030 links the issue of cultural participation to the development of civil society and critical thinking of young people. The tasks of the goal are the following: to strengthen the immunity of citizens and institutions

to information threats and their civic activity and knowledge; strengthen people's critical thinking ability and understanding of cultural phenomena; and develop national awareness and cognition of tangible and intangible heritage of modern society.

Before the adoption of the strategy in 2019, the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture already implemented some measures to increase the accessibility of culture and cultural participation. The newest measure is free admission to museums. Since the beginning of 2019, under the initiative of the Ministry of Culture, permanent exhibitions of national and state museums can be visited free of charge every last Sunday of the month. This regulation does not apply to private museums.

In 2018, the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, launched a programme for schoolchildren called Cultural Pass ([Kultūros pasas](#)). The aim of the measure is to improve access to cultural and educational projects and events, develop cultural awareness and experience of schoolchildren by providing appropriate cultural and artistic services. The measure provides each pupil with a "cultural passport" worth 15 EUR per school year that could be used for visiting performances, concerts or exhibitions offered by various cultural organisations and selected by expert groups according to the needs of different age groups and other criteria. Depending on the age group, the pupil attends cultural and artistic events either with their class or individually. The range of services that can be chosen per year depends on the price of the service. In 2019, pupils of all age groups were involved in the project. The Lithuanian Ministry of Culture allocated to the measure a total of 4.808 million EUR.

In 2007 (renewed in 2009), the Strategy of Support and Development of the Creative Industries was approved by the Minister of Culture. According to the Strategy, the creative industries include crafts, architecture, design, film and video production, publishing, visual and applied art, music, software and computer services, advertising, Radio and TV programmes and broadcasting, and the performing arts. In 2007, the National Association of Creative / Cultural Industries was established.

[Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#) reflects a national vision and priorities for development as well as guidelines for their implementation by 2030. It is stated in the strategy that the vision of Lithuania is a country with creatively empowered population, and its progress is in the hands of responsible, creative and open-minded people. The implementation of the vision is guided by progress-relevant values, like openness to a different views, positive initiatives, to a dialogue, cooperation, and innovations as well as creativity in generation and implementation of new ideas, treating challenges as new possibilities of building success. The Annex 2 of the [Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#) has a list of Progress Indicators which will be used to measure the success of the Key Initiatives for Change.

In order to implement [Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#), The [National Progress Program 2014-2020](#), one of the tasks of which is to promote the development of the cultural and creative industries, with arts and culture related innovations, cross-sectoral development of these innovations and cultural export. To achieve this, the need to promote creativity is highlighted through promoting and the introduction of new products into production, improve access to culture and the arts products and services, as well as creating financial incentives for entrepreneurship in the areas of cultural and creative industries development promoting distribution across borders, supporting the development, use and promotion of new products and services and cross-sectoral cooperation. It should be noted that by 2020 it is planned to pay more attention cultural development and creativity in the regions. The [Program for the Development of Regional Development](#) for the period 2012-2020 also aims at "creating conditions for creativity in the regions" the full range of personality development, cultural diversity, dissemination and accessibility as a regional social the basis of economic progress, to develop civic self-awareness, fostering regional excellence and attractiveness. In 2012, the government passed the *Resolution on the Programme of National Advancement for the years 2014-2020*, which included the horizontal priority "Education of society, science and culture".

Through this document, culture became an important sector for social life, science, the economy, technology, ecology, etc. issues.

In 2010s several universities (e.g. [Department of Creative Communication](#) and [Department of Entertainment Industries](#) (established in 2017) at the [Faculty of Creative Industries](#) at VGTU) and colleges in Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipėda launched the Training Programmes of Creative / Cultural industries with the aim to educate specialists in advertising, marketing, public relations, multimedia, TV, publishing and the communication sectors.

Over the past years, positive approaches to the creative industries were promoted in a series of international conferences and the publications of several research studies on the topic (e.g. "Creative industries in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania", 2010, 2011). In 2008, the study on "The Creative and Cultural Industries of Lithuania" revealed the situation and tendencies of the creative industries development in Lithuania. An international conference on the cultural and creative industries "Mainstreaming Culture" took place on 1 October 2012 in Vilnius with the aim of promoting efforts to mainstream culture in a variety of policy areas and to highlight the relevance of culture in relation to innovation, education, social, economic and environmental policy on the local and national level.

The National Association of Creative and Cultural Industries was established to support cooperation between artists, culture and art organisations, NGOs, businesses, science and educational sectors, and support their participation in regional and international networks and workshops, and to stimulate the creative industries in Lithuania. The art incubators became a popular form to develop arts and business joint activities.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

In general the [Department of Youth Affairs](#) within the the Ministry of Social Security and Labour is primarily responsible for youth and/or youth programming and this includes cross-sectorial mechanisms of cooperation. The [Department of Youth Affairs](#) coordinates and organizes committees on monitoring specific policy measures while the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) through Action Plan for the period of 2017-2019. In this Action Plan specific objectives, actions, terms of implementation, budget allocations and responsible institutions for its implementation are indicated. Collaboration between ministries and stakeholders does exist to varying degrees and on different levels. Intersectoral committees have successfully been set up to manage ongoing policy processes. In general, the [Ministry of Social Security](#), the [Ministry of Education and Science](#) and the [Ministry of Culture](#) handles youth and creativity issues.

8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people

Existence of a national strategy

[Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#) reflects a national vision and priorities for development as well as guidelines for their implementation by 2030. It is stated in the strategy that the vision of Lithuania is a country with creatively empowered population, and its progress is in the hands of responsible, creative and open-minded people. The implementation of the vision is guided by progress-relevant values, like openness to a different views, positive initiatives, to a dialogue, cooperation, and innovations as well as creativity in generation and implementation of new ideas, treating challenges as new possibilities of building success.

The explicit strategy of **youth creativity and culture** does not exist, however, the second goal (see Chapter 13) of the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) aims at ensuring better youth employment opportunities, creating favourable conditions for young people to participate in the labour market, promoting economic and

social entrepreneurship, developing non-formal education system, encouraging youth creativity and active participation in the society.

Scope and contents

The [Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#) is aimed at creating an environment that would enable progress-related values. It is stated in the Strategy that changes will take place in the following areas:

1. Smart society: happy society that is open [openness] to the ideas of each citizen [creativity], to innovations and challenges, demonstrating solidarity, self-governance and political maturity [responsibility].
2. Smart economy: economy that is flexible and able to compete globally [openness], generating high added value, based on knowledge, innovations entrepreneurship [creativity] and social responsibility as well as "green" growth [responsibility].
3. Smart governance: governance that is open and participatory [openness], delivering, meeting public demands and ensuring high quality services [responsibility], as well as competent government, able to take targeted strategic decisions [creativity].

It is stated that only a creative entourage that can empower an individual to unlock his creative potential and play a part in the smart society. Relying on the creative powers of society and smart economy, which is based on knowledge, entrepreneurship and responsibility, will generate high added value and create public wellbeing. The strategy also aims at qualitative changes in society and economy that will be facilitated through an efficient government that ensures the delivery of high quality services.

The Key Initiatives for Change of the [Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#) inexplicitly address the involvement of younger population in the creating the future of the society:

1. To gear the general education system to creativity, citizenship and leadership skills. To develop programmes focussed on creativity, quest and personal development, as well as competence assessment and self-assessment framework, putting them in place across all the educational establishments. To reorganize the concentrated examination system to a balanced system of accumulation and recognition of various learning achievements, the system that captures evergrowing personal experience and recognizes ever-higher achievements in education. To facilitate proper learning environment, establish science laboratories, create arts education tools, wellness areas, etc. in all schools.
2. To develop high quality cultural services across the country in order to ensure diversity of cultural services and their accessibility. To promote partnership between culture and other areas of life through creative cultural products and services.
3. To develop a healthy lifestyle as a prerequisite for a dynamic society. To mobilize public and institutional efforts towards better public health through measures preventing the use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs and increased public awareness as regards the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
4. To develop individual health care services for increased efficiency of preventive measures, and to apply more extensively targeted public health promotion measures.
5. To develop community self-governance (through empowerment of schools and grass-root administrations), which strengthens participation of communities and non-governmental organizations in public life. National and local authorities have to deliberately seek to delegate to the public ever more powers and responsibility to act independently as regards the implementation of the subsidiarity principle.
6. To strengthen communities and non-governmental organizations, to develop community leaders and support civic initiatives.
7. To develop national programmes unlocking learners' potential and talents, as well as systems for talent identification and development, and for academic mobility. To support

non-formal academic, sporting and creative education of gifted children: to bring together the country's best teachers, science, culture and sports experts, to attract foreign professionals.

8. To create environment favourable for science and research, ensuring Lithuania's appeal for top researchers and scientists.

9. To create a world-class studies and research centre, with a view to strengthening the existing national infrastructure and mobilizing the best scientific and teaching potential. The centre would bring together study opportunities in the interdisciplinary network, providing for interdisciplinary research and development, and opening up the research infrastructure for business-science interaction.

10. To enable Lithuania's high school students to study at foreign universities for at least one semester, particularly focussing on Nordic-Baltic student exchanges.

11. To develop a rich cultural environment through investments in the development and integration of public cultural establishments, and promotion of public participation in cultural developments. To facilitate cultural dynamism, particularly through international cultural exchanges and international artist mobility.

The Annex 2 of the [Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#) has a list of Progress Indicators which will be used to measure the success of the Key Initiatives for Change.

One of the objectives of the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) (see Article 14.2) is to create conditions for young people's cultural education, to encourage young people's creativity, to support the professional and non-professional youth art. The [Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Youth Policy 2011-2019 Program for the period from 2017-2019](#) states that since 2009 financial resources allocated from the state budget of the Republic of Lithuania funds for the cultural education of young people, for the promotion of professional and unprofessional youth art increased by about 2,5 times, nevertheless, the issue of involvement of young people in public and creativity activities is still relevant, therefore, it is necessary to create conditions for the promotion of youth creativity and cultural education. The measure 2.2.1. of the [Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Youth Policy 2011-2019 Program for the period from 2017-2019](#) aims to implement cultural and cultural education promotion initiatives which include not less than 250 000 to 300 000 young people each year in the period of 2017-2019.

Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

The implementation of the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) is coordinated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labor. The measures aimed at youth creativity and culture of the Program are implemented by the the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Science, Lithuanian Labor Exchange under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor, Youth Affairs Department under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor. Every year before 1 February the responsible authorities submit reports on the implementation of the measures to the Ministry of Social Security and Labor.

The implementation of the [Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#) is an on-going dynamic process, with proactive society and the State Progress Council, set up by the Government. This process is not only a direct implementation of strategic guidelines and initiatives; it also includes solutions of other issues of public relevance, and promotes continued development of progress-related ideas. Therefore, the State Progress Council initiates a broad debate, inviting people to get actively involved in the implementation of the common vision. The implementation of the "Lithuania 2030" is be ensured by the key participants: Open Progress Forum "Lithuania 2030", the State Progress Council and its Secretariat. The mission of the Open Progress Forum "Lithuania 2030" is to promote and maintain a permanent dialogue with the society on a country's development processes, priorities and values. The Forum will bring together academic, business, artistic communities and other public representatives for a debate and sharing of ideas. The Forum

"Lithuania 2030" will be held at least two times a year. The State Progress Council will not only support the communication and encourage public discussion of the ideas, but will take the leadership in the activities of the Forum "Lithuania 2030". It will also oversee the implementation of the Strategy and monitor its results. The State Progress Council will annually assess the relevance of the Strategy initiatives and will be responsible for drawing up annual inventory of the progress-related actions and its presentation to the Government. In view of these aspects, the composition of the Council will be adjusted to include active representatives of the society (~ 50 per cent), parliamentary groups (~ 20 per cent) and government agencies (~ 30 per cent). The State Progress Council will convene at least once every 3 months. The Secretariat of the State Progress Council will be based at the Office of the Prime Minister and will be responsible for coordination of the implementation of the Strategy and on-going monitoring at governmental level. The Secretariat will provide necessary support to the State Progress Council as regards supervision and monitoring of the performance. It will also actively participate in the activities of the Forum "Lithuania 2030" focusing on the analysis of the discussion conclusions and their implementation proposals. The Strategy will be implemented in the following main directions: commitment to take 10 progress priority actions a year; consistent implementation of the vision through the system of strategic planning documents (medium and short-term planning documents); direct involvement of communities and NGOs. Considering the progress achieved and existing state of events, the State Progress Council will identify ten key actions for the implementation of the most important initiatives. Annual progress actions will also be debated and discussed at the open Forum "Lithuania 2030". The State Progress Council will submit to the Government a list of progress actions, and recommend that they are included in annual governmental and/or ministerial priority lists, thus linking governmental annual priorities with the Strategy initiatives, and ensuring the implementation of the progress-related actions. The inclusion of annual progress actions into the governmental priorities is a very important step towards the achievement of the Strategy results, having not only annual but also longer-term effect. All the resources required should be mobilized for the implementation of Government's priorities, which has a direct impact on the state budgeting. With a view to ensuring effective implementation of the Strategy, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, when considering a draft budget, should take into account allocation of appropriations, and the link between governmental priorities and the Strategy. Consistent implementation of the Strategy. The progress values, outlined in the Strategy, will have to be mainstreamed across all the areas of public policies, and they will have to reflect in taking decision on strategic goals or any other important decisions. The Strategy will be implemented also through the system of strategic planning and documentation. A National Progress Programme will be drawn up for the implantation of the Strategy, with a forecast of European Union and national funds allocations for 2014-2020 in terms of the achievement of long-term priorities. The development of the National Progress Programme will be coordinated by the Ministry of Finance. Each ministry or government agency will be directly involved in the implementation of the Strategy. The authorities will have to follow the provisions of the Strategy in drafting their individual strategic plans, and ensure the achievement of the goals set forth in the National Progress Programme. Therefore, the provisions of the Strategy will have a direct influence on institutional actions. The success of the Strategy will be measured by monitoring the progress in indicators that are directly linked to the main achievable outcomes 2030. Given a substantial length of this period, and in view of the goals of the Strategy 2020, interim indicators for 2020 were established. A comprehensive interim assessment of the strategy has been foreseen for 2020, aimed at the improvement of the implementation process of the Strategy, and better outcomes. Evaluation of the Strategy or its individual components may be effected more frequently to assess relevant aspects, such as effectiveness, efficiency, appropriateness and need for continuity of individual guidelines. The people and the State Progress Council will be regularly reported to on the progress of the Strategy in terms of the achievement of the goals. Information on the progress of the Strategy will be put to public consideration as part of the Government Performance Report, submitted annually to the Seimas. It should be noted that national progress processes will be measured not only against the Strategy's

progress indicators, but also the indicators of national economic competitiveness. The Strategy progress report will also include information about the progress achieved as regards the implementation of Government's priorities as well as progress actions. The scoreboard of progress indicators and progress actions results will be available at: www.Lietuva2030.lt. Direct involvement of communities and non-governmental organizations. The implementation of the Strategy will involve public at large, focusing on communities and nongovernmental organizations. The Lithuanian society and business organizations will be encouraged to contribute to the implementation of progress policies. Much in this respect is being done already today, which is regularly covered at: www.Lietuva2030.lt.

Revisions/updates

There have been no revisions and updates.

8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation

Reducing obstacles to young people's access to culture

According to the data of the [Lithuanian National Cultural Centre](#), in 2018, there were 158 cultural centres and about 500 of their branches and subdivisions that are located in urban and rural territories of Lithuania, with 2915 amateur art groups, 886 studios and clubs that have in total 52 819 participants. Children's and youth groups comprise 36 per cents of all amateur arts groups, and young participants comprise about 38 per cent of all participants.

Two of the four main objectives of the [Lithuanian Cultural Policy Strategy 2030](#), adopted in 2019 by the Lithuanian Government, are targeted to the accessibility of culture and cultural participation. The first objective is to strengthen the cooperation between the state, municipal and non-governmental sectors, reducing cultural exclusion and inequalities. The objective has to be achieved by accomplishing three tasks: to ensure leadership and proportionality of performed functions within the network of cultural institutions; improve the quality and efficiency of the performance of cultural and art institutions by optimally distributing services across their networks, and to ensure the sustainability of cultural human resources and their equal distribution. The second objective is to stimulate creation and participation in culture. It also comprises three tasks: to develop and foster talents by providing the appropriate conditions for creation in different artistic fields; promote the equal accessibility of high quality and various forms of culture for diverse social groups, and promote the participation in diverse creative activities by lifelong development of cultural competencies.

The third goal of the Lithuanian Cultural Policy Strategy 2030 links the issue of cultural participation to the development of civil society and the critical thinking of people. The tasks of the goal are the following: to strengthen the immunity of citizens and institutions to information threats and their civic activity and knowledge; to strengthen people's critical thinking ability and understanding of cultural phenomena, and develop national awareness and cognition of tangible and intangible heritage of modern society.

Before the adoption of the strategy in 2019, the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture already implemented some measures to increase the accessibility of culture and cultural participation. The newest measure is free admission to museums. Since the beginning of 2019, under the initiative of the Ministry of Culture, permanent exhibitions of national and state museums can be visited free of charge every last Sunday of the month. This regulation does not apply to private museums.

In 2018, the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, launched a programme for schoolchildren called Cultural Pass ([Kultūros pasas](#)). The aim of the measure is to improve access to cultural and educational projects and events, develop cultural awareness and experience of schoolchildren by providing

appropriate cultural and artistic services. The measure provides each pupil with a "cultural passport" worth 15 EUR per school year that could be used for visiting performances, concerts or exhibitions offered by various cultural organisations and selected by expert groups according to the needs of different age groups and other criteria. Depending on the age group, the pupil attends cultural and artistic events either with their class or individually. The range of services that can be chosen per year depends on the price of the service. In 2019, pupils of all age groups were involved in the project. The Lithuanian Ministry of Culture allocated to the measure a total of 4.808 million EUR.

Disseminating information on cultural opportunities

To encourage creativity among cultural centres and recognise the best achievements and work of cultural centres, the Ministry of Culture established three [Prizes for the Best Cultural Centres of the Year](#). These prizes are awarded for active, creative and innovative activities over the past five years in fostering ethnic culture and amateur art, creating artistic programmes, expanding educational and recreational activities, meeting the cultural needs of the community and organising the spread of professional art. Since 2006, 40 cultural centres in different categories have received this prize as a form of incentive.

In 2005, the Ministry of Culture established the [Prize for Active, Creative Activities at Cultural Centres](#). The goal of the prize is to encourage professional activities among arts and culture employees at cultural centres and recognise their best achievements and work. Heads of cultural centres and arts and culture employees who work at cultural centres can be nominated for the prize. Since 2005, this prize has been awarded to 11 cultural centre employees.

To encourage cultural institutions and creators of culture and evaluate their activities in the field of cultural education for children and youth, the Ministry of Culture has, since 2007, been awarding [four prizes](#) per year for the best education projects that were prepared and implemented for children and youth.

Knowledge of cultural heritage amongst young people

Article 6(13) of the Republic of Lithuania [Law on Local Self-Government](#) establishes that the 'cultivation of general culture and fostering of ethno-culture of the population (participation in cultural development projects; the establishment, reorganisation, restructuring and/or liquidation of museums, theatres, culture centres and other cultural institutions as well as the supervision of the activities thereof; the establishment, reorganisation and/or restructuring of public municipal libraries as well as supervision of the activities thereof)' is the independent function of the municipalities.

In the area of regional cultural policy-making, the Ministry of Culture is responsible for the formation of a national policy in the fields of culture and amateur artistic activities. The strategic objective of the Ministry of Culture in the area of regional cultural policy is to promote access to culture for various groups of society as well as their participation in nurturing cultural traditions and diversity of cultural expression. The Ministry of Culture works in constant collaboration with Lithuanian municipalities in implementing this objective.

In 2003, the first State Programme for the Development of Ethnic Culture was approved by the resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. One of the goals of this programme is to activate the development of culture in the regions and to give residents the opportunity to foster their regional and national traditions and customs. In 2015, the 2015–2018 Action Plan for the Development of Ethnic Culture was approved by order of the Minister of Culture. [In 2011, the 2012-2020 Programme for the Development of Regional Culture was approved, as well as the measures for implementing this programme in 2012-2014](#). The purpose of the 2012-2020 Programme for the Development of Regional Culture is to establish priority areas of regional cultural development and create conditions for cultural access and dissemination by making the regions more attractive for young persons, local communities, investors and tourism. In 2015, the measures for

implementing the 2012-2020 Programme for the Development of Regional Culture in 2015–2017 were prepared and approved.

Numerous municipalities have approved programmes for the development of ethnic culture and regularly plan their budgets to provide funding for the nurturing, preservation and dissemination of traditional culture.

The main initiator of national intercultural dialogue at the policy level is the [Department of National Minorities to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania](#), established in 2015. The Department funds cultural projects within the frame of the Integration of the National Minorities in the Society while Preserving Their Identity Programme. The programme funds three categories of projects proposals: 1) the Dissemination of National Minorities Culture; 2) the Dissemination of National Minorities Culture and Cultural Cooperation in South-East Lithuania; 3) the Promotion of Intercultural Dialogue and the Dissemination of the National Minorities' Culture in the Mass Media. In 2018, the Department allocated 70 000 EUR for 33 cultural projects of Lithuanian and national minorities organisations aimed at the development of non-formal education, 25 000 EUR for 10 media projects, and 175 000 EUR for 132 projects of the development of a culture of national minorities.

A consultative body of the Department of National Minorities is the [National Communities Board](#). The board represents national minorities and deals with the policy coordination issues related to Lithuanian national minorities and involves the representatives of the national minorities into the decision-making process. The members of the Board are selected from the national communities' representatives. The number of Board members from each national community depends upon the communities' population as presented in the Population and Housing Census 2011. If the national community's population is above 100 thousand, then 3 Board members from the community shall be selected into the Board; if the national community's population is from 10 thousand to 100 thousand – 2 representatives; small up to 10 thousand population national communities have one Board member.

National communities living in Lithuania develop cooperation and dialog through cultural centres and non-governmental organisations. There are 4 intercultural centres in Lithuania, financed by municipalities: the House of National Communities in Vilnius (established in 1991), the Kaunas Centre of Various Nations Culture (established in 2004), the Roma Community Centre (established in 2001), and the Folklore and Ethnography Centre of the Lithuanian National Minorities (established in 2007). These and others cultural centres initiate various arts, culture and interdisciplinary projects, organise cultural events, arts exhibitions, books presentations, and cooperate with non-governmental organisations of national communities. Approximately [300 non-governmental organisations](#) of national minorities are engaged in cultural activity in Lithuania. The Armenian, Azerbaijani, Belarusian, Bulgarian, Chechen, Estonian, Greek, Karaits, Latvian, Polish, Roma, Romanian, Russian, Tatar, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Hungarian, German, Jewish, and other national communities have established their cultural, educational, professional, and other non-governmental organisations.

Intercultural dialog on an international level is coordinated by the Lithuanian Culture Institute. For several years, the Lithuanian Culture Institute has been realising Lithuanian culture seasons in various countries. In 2015, the Lithuanian Culture Institute represented Lithuania in Krakow; in 2016, it organised Spring and Autumn seasons in Ukraine; in 2017, Lithuania was a guest of honour at the international Leipzig book fair; in 2018, the institute realised two large-scale international events – Baltic Countries Market Focus programme at London Book Fair and the Lithuanian art festival "Flux" in Rome. In 2019, Tel Aviv became a host to the largest to date presentation of contemporary Lithuanian culture: "Lithuanian Story. Culture Festival in Tel Aviv 2019". The festival aimed to introduce Israel's audiences to Lithuanian artists from the fields of poetry, classical and contemporary music, performance, dance and film.

8.5 Developing cultural and creative competences

Acquiring cultural and creative competences through education and training

In Lithuania, the curricula of all three stages of state school education (primary, basic and secondary) are shaped by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports. According to the general descriptions of primary, basic and secondary education, the curricula of these stages have to encompass 6, 8 and 7 study fields. The primary education comprises 6 study fields: moral education (religion or ethics), languages (mother tongue and first foreign language), mathematics, natural and social sciences, arts and technologies, physical and health education. The curriculum of basic education comprises the following study fields: moral education (religion or ethics), languages (mother tongue and literature, first and second foreign languages), mathematics (mathematics and informatics), natural sciences (biology, physics, chemistry, etc.), social sciences (history, geography, civil education, economics, entrepreneurship, citizenship), arts (fine arts, music, dance, theatre, and modern arts), technologies (nutrition, textiles, construction materials, electronics, product design and technology, etc.), physical education. Some subjects could be studied at an intensified level. The third stage of education comprises the same study fields as basic education except technologies.

Subjects of arts, i.e. fine arts, music, dance, theatre, and modern arts are the compulsory part of education at all three stages. The aim of this part of curriculum is the development of general artistic competencies of pupils and their ability to express oneself creatively by means of art, to understand and value artistic creation. The developed artistic competencies should help pupils to make informed and independent decisions about further learning and participation in artistic creation and culture. However, according to the curriculum plans approved by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, compulsory subjects in the primary and basic stages of education are only fine arts and music. The schools may offer subjects of dance and theatre depending on their possibilities and the preferences of pupils.

Pupils with artistic abilities can choose to enrol in special arts or music schools that combine general education with specialised artistic education. There are 9 specialised art schools in Lithuania, funded by the state and municipalities: 4 schools specialising in music, 1 specialising in fine arts, 3 schools combining fine arts and music, 1 school combining fine arts, music and ballet.

In 2018, the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, launched a cultural education measure for schoolchildren called Cultural Pass ([Kultūros pasas](#)). The aim of the measure is to improve access to cultural and educational projects and events, develop cultural awareness and experience of schoolchildren by providing appropriate cultural and artistic services (see chapter 6.1 for more about the measure).

Several universities and colleges also conduct programmes in the field of communication closely related to arts and culture, e.g. Media and Communication, Creative communication, Creative Industries, Creative and Culture Industries, Fashion Industry, Political Communication and Journalism, Entertainment and Tourism Industries, Entertainment industries, Integrated Creative Communication, Communication of Creative Society, and Communication and Creative Technologies.

There are also programmes in management and public administration, related to arts and culture, e.g. Art Management, Cultural and Creative Industries Management, Sports and Tourism Management, Culture and Tourism Management, and Culture Management and Culture Policy.

The main high schools of arts education in Lithuania are the [Vilnius Academy of Arts](#) (VDA) and the [Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre](#) (LMTA). VDA has four faculties that are located in different cities of Lithuania – Vilnius, Kaunas, Telšiai and Klaipėda. Each faculty

has its own undergraduate and graduate study programmes. According to the data of VDA, in 2019, 1540 students were studying at the Academy in 45 study programmes. The Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre has three faculties; two of them (Faculty of Music and Faculty of Theatre and Film) are located in Vilnius and one in Klaipėda. According to the data of LMTA, its three faculties currently host about 1,000 students in three study cycles – bachelor's, master's and doctoral.

Specialised training for professionals in the education, culture and youth fields

The main high schools of arts education in Lithuania are the [Vilnius Academy of Arts](#) (VDA) and the [Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre](#) (LMTA). VDA has four faculties that are located in different cities of Lithuania – Vilnius, Kaunas, Telšiai and Klaipėda. Each faculty has its own undergraduate and graduate study programmes. According to the data of VDA, in 2019, 1540 students were studying at the Academy in 45 study programmes. The Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre has three faculties; two of them (Faculty of Music and Faculty of Theatre and Film) are located in Vilnius and one in Klaipėda. According to the data of LMTA, its three faculties currently host about 1,000 students in three study cycles – bachelor's, master's and doctoral.

Providing quality access to creative environments

There are several [art incubators](#) established in Lithuania as well as some additional new creative initiatives for youth and general public starting. The biggest part of incubators are situated in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius or its outskirts. Others are located in different Lithuanian cities (e.g. [Anyksciu menu inkubatorius](#)). There is an evident growth of artistic and creative sector in the second largest city of Lithuania – Kaunas, that host the new initiatives of art incubation mentioned.

[Vilnius Gediminas Technical University](#) (VGTU) "[LinkMenu fabrikas](#)" is a space for young persons who want to create, develop and implement their ideas. Center workshops and bureaus are designed to be used by creative and innovative people, from beginners to professionals. The aim of this creativity and innovation center is to become a venue for practical workshops and the realization of various projects. In collaboration with national and international partners, the center focuses on developing students' creativity and practical skills by inviting them to the first such workshop in Lithuania. VGTU "[LinkMenu fabrikas](#)" contains mechanics, wood, metal, painting, 3D printing, electronics, transport, technical and creative spaces, advertising, photo / video and audio recording studios. It accommodates teamwork, creative inspiration spaces, lounge area and is equipped with the most advanced modern technology, which allows a team of developers working in different areas to turn interdisciplinary ideas to real products and services. Active cooperation with various businesses will allow the best ideas to move beyond the threshold and become real market products.

[Menu spaustuve](#) (Arts Workshop) is creative industries unit based in the Old Town of Vilnius, is collecting different types of independent performing arts projects into one and allows them to share their artistic visions with the audiences. The place is open up also as a performing arts residency. It works as an interdisciplinary centre, as well as a place for foreign shows and performances to happen. International festivals and conferences are held from time to time.

[Uzupis Art Incubator](#) (UMI) in Vilnius is the first art incubator in the Baltic States running for more than 10 years. It is the only alternative artistic organization with arts center not only in Vilnius but also in Lithuania. Having experience in the international cooperation with like-minded organizations and centers abroad and using new creative resources to introduce new artistic initiatives, Art Incubator creates and maintains the original and attractive atmosphere which is fully supported and encouraged in many advanced European cities appreciating the importance of the creative industries in the country's cultural, tourism and economic development.

[The Incubator of Architecture](#) in Vilnius aims to gather different artists and their groups as well as the creative businesses together in one creative space, providing better possibilities for creation and presentation of art work, support creative business startups, stimulate society participation in cultural life, take part in the preservation of the cultural heritage. Incubator residents are provided by a competitive rent price, consultations by professional architects, internships and communication.

[Audio-visual Arts Industry Incubator](#) was established in 2009 in Vilnius, Lithuania. It was established by three main leaders of Lithuanian cinema education and audio-visual industry – Lithuanian Film Studio, Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre and Vilnius Academy of Arts. This union has required experience needed to help young representatives from the industry gain deeper theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of professional cinematography. Main aim of Audio-visual Arts Industry Incubator is to create modern Educational Film and TV infrastructure for the use of young professionals, students and juniors. Audio-visual Arts Industry Incubator has become become a link between these three different sectors that encourages their collaboration and help them to find their place in the market. Audio-visual Arts Industry Incubator has modern specialized spaces at Lithuanian Film Studio (almost 2000 sq. meters), newest filming equipment, video and sound postproduction stations, sound recording studios, conference and screening halls. With this modern structure Audio-visual Arts Industry Incubator aims to become the biggest educational audio-visual art industry centre in Baltic countries.

[RUPERT](#) is a Centre for Art and Education devoted to establishing close cooperation between artists, thinkers, researchers, and other cultural actors through interdisciplinary programs and residencies including young artists. A knowledge-based platform for innovative creative production, Rupert integrates with the social and cultural framework of the city of Vilnius while simultaneously supporting a strong international focus. Rupert's mission manifests in three distinct but closely-linked channels: first, the EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM offers participants the chance to develop project ideas and make connections with professionals in the field through regular lectures and workshops. It provides the opportunity for collaborative education, forging new international networks. This degreeless, non-academic program is proudly career-oriented and supplemented by its interdisciplinary approach. Rupert offers a RESIDENCY PROGRAM in which the participants develop their individual projects, giving them the opportunity to immerse themselves in Vilnius. Through collaboration, participants will establish fruitful connections with Rupert's educational program and the artistic sphere of the region. Rupert's residencies will provide both Lithuanian and foreign participants with the opportunity to live and work in Vilnius for a minimum of 10 weeks. Finally, an unconventional EXHIBITION PROGRAM serves as the basis for a wide range of public programs and activities exploring art and its role in contemporary society. The gallery is conceived as a space of support for the educational program – a laboratory that will complement topics covered by workshops and lectures. Through its research and development-oriented programs, Rupert supports international thinkers in realizing their projects and establishing their creative careers on an international scale. It focuses on contemporary artistic and curatorial practices but remains close to an extensive range of disciplines, while encouraging interdisciplinary projects and activities.

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Art Incubator of Anyksciai ([Anyksciu menu inkubatorius](#)) town provides consultation and mentoring, event planning and organization, gathers, analyses and publicizes information regarding cultural creative industries in the region of Anyksciai, providing residency services, office space rent, other different services related to cultural entrepreneurship.

[Culture Factory](#) in Klaipeda city is the only one incubator in Klaipeda city.

There other new additional initiatives in Kaunas city – a new creative incubator called [Talent Garden Kaunas](#) working by a franchise as well as creative design co-work and a prestigious Italian cultural design organization Design Library Milano branch Design Library Kaunas is opened at Kaunas University of Technology, Design Center. These activities are planned to be integrated to an existing KTU business incubator's structure as well as connecting with Design Library Milano network and a subproject of this organization - design incubator QUO. These initiatives have a real potential of aggregating creative community in the second bigger city of Lithuania Kaunas. The mentioned initiatives are coming from the evident need of contemporary and innovative design co-work and hub places that is defined in the market among present creative community target group - young artists, designers, ICT freelancers, graduates form Kaunas University of Technology, Vilnius academy of fine arts, Kaunas Faculty.

The KTU Design Center's activities have already started with some projects such as design contest „Dideja – design idea“ www.dideja.lt that is aimed to help young designers realize their ideas, by mentoring and connecting them with local producers as well as showing themselves abroad by collaborating with foreign partners.

8.6 Developing entrepreneurial skills through culture

Developing entrepreneurial skills through cultural activities

The 2003 [Lithuanian National Education Strategy](#) explicitly noted the importance of entrepreneurship and cultural education, cultural and social competences essential for a young person to become an independent, active and responsible person who is willing and able to learn and create a life of his own and life of society, which is one of the first signals in the EU of this kind.

At the **primary education** level in Lithuania, entrepreneurship and cultural activities are integrated within social sciences (i.e. “world discovery”) and also as part of the natural sciences; both of which are compulsory subjects. Nonetheless, the integration of entrepreneurship within core subject areas demonstrates a very high level of commitment to entrepreneurship teaching in Lithuania and ensures that a large number of young students are introduced to entrepreneurship (see [Supporting Youth Entrepreneurship in Lithuania](#), OECD 2015).

At **secondary level**, “Economics and Entrepreneurship Education” (grades 9-10) is a compulsory subject in the Lithuanian curriculum. Entrepreneurship is also integrated into several compulsory subjects such as social sciences and maths, sciences, technology and ICT. In upper secondary education, entrepreneurship is integrated in compulsory subjects (social sciences and maths-sciences technology-ICT) and is also an optional subject. Entrepreneurial attitudes and skills are developed through critical thinking, problem solving, ability to present one's activity and active teaching methods. Also most programmes in secondary schools co-operate with Junior Achievement and through this co-operation, students learn core business management skills (see [Supporting Youth Entrepreneurship in Lithuania](#), OECD 2015).

Junior Achievement Lithuania (JAL) is a non-profit organisation of which the mission is to train youth in developing a free-market spirit, understanding of business and economics, leadership, entrepreneurship and initiative skills. Apart from building an entrepreneurial culture, the organisation helps to consolidate trust in entrepreneurs within society. JAL has a clear division of their programmes in: financial literacy (economics, investment competition, and computer simulation), career development (shadowing an employee, leadership) and entrepreneurship (company and start-up programme, summer camps, business competitions for students of grades 9-12.). The programmes on entrepreneurship aim to promote students' capabilities such as: creative thinking, teamwork, solving of real problems and accountability to achieve their goals. They have evaluated these programmes observing that JAL graduates are better prepared for work, get easier a promotion and more often create their own business. In addition, Junior Achievement has prepared entrepreneurship textbooks and has trained approximately 3 000 teachers (out of 40 000 teachers). Relative to other EU and OECD countries, this is a high proportion (see [Supporting Youth Entrepreneurship in Lithuania](#), OECD 2015).

There is a general consensus that the **vocational training** (VET) system needs improvement in Lithuania. This creates an opportunity to improve entrepreneurship training in VET because work-based learning (including apprenticeship type VET organisation) can be used to provide experience learning about business management and entrepreneurship through active learning. This active learning could also contribute to career guidance and play a significant role in helping VET students identify opportunities that they could pursue after completion of their studies (see [Supporting Youth Entrepreneurship in Lithuania](#), OECD 2015).

In Lithuania, entrepreneurship is generally not included in **higher education** programmes outside of business schools. The National Programme for Higher Education 2013-2020 focuses on the importance of developing job-specific competences in research and educational institutions and on career guidance to help students make a conscious and informed choice of the study and career paths. Implicitly this would include entrepreneurship. However, in practice there is little evidence that higher education institutions are systematically promoting and supporting entrepreneurship (see [Supporting Youth Entrepreneurship in Lithuania](#), OECD 2015). Higher education institutions are autonomous and have a mandate to develop their own teaching entrepreneurship and cultural education programmes. It is therefore challenging to systematically embed entrepreneurship in higher education because this would require buy-in at an institutional level.

Moreover, the Action Plan for Entrepreneurship for 2014-2020 includes measures to increase the competences of teachers, especially those of vocational education. Entrepreneurship training outside of formal education is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.

Support young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors

The [Lithuanian Entrepreneurship Action Plan 2014-2020](#) aims to create a national network of business consultants under the responsibility of Enterprise Lithuania which would be expected to improve the quality of training and consultancy services. Junior Achievement is the most important organisation in providing entrepreneurship training outside of formal education in Lithuania. It adapts international practices to the Lithuanian context, stimulating entrepreneurship through initiatives such as company programmes where students manage their own firms for one year, assuming risks but with lower requirements than normal companies. It also offers simulations, summer camps and innovation camps. In addition, a number of business associations are active in supporting youth entrepreneurship through mentoring, business counselling, delivering seminars and hosting internships to help youth acquire entrepreneurship and cultural skills and develop industry contacts. INVEGA, a public loan guarantees institution established under the auspices of the Ministry of Economy, operates one of the most important entrepreneurship supports in Lithuania, the [Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund](#), which provides micro-credit

that includes a training offer to financing recipients. Business training (up to 72 hours) and business consultancy (up to 50 hours) are provided to clients by Credit Unions. Youth (up to the age of 29) are one of the key target groups of this programme. 46% of clients are youth and they receive 36% of the micro-credit.

In order to implement [Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#), The [National Progress Program 2014-2020](#), one of the tasks of which is to promote the development of the cultural and creative industries, with arts and culture related innovations, cross-sectoral development of these innovations and cultural export. To achieve this, the need to promote creativity is highlighted through promoting and the introduction of new products into production, improve access to culture and the arts products and services, as well as creating financial incentives for entrepreneurship in the areas of cultural and creative industries development promoting distribution across borders, supporting the development, use and promotion of new products and services and cross-sectoral cooperation. It should be noted that by 2020 it is planned to pay more attention cultural development and creativity in the regions. The [Program for the Development of Regional Development](#) for the period 2012-2020 also aims at "creating conditions for creativity in the regions" the full range of personality development, cultural diversity, dissemination and accessibility as a regional social the basis of economic progress, to develop civic self-awareness, fostering regional excellence and attractiveness.

In Lithuania, several institutions provide financial support for artists and culture through funding programmes: the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Council for Culture, the Press, Radio, and Television Support Foundation, the Film Centre, and the Lithuanian Culture Institute.

The Ministry of Culture allocates the biggest share of state financing for culture through direct institutional funding. It also implements a range of special programmes designated to support various fields of culture: the [Programme of Libraries Development](#), [Programme of Lithuanistics Traditions and Heritage](#), [Funding Programme of Projects Implementing Initiatives to Preserve Historical Memory](#), [Programme of Partial Compensation of the Cost of Dissemination \(Venue Hire\) of Professional Performing Arts Projects](#), [Programme for the Partial Funding from the State Budget of Professional Performing Arts Institutions that Are not National, State or Municipal Theatre or Concert Institution](#) (see chapter 3.3 for more about the last two programmes). The Ministry, in cooperation with the Lithuanian Film Centre and Lithuanian Culture Institute, also coordinates the participation of Lithuania in EU funding programmes [Creative Europe](#) and [Europe for Citizens](#).

Other institutions – the Lithuanian Council for Culture, the Press, Radio, and Television Support Foundation, the Film Centre, and the Lithuanian Culture Institute – implement financing programmes and allocate funding through calls for tender. Their budget consists of appropriations allocated by the Ministry of Culture.

The [Lithuanian Culture Institute](#) implements the [Translation Grant programme](#). The [Press, Radio and Television Support Foundation](#) implements 6 funding programmes: 1) periodicals of culture and art; 2) national periodical press; 3) regional periodical press; 4) national radio and television broadcasting, 5) regional radio and television broadcasting; 6) Internet media. The [Lithuanian Film Centre](#) allocates subsidies for the development, production and distribution of Lithuanian films and international co-productions.

The Lithuanian Council for Culture implements the greatest number of funding programmes and allocates the biggest share of programme financing. The Council implements two types of financing measures: funding of projects by cultural programmes or arts fields, and funding of individual grants for artists. Financing of arts fields includes projects of architecture, design, visual arts, photography, interdisciplinary arts, theatre, music, dance, circus, and literature. Projects funded by the arts fields programme have to be targeted at the following activities: 1) professional creation and its dissemination in Lithuania and abroad; 2) events; 3) accumulation of information (archiving, documentation) and its dissemination; 4) publishing; 5) professional criticism and analysis; 6) networking and mobility; 7) co-production. Cultural programmes financed by

the Council in 2019 were the following: Periodical Events of Amateur Arts, Cultural Education, Artists' residences in Lithuania, Strategic Funding for Artistic Organisations, Memory Institutions, Civic Education, Cultural Heritage, Ethnic Culture, Strategic Funding of International Events, Cultural and Creative Industries, Protection of Copyright and Related Rights, and Creative Initiatives of Communities.

8.7 Fostering the creative use of new technologies

New technologies in support of creativity and innovation

[Education Development Centre \(Ugdymo pletotes centras\)](#) is the biggest institution affiliate to the Ministry of Education and Science providing educational support in the field of pre-school, primary and general education in Lithuania. It provides educational content for teachers working in general formal and non-formal education. The [methodological support database](#) consists a bank of methodological help books, lesson plans, ideas and innovations and best practices and provides an opportunity to diversify teachers' pedagogical activities, to find new forms and methods, and to achieve the continuous growth of vocational competence of teachers. It also contains methodological material, tasks, tests, articles, reports, reviews and summaries of studies, plans for lessons or their cycles (descriptions), methods of organizing pupils' activities, methods of assessment, records of open lessons, various projects on how to use technology to support creativity and innovation. The heads of educational institutions, teachers and assistants working in the school can share good work experience, and present examples of their pedagogical work experience to the community of educators. The [section on technology](#) for example contains links to methodological materials on fashion, sewing, ceramics, and landscape technologies.

Facilitating access to culture through new technologies

[Education Development Centre \(Ugdymo pletotes centras\)](#) has published a methodological guidebook for teachers "[Examples of Competence Training Through the Use of Technologies](#)" by Egle Vaivadiene. This guidebook includes methodological help for teachers on developing students' communication, cognitive, social, interpersonal initiative, innovation and creativity competencies. It also includes examples of developing initiative and creativity competencies, and ways of assessing the progress of excellence in excellence and creativity as well as information sources. Besides the methodological work database includes materials for arts education (e.g. arts education methods; teaching material "On European art History" etc.), photography (e.g. open source computer programs for photography; working on photo images with photoshop; photographic laboratory hardware etc.), music (e.g. active musical teaching methods; composing the rhythmic skill in the initial stage using information and communication technologies etc.), theater and dance (e.g. methodical material "Dance in slides" etc.).

8.8 Synergies and partnerships

Synergies between public policies and programmes

[Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#) reflects a national vision and priorities for development as well as guidelines for their implementation by 2030. It is stated in the strategy that the vision of Lithuania is a country with creatively empowered population, and its progress is in the hands of responsible, creative and open-minded people. The implementation of the vision is guided by progress-relevant values, like openness to a different views, positive initiatives, to a dialogue, cooperation, and innovations as well as creativity in generation and implementation of new ideas, treating challenges as new possibilities of building success. The Annex 2 of the [Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"](#) has a list of Progress Indicators which will be used to measure the success of the Key Initiatives for Change. In order to implement [Lithuania's Progress Strategy](#)

“Lithuania 2030” , The [National Progress Program 2014-2020](#), one of the tasks of which is to promote the development of the cultural and creative industries, with arts and culture related innovations, cross-sectoral development of these innovations and cultural export. To achieve this, the need to promote creativity is highlighted through promoting and the introduction of new products into production, improve access to culture and the arts products and services, as well as creating financial incentives for entrepreneurship in the areas of cultural and creative industries development promoting distribution across borders, supporting the development, use and promotion of new products and services and cross-sectoral cooperation. It should be noted that by 2020 it is planned to pay more attention cultural development and creativity in the regions. The [Program for the Development of Regional Development](#) for the period 2012-2020 also aims at "creating conditions for creativity in the regions" the full range of personality development, cultural diversity, dissemination and accessibility as a regional social the basis of economic progress, to develop civic self-awareness, fostering regional excellence and attractiveness. The explicit strategy of **youth creativity** does not exist, however, the second goal (see Chapter 13) of the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) aims at ensuring better youth employment opportunities, creating favourable conditions for young people to participate in the labour market, promoting economic and social entrepreneurship, developing non-formal education system, encouraging youth creativity and active participation in the society.

The development of the CCI is inseparable from the national strategy in the area of innovation and science. [The Lithuanian Innovation Development Strategy for 2014-2020](#) emphasises the role of the cultural and creative industries in the development of different sectors. There are measures planned to promote cooperation between different sectors, to exploit possible synergies developing new products and services, introducing new technologies in various fields - production, transport, agriculture, energy, etc. Creative and informational society communication technologies are also among the priorities of government-approved R&D and innovation development (smart specialization) directions.

There are in Lithuania 19 artists’ associations that have a special status of “artists’ organisation” granted them according to the 2011 [Law on the Status of Artists and Artists Organisations](#): [Architects’ Association of Lithuania](#), [Lithuanian Union of Journalists](#), [Lithuanian Theatre Union](#), [Professional Folk Artists’ Association](#), [Lithuanian Writers’ Union](#), [Lithuanian Musicians’ Union](#), [The Lithuanian Association of Literary Translators](#), [Lithuanian Composers’ Union](#), [Lithuanian Filmmakers’ Union](#), [Union of Lithuanian Art Photographers](#), [Lithuanian Designers’ Society](#), [Lithuanian Painters’ Association](#), [Lithuanian Association of Landscape Architects](#), [Contemporary Dance Association](#), [Lithuanian Interdisciplinary Artists’ Association](#), [Association of Performing Arts Critics](#), [Lithuanian Association of Chores](#), [Association of Vilnius Region Folk Artists](#), [Lithuanian Association of Artists](#). The latter organisation is an umbrella association of twelve artists unions. It was established in 1995. Its aim is to coordinate cooperation between artists and artists’ organisations in Lithuania, represent interests of Lithuanian professional artists and writers abroad and organize public debates between artists and politicians on the development of culture and arts. The association organises conferences on culture and art, submits proposals on draft laws and regulations, participates in programmes for artists, reviews professional art programmes, and defends copyright.

Artists unions and associations that have the status of “artists’ organisations” granted them according to the [Law on the Status of Artists and Artists Organisations](#) can apply for funding to the special programme “Implementation of Strategic Programmes of Artists Organisations”, created by the Lithuanian Council for Culture in order to support these kind of organisations. Its budget for 2018–2021 is 721 000 EUR.

Partnerships between the culture and creative sectors, youth organisations and youth workers

[National creative and cultural industries association](#) established in 2008 brings together more than 70 members. These are Lithuanian higher education institutions and colleges,

associations of creative industries and creators, art incubators, public institutions and creative business companies, creators' communities and individuals. The association implements projects, activities and seminars in the cultural and creative industries sector and facilitates partnerships in cultural and creative industries.

Among the projects implemented by [National creative and cultural industries association](#) a project funded by The Norden Association in Sweden, together with its foreign partners from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Poland for the creation of an international network for the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) for the Creative and Cultural Industries (CCI) field can be mentioned. The main objective of this project is to bring together representatives of the creative and cultural industries of the Baltic Sea Region, practitioners and experts into one platform where they can discuss cooperation opportunities, new niches and common plans for the future. The aim of this project is to create a new strong networking strategy that could be successfully implemented in the BSR. To achieve this, the first will be to identify and prioritize the CCI sectors and activities, both in each country and region as a whole. By developing a quality survey of CCI sectors, a joint strategy for the development of the region's creative field and international cooperation will be developed. The material and insights generated during this project will become the basis for EU funds for long-term promotion of international creative sector cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region.

There are several [art incubators](#) established in Lithuania as well as some additional new creative initiatives for youth and general public. The biggest part of incubators are situated in Vilnius or its outskirts. Others are located in different Lithuanian cities (e.g. [Anyksciu menu inkubatorius](#)). There is an evident growth of artistic and creative sector in the second largest city of Lithuania – Kaunas, that host the new initiatives of art incubation mentioned.

[Vilnius Gediminas Technical University](#) (VGTU) "[LinkMenu fabrikas](#)" is a space for young persons who want to create, develop and implement their ideas. Center workshops and bureaus are designed to be used by creative and innovative people, from beginners to professionals. The aim of this creativity and innovation center is to become a venue for practical workshops and the realization of various projects. In collaboration with national and international partners, the center focuses on developing students' creativity and practical skills by inviting them to the first such workshop in Lithuania. VGTU "[LinkMenu fabrikas](#)" contains mechanics, wood, metal, painting, 3D printing, electronics, transport, technical and creative spaces, advertising, photo / video and audio recording studios. It accommodates teamwork, creative inspiration spaces, lounge area and is equipped with the most advanced modern technology, which allows a team of developers working in different areas to turn interdisciplinary ideas to real products and services. Active cooperation with various businesses will allow the best ideas to move beyond the threshold and become real market products.

[Menu spaustuve](#) is creative industries unit based in the Old Town of Vilnius, is collecting different types of independent performing arts projects into one and allows them to share their artistic visions with the audiences. The place is open up also as a performing arts residency. It works as an interdisciplinary centre, as well as a place for foreign shows and performances to happen. International festivals and conferences are held from time to time.

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furniture, internet access, electricity and heating accounts for the lower rates respect the existing market.

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The KTU Design Center's activities have already started with some projects such as design contest „Dideja – design idea“ www.dideja.lt that is aimed to help young designers realize their ideas, by mentoring and connecting them with local producers as well as showing themselves abroad by collaborating with foreign partners.

Therefore in order to encourage partnerships between the culture and creative sectors youth organisations and youth worker and the competitiveness and the growth of the culture and creative industry sectors it is important to improve the choice of the legal form of business, taxation environment and funding availability as most of the companies in cultural and creative industry sector in Lithuania are very small, small or medium-sized enterprises, in most of them employ one or two employees. They often work as freelance workers who no longer belong a group of traditional full-time employees.

Private funding for culture is regulated in by the *Law on Charity and Sponsorship* (1993), the *Law on Patronage* (2018), the *Law on Personal Income Tax* (2002) and the *Law on Corporate Income Tax* (2001). According to Article 9 of the *Law on Charity and Sponsorship*, natural persons can transfer an amount not exceeding 2% of the income tax payable on the basis of an annual income tax return to Lithuanian entities that are entitled to sponsorship, i.e. charity and sponsorship funds; budget financed institutions; associations; public organisations; public agencies; religious communities, associations and religious centres; divisions (chapters) of international public organisations; other legal persons whose activities are regulated by special laws and which participate in not-for-profit activity; artists registered as beneficiaries in the Information System of Artist's and Artist's Organisations maintained by the Ministry of Culture.

Data about the sponsorship provided and received by legal persons are collected by the Lithuanian Department of Statistics. According to this data, legal persons working in the field of culture received more than 13 million EUR sponsorship in 2018. Compared to other areas, culture receives nearly as much sponsorship as education, but almost three times less than sport. The total amount provided by sponsors for culture did not change significantly over the last five years.

8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture

Fostering equality and young people involvement through cultural activities

Lithuanian public cultural institutions like The House of National Communities, Kaunas Cultural Centre of Various Nations and Visaginas Cultural Centre, in cooperation with national minority Saturday/Sunday schools operating in Lithuania (Polish, Belarusian, Ukrainian, German, Jewish, Latvian, Armenians, Karaites, Tartar, Greek, and others), have been organising the National minorities' Saturday/ Sunday School festival since 2002. The mission of the festival is to provide a platform to bring together representatives of different national minorities in Lithuania to enrich each other with the diversity of cultural expressions, to promote their sense of community, and to promote intercultural dialogue and cooperation. The success of the festival lies in creating favourable conditions for children and young people from national minorities, enabling their full participation in one cultural space and presenting their traditions to the public. The innovation of the festival lies in searching for new spaces of encounter each time the event is organised. Almost every year the location of the festival may differ, providing a new and diverse cultural programme and creative workshops for the participants. This makes it possible to expand the geography of the festival, to present traditions of national minorities in various forms of art. The festival's programme usually includes a concert, where the participants give a performance (each time a different one, depending on the theme of the festival); cultural and educative programmes; creative workshops; and a round table discussion (where leaders and teachers of national minority Saturday/Sunday schools can discuss the results of the festival and provide feedback on the event, and exchange work experience). It is noteworthy that the festival has one major requirement – the greater part of the performance has to be presented in the native language, with a view not only to showcase national traditions and customs, but also to acquaint the audience with linguistic diversity. Festival participants – children and young people as well as their teachers of Saturday/Sunday schools throughout Lithuania – are involved in the preparation process of the performance (they rehearse national dances and songs, and prepare performances based on national fairy tales, etc.). The theme of the festival is announced to the teachers of national minority Saturday/Sunday schools in advance, so that children and young people studying there can prepare their performances. For example, the themes proposed thus far are as follows: 'Language', 'National fairy tales', 'National traditions and customs', 'My Europe', 'Myths of my nation', 'National doll. Folk puppet theatre', 'Riddles', and others.

Combating discrimination and poverty through cultural activities

The Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, recognising that the preservation of regional, historical and cultural identity is one of the cornerstones of the European Union's regional policy and emphasising the importance of fostering the uniqueness of Lithuania's ethnographic regions, declared 2013 the Year of Dialects and 2015 – the Year of Ethnographic Regions. This decision was aimed to emphasise the historical and cultural importance of dialects and ethnographic regions as well as to form a public opinion in favour of preserving the cultural heritage of dialects and ethnographic regions and accenting their identity. 2017 has been declared the Year of National Costume.

The State Jonas Basanavičius Prize has been established for the most significant work done by Lithuanians living in Lithuania and abroad related to the development, fostering and study of ethnic culture. Since 1992, a total of 35 people have received this prize.

Each year, the Ministry of Culture bestows [three prizes for the fostering and dissemination of traditional culture](#). The objective of the prize is to recognise the contributions individuals have made in ethnic culture activities as well as to encourage them. Curators and presenters of folk music and customs, heads of folk ensembles and amateur theatres, founders and heads of non-governmental museums, collectors of ethnic cultural material, folk artists, craftspeople and national heritage creators living in Lithuania and abroad can

be nominated for the prize. Since 2006, 31 promoters of traditional cultural have been awarded this prize.

The innovative cultural spaces, the so called Multi-Functional Cultural Centres in Lithuania, replaced the traditional venues in the small towns in Lithuania. They consist mainly of public cultural institutions, such as public cultural centres, libraries, museums, art galleries, theatres, cinemas, concert halls etc. "under one roof". These spaces have been significant factors for encouraging intercultural dialogue in local communities and there are further possibilities to make better use of these spaces in order to address even broader audiences and diverse communities. The multi-functionality of traditional cultural spaces allows all kinds of cultural activities to be organized in one space and attract wider audiences.

8.10 Current debates and reforms

In order to encourage partnerships between the culture and creative sectors, youth organisations and youth and the competitiveness and the growth of the culture and creative industry sectors it is important to improve the choice of the legal form of business, taxation environment and funding availability as most of the companies in cultural and creative industry sector in Lithuania are very small, small or medium-sized enterprises, in most of them employ one or two (usually young) employees. They often work as freelance workers who no longer belong a group of traditional full-time employees.

9. YOUTH AND THE WORLD

[Lithuanian Progress Strategy 2030](#) has provisions to develop cultural and political awareness in Lithuania, by shaping authentic policy of the history, promoting public debate on national identity, highlighting positive historical experience. To strengthen historical self-awareness and self-esteem by promoting different cultural and artistic expression, by reviewing national cultural, educational programmes and the repertoire of public events and symbols, as well as by ensuring preservation of cultural and national heritage and its reasonable application for public needs.

9.1 General context

Main concepts

In Lithuania youth involvement in global issues still requires a more systematic approach for its integration in various policies, strategies and programmes.

The National Youth Policy Development Programme for 2011–2019 formulates youth policy priorities, goals, activity directions, as well as the objectives of the state and society for the period of 2011–2019. In the programme some objectives mentioned are related to global youth issues as the programme seeks: to ensure the development of social security, education and health care systems, which meets the needs of young people; to develop a conscious, public-spirited, patriotic, mature, cultural and creative young personality, capable of being an active part of diverse society; to develop and coordinate the system of youth work and to ensure the development of youth employment infrastructure; to create favourable conditions for consistent and high quality activities of youth organisations and organisations working with youth, seeking more active youth involvement in organised activities; to ensure interdepartmental and cross-sectoral cooperation in developing coherent, fact and knowledge based youth policy. In developing youth policy, interdepartmental cooperation on the local self-government and international levels is strengthened; priority is given to the promotion of youth employment, strengthening of the potential of youth organisations, development of youth work; and

another important aspect is youth information and consultation on relevant issues. The [Plan of Measures 2017-2019 for the Implementation of the National Youth Policy Development Programme for 2011-2019](#) was approved with the view of implementing youth policy priorities, goals, activity directions, as well as the objectives of the state and society within the programme timeframe. The [Plan of Measures 2017-2019 for the Implementation of the National Youth Policy Development Programme for 2011-2019](#) has measures: 1) to encourage Lithuanian youth non-governmental organizations to cooperate more actively with the Lithuanian youth of the world, through joint efforts to ensure the preservation and fostering of national identity and culture (measure 4.4); and 2) to develop bilateral and / or multilateral cooperation with foreign countries in the field of youth policy, to analyze foreign experience and to disseminate positive experience in the formation and implementation of Lithuanian youth policy (measure 5.3).

As stated in [Lithuania's Progress Strategy](#) (which is the most important long-term strategy to strengthen fundamental public capacities, thus ensuring a harmonious development of the State and helping to respond to global economic and environmental changes and pressure coming from the global competition) Lithuania is a modern nation, always ready to participate in the ever growing dialogue between different cultures). In the strategy its community sense is based on the idea of "Global Lithuania", which means that Lithuania's nation is solid and integral, without any divisions into Lithuanians living in Lithuania and Lithuanians living abroad. The strategy states, that Lithuanians living outside Lithuania are active in public life and contribute to the economic and cultural prosperity. The strategy address also to Lithuanian citizens and states that the values that are fostered in Lithuanian society are rooted with positive attitudes as regards solidarity with different social groups, as well as tolerance, compassion, social responsibility and responsible consumption. Moreover this strategy seeks to promote fundamental changes in society and to facilitate the formation of a creative, responsible and open personality. According to the strategy, such personality will promote innovative processes and lead to positive changes across all walks of life.

One of the objectives of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania is „[...] to ensure conditions enabling a person to acquire the basics of civic and political culture that embody democratic traditions, and to develop the abilities and experience needed by a person for competence as a citizen of Lithuania and a member of the European and global community as well as of a multi-cultural society.“ Lithuania's educational system is also aimed to develop a young person's values enabling him/her to become an honest, knowledge-seeking, independent, responsible and patriotically-minded person; to cultivate the communication skills important in contemporary life; to reinforce the capability of society to ensure sustainable development of the country's economic, environmental and human resources, internal and external economic competitiveness, national security and the advancement of a democratic State; to convey to each person the traditions and values of the humanistic culture of Europe and of the world.¹⁹ The provisions of the Law are complemented by the National Education Strategy for 2013-2022. The strategic goal of this document is „to make Lithuania's education a sustainable basis for the enhancement of the state's wellbeing and education of a dynamic and independent personality responsible for the creation of own, country's and world's future“.²⁰ The Strategy highlights that in the age of globalisation it is important to reconsider own national identity and understand what unites us (including the ones leaving and arriving to Lithuania) and relates with the State of Lithuania. One of the Strategy's tasks is to educate, via development of relevant competences, full-fledged citizens of a rapidly changing society; improve learning and practical application environment in schools; expand the range of non-formal education schools and foster diverse activity in all schools, especially cultural self-expression, leadership and creativity, support to voluntary initiatives and cross-cultural education. The Strategy commits schools to implement substantive systemic changes.

Youth interest in global issues

The information on Lithuanian youth interest in global issues is rather fragmented. The research of the [Attitudes of Youth Organizations Towards Global Issues and Global Learning in Lithuania](#) presents a partial picture and highlights key trends on attitudes and general understanding of youth organisations in Lithuania towards global issues, global learning and their role as promoters global citizenship. The research is summarized with the following conclusions: 1) the majority of youth organisations in Lithuania recognise connections between their daily activities and the issues existing in international context; however the most frequent fields of activities are oriented toward local issues e.g. youth unemployment / occupation, increasing the level of active citizenship, dealing with social exclusion, coping with environmental issues, ensuring right to education. Global learning content connected with the mentioned fields of activities has a potential to sustain within the youth organisations because of their familiarity to the present youth workers and youth leaders. The research of the [Attitudes of Youth Organizations Towards Global Issues and Global Learning in Lithuania](#) findings also showed that youth workers and youth leaders in Lithuania were not always able to link local activities with the global dimension in their work and the majority of the activities are based on the local realities of the youth organisations, and no global aspect in them is touched. According to the research findings the thematic fields of activities, which are most of interest among youth organisations in Lithuania, are promoting intercultural dialogue, responsible consumption, healthy lifestyle, respect for human rights, ensuring access to education. According to the research findings the issues which are not often met in the daily lives of young people are e.g. 1) work with refugees and asylum seekers; 2) employees' and children's rights; 3) access to health service etc. But the need to challenge youth organisations and train them to make links between the local and global issues is recognized by the representatives of youth organizations. A number of activities run by youth organisations are connected with developing global citizenship competencies; however, such activities had global dimension in a very small extent.

9.2 Administration and governance

Governance

The [Lithuanian Youth Council](#) (LiJOT) was formed in 1992 and is an umbrella organisation with 64 members representing more than 200,000 young people in Lithuania. The LiJOT, seeks favorable changes for young people by serving as a platform for dialogue, Lithuanian youth organization interests and initiatives. LiJOT is a full member of the [European Youth Forum](#) and the Baltic Youth Forum. As the national agency, it coordinates [EURODESK](#) Lithuania and supports Lithuanian engagement in the EU [Structured Dialogue](#) process. The [Agency of International Youth Cooperation](#) is a public non-profit institution established in February 1999 by The State Council for Youth Affairs (currently Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour) and [Lithuanian Youth Council](#). The main aim of the agency is to ensure the development of international youth cooperation and participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programmes for young people. Among the goals of the [Agency of International Youth Cooperation](#) is implementing international commitments of the state in the field of youth policy; cooperation with foreign institutions working in the field of international youth cooperation; providing information about possibilities of international cooperation and information to Lithuanian young people on general understanding about youth policy in Lithuania and foreign countries, possibilities of international cooperation, significance of youth initiative to cooperation of state and non-governmental organizations; the strengthening of youth cooperation in the county and municipal level (to organize training courses and seminars based on intercultural learning methodology and to encourage youth exchanges and other youth activities organized in the county and municipal level). The [Agency of International Youth Cooperation](#) also coordinates financial support for international youth cooperation projects from European Union programmes for young people and ensures appropriate and effective

participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programme "Erasmus+" Youth (2014–2020). The [Agency of International Youth Cooperation](#) also provides information about possibilities of participation in European Union programme "Erasmus+" Youth, youth exchanges, European Voluntary Service, youth workers' mobility, strategic partnerships, structured dialogue projects and their organizational possibilities; helps to find partners for youth groups, willing to cooperate with youth from foreign countries, and also for young people and organizations willing to participate in the projects of European Voluntary Service; consults and provide methodical information for young people, potential participants of the Programme and youth workers about youth exchanges, intercultural communication, filling in application and project management;

The [Education Exchanges Support Foundation](#) is a national agency entrusted with the administration of Erasmus+ and Lifelong Learning programmes and other initiatives funded by the European Commission (EC) and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania in the field of education and vocational training. It has been operating since 2007. It is aimed at helping Lithuanian people to take advantage of international cooperation. The Foundation offers guidance to potential applicants and provides information about various programmes and activities in the education and training area. The Foundation administers more than 50 different activities that are equally relevant to youth and seniors, kindergartens or schools, and higher education or other education-related institutions. The opportunities offered by the Foundation are available to various associations, business or non-governmental organisations and other structures seeking to improve their business practice or enhance their employees' qualifications. Besides the Lifelong Learning Programme, which includes Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus and Grundtvig sub-programmes, the Foundation also administers other educational programmes or initiatives such as Euroguidance, Europass, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, eTwinning, EPALE, and Nordplus programme funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

[StudyInLithuania.lt](#) is a non-commercial national portal for Higher Education studies in Lithuania, which is administrated by Education Exchange Support Foundation. The aim of this website is to inform future students, their parents and other stakeholders about [education system in Lithuania](#), Higher [Education institutions](#) and their [study programmes](#), [migration procedures](#), [admission requirements](#) and more. This website also has a section about Lithuania as a country, presenting our [history](#), [social environment](#), [famous people](#) and [traditions](#). StudyInLithuania.lt is a part of project „Internationalization of Higher Education in Lithuania“ which was initiated by Ministry of Education and Science, and is funded by European Social Fund and Government of Lithuania. This project has scholarships for Lithuanian students and scientists to enable them to study and conduct research abroad as well as an objective to strengthen Lithuanian Higher Education image and positioning in international environment.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

As stated in the [Plan of Measures 2017-2019 for the Implementation of the National Youth Policy Development Programme for 2011–2019](#) (section 8.2.), youth policy is a horizontal policy area covering many areas: citizenship education, education, non-formal education, employment and employment, housing, leisure, culture, social and health care, health, sports, drug addiction and prevention of other forms of addiction, crime prevention, etc. Therefore, it is important to ensure the co-operation of the departments and the public, private and non-governmental sectors with the aim of developing it so that the state and municipal institutions and institutions interact and co-operate with each other to address youth issues by coordinating with young people or youth organizations. Cross-sectorial cooperation networks which include the youth affairs coordinators, the education departments of municipal administrations, the police, probation services, social workers, educational institutions, local employers, should be strengthened in implementing youth policy in Lithuania. The need for Lithuanian state institutions to cooperate with foreign institutions is also stressed. In 2015 an international event entitled "The Impact of Open Youth Jobs on the Implementation of Youth Guarantees" was held to discuss the successes and challenges of implementing the Youth Guarantee Initiative and, in particular, the role

of open work with young people in developing the skills of young people in the labor market and integration into the education system. It is stated in the [Plan of Measures 2017-2019 for the Implementation of the National Youth Policy Development Programme for 2011–2019](#) that although international events are taking place, cooperation between the public, private and non-governmental sectors, local authorities, national and international levels is still not fully ensured. In order to ensure the smooth functioning and cross-sectorial cooperation network, public authorities must constantly cooperate with the authorities of foreign countries as well as with municipalities, the exchange of information and best practices. Lithuania's [Institute for Policy Research and Analysis](#), established in 2011, which is an independent, autonomous, non-political, non-profit organization based in Lithuania, developing wide range of youth projects and partnerships with International institutions, universities, public bodies and NGOs have published a handbook of cross-sectorial cooperation "[360 degrees of cross-sectorial cooperation](#)" dedicated at institutions who shape or implement youth policy.

The "[Global Lithuania](#)" program in 2012 was launched, the main idea of which is to unite all Lithuanian citizens (including well-educated young professionals) living abroad. This program aims to provide mechanisms to encourage the Lithuanians abroad to promote the Lithuanian language, Lithuanian national identity, to strengthen the Lithuanian diaspora relations with Lithuania, and engaging in various areas of public life and contribute to well-being creation in Lithuania. The program involves the aim to strengthen the cross-sectorial cooperation in the framework of its implementation by 14 state institutions and departments. The [Interinstitutional Action Plan](#) has been approved and an institutional framework has been created. One of the most important tasks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the program coordinator is not only the implementation of the measures provided for in the program, but also the consolidation of state institutions in order to include in their specialized field of activities projects related to the Lithuanian diaspora. In order to consolidate the diaspora of Lithuania two directions of activities have been foreseen: 1) relations with professionals who can contribute to the development of the country well-being through cooperation projects; 2) Lithuanians' communities and organizations implementing projects of national importance. The program also has measures aimed at young people: trainees / practitioners / mentoring programs: "Createfor Lithuania" (www.kurklt.lt), "LT Big Brother" (www.ltbigbrother.com), "Talents for Lithuania" - a unique traineeship program in Lithuanian companies for Lithuanians graduating from foreign countries(www.stazuokis.lt), PLJS Practice (www.pljs.org), Lithuanian Expatriate Student Exchange (www.stazuote.com), World Lithuanian Traineeship Program (www.vdu.lt), Competitions of Activities of Lithuanian Youth Organizations (www.jrd.lt).

9.3 Exchanges between young people and policy-makers on global issues

Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the domestic level

Youth is involved in policy decision-making and exchanges between policymakers through the framework of implementing youth policy in municipalities. Each municipality in Lithuania established the positions of coordinators of youth affairs. The main functions of the coordinators of youth affairs are to assist the municipal institutions to frame and implement the municipal youth policy. The coordinator of youth affairs assists the municipal institutions to frame and implement a municipal youth policy Coordinator of youth affairs serves as a mediator between the politicians of the municipality, officers, as well as youth. Coordinators of youth affairs supervise and initiate measures, necessary for the performance of youth policy, as well as, where necessary, carry out youth situation surveys. With the view of due cooperation in the field of youth affairs, they furnish the institutions and persons concerned with information on the implementation of youth policy in the municipality, cooperate with the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Department of Youth Affairs, and such other institutions, youth organizations, non-formal youth

groups, as well as take part in developing cooperation with the municipalities of foreign countries in the field of youth policy.

Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the international level

There is no formal mechanism of global exchanges between young people and policy makers at the international level; however [Lithuanian Youth Council](#) is involved in the process of promoting exchanges between youth and policy makers on national and international level. [Lithuanian Youth Council](#) is the biggest non-governmental, non-profit umbrella structure for Lithuanian national youth organizations and regional unions of youth organizations promoting exchanges between young people and policymakers on the international and national level and local and global issues. It is a full member of the European Youth Forum and a full member and founder of the Baltic Youth Forum and National Agency of International Youth Co-operation, which coordinates the European Union program "Youth in Action". LiJOT is coordinating EURODESK Lithuania – a European information services network, which works in 33 European countries and provides exclusive European information for young people and youth workers. LiJOT seeks favorable changes for young people by serving as a platform for dialogue, Lithuanian youth organization interests, and initiatives. [Lithuanian Youth Council](#) provides suggestions to governmental institutions which work with problems of youth and youth organizations, organizes, analyzes and presents information about the work of youth organizations and governmental institutions which satisfy children and youth demands in Lithuania and abroad, and develops international relations and international cooperation between Lithuanian youth organizations and youth organizations from other countries through meetings, discussions, conferences, and other events. [Lithuanian Youth Council](#) also aims achieve Lithuania's participation in UN Youth Delegates programs in the near future.

9.4 Raising awareness about global issues

Formal, non-formal and informal learning

In 13 April 2015, Vilnius hosted the first international conference on global education. The Global Education Scenario: From Concept to Action was one of the Lithuanian events dedicated to 2015 as the European Year for Development. The aim of this international conference was to build a common concept of global education and strengthen its role at various levels of the system. The following topics were discussed during the event: global education in Lithuania and Europe, implementation and results of global education in Europe, links between global education and realities of daily life. The draft Lithuanian Conceptual Framework of Global Education was presented during the conference for the first time.

Youth are viewed as one of the most active social groups able to determine changes in the society. This group plays an important role in the process of creation of a sustainable world, thus, young people inevitably become objects of global education. Pursuant to the Law on Youth Policy Framework of the Republic of Lithuania, the purpose of youth non-formal education is „[...] to educate an intelligent person, capable of responsible and creative resolution of his problems and active participation in public life as well as to develop social competencies of young people”.⁴² Youth non-formal education is carried out by youth organisations, youth leaders and youth workers. It should be noted that global education is one of the ways of assisting the above organisations and persons seeking the youth work goals, especially the ones promoting active participation of young people in public life. The purpose of global youth work⁴³ is to increase young people's ability to critically analyse local and global issues, make informed decisions and become responsible global citizens.⁴⁴ In 2013 the Youth Career & Advising Centre (YCAC) carried out the research „ The Attitudes of Lithuanian Youth Organisations Towards Global Issues and Global Learning in Lithuania”. The research aimed to explore the attitudes of youth organizations in Lithuania on global development issues and the role of youth organizations

in coping with problems. The research was also dedicated to explore the motivation, willingness and preparation of youth organisations to implement global learning and awareness raising activities for youth. According to the research, more than 3/5 of youth organisations in Lithuania recognise connections between their daily activities and the issues existing in international context; this shows a huge potential of youth organisations to pursue various global activities. Unfortunately, so far these organisations face difficulties in integrating global education aspects in their activity. According to the research, activities of many organisations are to some extent connected with the issues existing across the globe, but majority of the activities are based only on the realities of local communities (e.g. the right to education in Lithuania). The research also revealed that though some youth organisations in Lithuania are motivated to integrate global education activities in their work, quite a many of them still do not have a vision of introducing global dimension as an aspect of their daily activities and organisational culture.⁴⁵ Pursuant to the research, it is very important to emphasise and help youth organisations realise the importance of global education and everyone's role as a global citizen in today's society. The research findings also showed that it is important to provide learning and and in -service training opportunities to youth leaders and youth workers empowering them to connect the current competence development activity with the key local education aspects, methods and content. It is important to note that in order to fill gaps in global education related to youth work, a number of steps have already been taken, including implementation of the initiatives promoting development of global education in the sector of youth non-formal education, name- Pursuant to the research, it is very important to emphasise and help youth organisations realise the importance of global education and everyone's role as a global citizen in today's society. The research findings also showed that it is important to provide learning and and in -service training opportunities to youth leaders and youth workers empowering them to connect the current competence development activity with the key local education aspects, methods and content. It is important to note that in order to fill gaps in global education related to youth work, a number of steps have already been taken, including implementation of the initiatives promoting development of global education in the sector of youth non-formal education, namely:

- In implementing the project „Youth of the World! Mainstreaming Global Awareness in Youth Work“ supported by the European Commission, the Youth Career & Advising Centre pursues the activities related to the development of skills of youth leaders and youth workers in the sphere of global education. A methodological tool for better integration of global education in the youth work has been prepared during the project.
- Association LITDEA and Kolping University of Applied Sciences pursued training programmes for multipliers in Global Education and engaged youth representatives in this activity.
- Young people, youth leaders and youth workers have the possibility to participate in the international qualification upgrading, training and youth exchange activities organised by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe and non-governmental organisations operating in various European countries.
- Various non-governmental organisations pursue youth volunteer programmes supported by the European Union and other institutions. Taking part in the volunteer activity abroad young people have a possibility to develop their life skills and values and contribute to sustainable development. In reviewing the opportunities of youth and youth workers to develop global education competences, it is important to highlight the opportunities provided by the European Union and Council of Europe to youth to participate in various international global education events. For instance, every year the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe organises international training courses for lecturers intending to pursue youth global education activity. Several times per year this centre also organises distance training courses for global education practitioners. These training courses can be attended by youth leaders and youth workers from Lithuania. It is also important to note the opportunities provided by the ERASMUS+ Programme of the competences, understand socially relevant topics and thematic areas, new cultures, habits and lifestyles by learning from each other, and develop the values like solidarity, democracy, friendship etc. Moreover, the programme gives the possibility for young people to participate in volunteer activity both in European and neighbouring countries and in the daily work of various organisations

(personal and social education of young people, participation in civil life, social care, inclusion of people with fewer opportunities, environmental protection, non-formal education programmes, development cooperation etc.).⁴⁶ Programme requirements and supported activities are in tune with the main global education principles. This is a perfect opportunity for youth organisations and youth workers to develop global education activities and join global education initiatives implemented by other European organisations. When reviewing the methodological framework for youth workers and youth leaders on the development of global citizenship competences it is worth mentioning that a number of publications in Lithuanian are related to the development of intercultural personal competences, education on human rights, tolerance, discrimination and racism, gender equality problems and spread of democratic and solidarity values among youth. Many of the above publications have been prepared by the Council of Europe and translated into Lithuanian. There is still lack of specific measures for youth which could bring global issues closer to Lithuanian realities, help better understand the connection between (including reasons and consequences) local and global problems and initiate active citizenship in solving these problems. Youth are viewed as one of the most active social groups able to determine changes in the society. This group plays an important role in the process of creation of a sustainable world, thus, young people inevitably become objects of global education. Youth are viewed as one of the most active social groups able to determine changes in the society. This group plays an important role in the process of creation of a sustainable world, thus, young people inevitably become objects of global education. Pursuant to the Law on Youth Policy Framework of the Republic of Lithuania, the purpose of youth non-formal education is „[...] to educate an intelligent person, capable of responsible and creative resolution of his problems and active participation in public life as well as to develop social competencies of young people“.⁴² Youth non-formal education is carried out by youth organisations, youth leaders and youth workers. It should be noted that global education is one of the ways of assisting the above organisations and persons seeking the youth work goals, especially the ones promoting active participation of young people in public life. The purpose of global youth work⁴³ is to increase young people's ability to critically analyse local and global issues, make informed decisions and become responsible global citizens.⁴⁴ In 2013 the Youth Career & Advising Centre (YCAC) carried out the research „ The Attitudes of Lithuanian Youth Organisations Towards Global Issues and Global Learning in Lithuania“. The research aimed to explore the attitudes of youth organizations in Lithuania on global development issues and the role of youth organizations in coping with problems. The research was also dedicated to explore the motivation, willingness and preparation of youth organisations to implement global learning and awareness raising activities for youth. According to the research, more than 3/5 of youth organisations in Lithuania recognise connections between their daily activities and the issues existing in international context; this shows a huge potential of youth organisations to pursue various global activities. Unfortunately, so far these organisations face difficulties in integrating global education aspects in their activity. According to the research, activities of many organisations are to some extent connected with the issues existing across the globe, but majority of the activities are based only on the realities of local communities (e.g. the right to education in Lithuania). The research also revealed that though some youth organisations in Lithuania are motivated to integrate global education activities in their work, quite a many of them still do not have a vision of introducing global dimension as an aspect of their daily activities and organisational culture.⁴⁵ Pursuant to the research, it is very important to emphasise and help youth organisations realise the importance of global education and everyone's role as a global citizen in today's society. The research findings also showed that it is important to provide learning and in-service training opportunities to youth leaders and youth workers empowering them to connect the current competence development activity with the key local education aspects, methods and content. It is important to note that in order to fill gaps in global education related to youth work, a number of steps have already been taken, including implementation of the initiatives promoting development of global education in the sector of youth non-formal education, name- Youth are viewed as one of the most active social groups able to determine changes in the society. This group plays

an important role in the process of creation of a sustainable world, thus, young people inevitably become objects of global education.

Educational work in general education schools is pursued according to the General Curriculum Framework for Primary, Basic and Secondary Education approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania 22 and regulating the curriculum content in general education schools. The purpose of the national school curricula is to ensure coherent implementation, continuity and high quality of education in all schools of the country. The national school curricula stipulate the trends of education, its objectives and tasks, as well as the content and methods enabling the learners to acquire relevant knowledge, understand and develop key skills and values. The analysis of the current National School Curricula reveals that separate global education topics are integrated in the formal education process during the primary education and are further pursued in basic and secondary education stages. The curriculum of ethics and religion in primary education deal with the topics like social relations and relationship with the world where particular emphasis should be given to the global dimension. The teachers should understand and be able to integrate global topics in the curricula of the smallest school pupils. The Ethnic Culture curriculum in basic education is an integral part of general education contributing to the achievement of educational goals of cultural consciousness. These goals are to develop personal competences expressed via the ability to recognise, respect and preserve cultural diversity and participate in the socially valuable cultural expression activity. Ethno-cultural education also facilitates development of the sustainable development, i.e. it teaches tolerance and respect for other cultures, solidarity with own community, participation in its life and contribution to its development. During the stage of secondary education global education could be smoothly integrated in the Ethics, Religion and Sustainable Development Education Programmes aimed to develop skills and values of pupils contributing to the sustainable development of society: individually and in the community, at local and global level by analysing the topics like peace and conflicts, human rights, cultural diversity, socially responsible business, environmental protection, its quality, the related human health aspects, and climate change. The educators can successfully use integrated programmes of generic competences and life skills development programmes defining new curriculum content important for school pupils and for the society. Their main task is to make the curriculum content more relevant. The relevance of the subjects of the curriculum content is enhanced toward the following global education directions: -orientation to the development of competences relevant for social integration, i.e. learning to learn, communication, sustainable development, cultural consciousness or the competences providing a possibility to take active part in the public life, develop professional skills and contribute efficiently to the progressive societal changes; -assistance to pupils in preserving health and developing/promoting healthy life style; -pupils with negative social experience are involved in the activity which helps to develop resistance to negative life phenomena. The implemented integrated programmes take consider local problems and initiatives and their links with the national, European Union's and global development tendencies. The national school curricula are updated on a regular basis considering the changing pupils' needs, their expectations, the increasing diversity of education opportunities, strategic trends of the national and municipal sociocultural and economic development, international education trends, scientific and technological innovations. A new draft of the General Curriculum Framework for Primary, Basic and Secondary Education highlights that in the 21st century life of the society is changing due to rapidly developing information infrastructure and high level technologies, as well as due to the effectively applied and created new knowledge and innovations. General education shall respond to the challenges of modern technologies and globalisation and create conditions for pupils to develop individual, civic, national and cultural identity and acquire competences relevant for the 21st century.²³ Legal acts regulating general education are directed toward the development of pupils' competences, active learning via communication, cognition of their needs, adjustment of the curriculum content and equal education opportunities etc. Yet, the documents also highlight that in practice general education is often perceived as

teaching and conveyance of knowledge. Relationship among the stakeholders of education process and their cooperation is fragmented. The curriculum content still lacks integrity, contextuality and learning-by-doing. Insufficient attention is given to pupils' learning needs, their diverse talents and learning difficulties. The draft Curriculum Framework anticipates relevant trends for the improvement of general education quality which are especially important in the context of global education and active citizenship: -to build general education on the dialogue among pupils and teachers during the learning process; and to make the school a welcoming place for learning, cooperation and creativity of all pupils; - in order to link theoretical and practical learning, education should be based on the analysis of real situations, problem solution, application of practical knowledge, interpretation of information and the interaction with social and cultural environment; -to recognise all the achievements in formal, non-formal and informal education; -to ground implementation of the national school curricula on the sustainable joint activity, mutual trust and cooperation culture for the sake of future of people and of the state.²⁴ The new document sets forth the principles for the development and implementation of the national education curricula complying with the current global challenges: -fostering pupils' deeper learning in acquiring competences relevant for life and learning. Relation of theoretical and practical knowledge provides opportunities to develop pupils' values and attitudes. Competences acquired through deep learning determine pupils' choices, dialogue skills, responsible behaviour preserving nature and sociocultural environment, tolerance and social sensitivity; - commitments and activity. Pupils are encouraged to responsibly participate, express themselves and take the leader's position in the activity of a group, class, school and community and in the civil initiatives integrating life in and beyond schools.²⁵ The national education curricula provides the possibility for pupils to successfully achieve education goals in the changing social, cultural and economic life, cope with global cultural diversity challenges, acquire the competences relevant for learning, work and creation and personal contribution to the sustainable development of the unique Lithuanian, European and global community and to the sustainable development of progressive economy. Due to its diverse nature and to the important task it plays in the educational process, Global Education needs to be an integral part of the education process. Global Education has to be embedded in the school culture and be transversally included in all relevant subjects. As Global Education is a participatory process it also requires time and space for student-led initiatives. Pursuant to the concept of global vision of the European Youth Forum²⁶ and to the recommendations of the European Parliament and Council²⁷, the formal education can mainstream Global Education in the following ways: -Through the transversal inclusion of global education in all relevant subjects, thus bringing an intercultural perspective into history, languages, geography, etc. -Through the inclusion of specific citizenship courses as a vital part of the curriculum. Such courses could provide a background and framework for the work done in other courses or projects; -by using, during the entire education process, interactive teaching methods and measures providing the possibility for pupils to act independently. Schools should especially promote the projects in which students go out and educate others in society, including projects through which students can act as peer-educators and multipliers. This fosters a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and so directly contributes to the development of general competences; -The work of school and student councils is also an important part in developing and enhancing Global Education within formal education, especially through individual empowerment, and the promotion of participation and critical thinking. This is essential for raising awareness and reflective decision-making. -Through the first hand experience of another culture. One of the most important intercultural learning experiences is spending time abroad and being immersed in a different culture. All young people should be provided the possibility to take part in an exchange while being in education, as this can be a defining or very enriching experience in one's lifetime. -By approaching the learner as a whole person. Formal education too often puts a lot of emphasis on the importance of academic knowledge and developing the rational side of people. Development of social, cultural and civil competences would help young persons to better understand themselves and enable them to improve or even change own values, attitudes and notions, and at the same time change the society; -Sensitivity to the

diversity of our own societies. Global Education aims to make people aware of different cultural realities, both in other parts of the world and in our own societies. This should not only help students become aware of their multicultural societies but also should adapt schools systems to new realities of diversity. "Classrooms must be perceived as unique spaces for day-to-day intercultural learning. Students from another country or of another religion are more likely to remain low achievers as the educational system is not adequately adapted to their needs or does not reflect their background sufficiently.²⁸ Developers of new curricula need to pay attention to the growing diversity in society and support/ensure inclusion. The first Global Education initiatives have been implemented recently by integrating this education concept in formal education. The main activities have been related to preparation and publishing of methodological tools on Global Education, integration of global education activities in the education process and development of a school culture etc. The main initiatives included: -Youth Career & Advising Centre, implementing the projects „Accessing Development Education“ and „Teach MDGs“ funded by the European Commission, prepared methodological tools for integration of Global Education in the education process. Methodological tools like „Get Global!“, „Go Banana“, „Change the World in Eight Steps“ have been translated from English into Lithuanian, adapted and published. Methodological tools „Teach MDGs. Development Education Lessons“ and „Development Education Lessons. Experience of Lithuanian Teachers“ have also been published. Their aim was to present the methodology of global education and provide best practice examples of Lithuanian teachers by integrating global education in the educational process. -Teachers of Kaunas Jonas and Petras Vileišiai Basic School and of the Youth and Adult Training Centre in Kaišiadorys participated in the project „Teach MDGs“ and implemented school partnership projects on topics „Clean Water and Sanitation“ and „Discrimination and Prejudices“. -Teachers of Kaunas Jonas and Petras Vileišiai Basic School have been consistently organising global education lessons based on non-traditional methods; 29 Together with partners Lithuanian Children & Youth Centre initiated Sustainable Development Skills Formation programme „Sustainable School“. Its objective is to raise public awareness by providing the knowledge and skills necessary for the development of sustainable institutional communities able to efficiently manage and use resources, and coordinate environmental protection with social justice and economic development. All Lithuania's schools are invited to join the programme.³⁰ In order to successfully integrate Global Education in school, teachers need solid initial training in Global Education, they have to be inquisitive and acquire new knowledge and skills which can be further developed throughout their careers, by way of international mobility programmes and further training within the framework of Erasmus+ Programme (since 2014). Teachers integrating Global Education and civic education topics shall work in cooperation with school teams. Association of Lithuanian non-governmental organisations LITDEA refers to Global Education in formal education as an active learning process where the educator plays a very important role. Teacher training and qualification development for Global Education is quite problematic in the education strategy. The absence of the national global education strategy (in 2012 the European Parliament has adopted an official resolution for its development and implementation) means absence of well-defined guidelines and a coordination mechanism for training the educators of global education programmes and for their qualification upgrading. Teacher training is a very important function of the state preparing the educators for their demanding professional activity in educating responsible and critically thinking creators of future able to make informed decisions. Teacher training systems have been rapidly changing across the globe in order to comply with new life challenges like globalisation, climate change, and sustainable development, and to create a better world. Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences is the major teacher training institution. The University does not have an extensive programme for future global education teachers, but integrates separate topics into the curricula of other programmes, e.g. a Bachelor's degree study programme „Social Pedagogics“³¹ educating a personality able to find creative ways to respond to current challenges or find the purpose of life in contradictory life conditions. The programme offers the integrated subjects like protection of children's rights, civil society and participation, social communication, equal opportunities in education, personal social integration which

serve as the basis for integration of Global Education in teacher training programmes. Other Lithuanian higher education institutions cannot offer any courses of the global education programme for educators. Teachers can choose only the studies of subjects integrating separate global education topics in Lithuanian universities. Thus so far the best way to upgrade qualification skills is non-formal education programmes or informal education. In Lithuania in-service teacher training in the sphere of global education is taking the first steps. These are the best practice examples in the field of qualification development of teachers:

- Youth Career & Advising Centre implementing the project „Teach MDGs“ funded by the European Commission organised several in-service teacher training events³² ;
- International Summer School for Teachers “MDG-School-Partnership” where teachers from European and African schools not only deepened their knowledge on global education topics, but also planned joint school projects in the area of global education;
- In-service trainings for teachers aimed to introduce the concept of Global Education, as well as methodology and opportunities for its integration in the education process;
- Discussions with the representatives of higher education institutions aimed to promote integration of global education in the teacher training programmes.

-Youth Career & Advising Centre as an accredited in-service teacher training institution integrated the elements of methodology and curriculum of Global Education in the teacher qualification development programmes in order to disseminate this concept in all Lithuanian schools;

- In implementing the project “Solidarity Schools”, Humana People to People Baltic, together with the Education Development Centre, organised in-service training workshops for teachers in the education centres of some towns and districts;³³

-Lithuanian teachers take part in the international in-service training programmes (e.g. Pestalozzi Programme coordinated by the Council of Europe) offering training on Global Education topics;³⁴

Universities are autonomous studies and science institutions which are free to choose what study programmes to offer to the society. It is declared that higher education institutions are sensitive to global changes and public needs. In response to global challenges, many universities deliver subjects presenting global dimension from the political, social, cultural and economic perspective which are integrated in different study programmes; whereas Vytautas Magnus University and Vilnius University accomplish complete study programmes analysing global development phenomena. Vytautas Magnus University realises the Bachelor’s degree study programme of International Politics and Development Studies. Its objective is to prepare highly qualified BA graduates of political sciences and professional analysts able to explain, analyse, compare and evaluate political, economic and social processes of the developing states and regions; to explain and evaluate the trends and strategies of the international support to the developing states; to independently pursue research, develop and implement practical and the applied projects³⁵ . The study programme is designed for Lithuanian and foreign students interested in the subjects like theory of political sciences, public policy, state development, studies of developing regions and countries, international processes, human rights, studies of economic and social development, regional studies, orientalistcs, international donor and development strategies, migration, project preparation and implementation etc. Vilnius University offers the Master’s degree study programme of „Communication for Sustainable Development“. The aims of the study programme are „to develop communication and information specialists’ understanding of the need for a sustainable development oriented change through the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary to make communication decisions favourable for the development of sustainability; to respectively affect organisations which engage in communication activities; to be able to identify and support sustainable development oriented decisions and activities of individuals representing the area of communication and information as well as other areas“. ³⁶ The graduates of this study programme will have the knowledge of sustainable development, its context and meaning, as well as the peculiarities of the development of this process; they will be able to critically analyse and evaluate environmental and social trends of the sustainable development and economic implementation of the sustainable development policy; effectively and constructively apply the acquired theoretical knowledge for the analysis and solution of specific sustainable development problems; identify and evaluate peculiarities of communication for sustainable development, develop a wider approach

toward formation of sustainable development communication policy and planning of mass communication projects; have the competences and skills to consult and create sustainable development communication strategies and implement them; critically and creatively assess sustainable development communication features and peculiarities of their application.³⁷ Non-formal education serves to provide lifelong learning opportunities for all and meet informal education and world cognition needs, as well as develop generic competences necessary in personal life and for public and professional activity. By target groups non-formal education can be divided into three main categories: 1. Non-formal education of children; 2. Non-formal education of youth (or youth work); 3. Non-formal education of adults. Below there is the analysis of opportunities for integrating Global Education in the three non-formal education categories, the description of the current situation and problems. Pursuant to the concept of Non-Formal Education of Children, one of its goals is „[...] to develop respect for human rights, dignity, citizenship and nationality, and democratic approach toward different worldviews and life styles“. ³⁸ Non-formal education is also aimed to develop children's critical thinking and decision-making skills and the ability to find place in the dynamic society.³⁹ These goals are in line with the goals of global education for they are directed toward the development of the same individual values and life skills necessary for every responsible citizen of the world. It should be noted that in Lithuania Global Education in non-formal education of children has already taken the first steps. Every year the Lithuanian Children & Youth Centre organises Global Education Week, which at European level is coordinated by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe. During this week global education events are organised nearly in all European countries. These events cover many various initiatives and organisation of creative competitions, information campaigns, workshops and training courses, lectures, discussions, film reviews, conferences etc. Various educative events during the Global Education Week are also organised by different formal and non-formal education institutions.⁴⁰ The analysis of educational tools of Global Education designed for non-formal education of children revealed that Lithuania still lacks special measures in this field. On the other hand, the analysis of methodological measures available in the database of educational publications on Global Education developed by the National Non-Governmental Development Cooperation Organisations' Platform (NGDO) demonstrated that there is number of publications for children and for work with children. Yet, it is important to highlight that the majority of them are of general character and could be applied in both formal and non-formal education. The majority of these publications foster children's understanding of the world's structure and global problems, and critical thinking skills. There is still lack of educational tools related to the specific nature of non-formal education of Lithuanian children and to the needs of non-formal education system; there is also lack of the methods which could help children not only get acquainted with the global development problems but also develop global citizenship competences (e.g. cooperation, active participation, decision-making and other skills) and contribute to the solution of global problems. Pursuant to the recent research data⁴¹, today children are mainly interested in the additional lessons of sports, dance, music and arts. In view of this, it is necessary to analyse the needs of the above areas of nonformal education of children and opportunities for integrating Global Education, as well as to increase motivation of specialists working in the above fields, including development of their qualification skills in Global Education. Development of global education methodological tools and qualification upgrading services for non-formal education teachers would help to more effectively seek the intended outcomes defined in the concept of non-formal education. It is expected that they would not only be useful for an individual but for the entire society seeking more active citizenship and participation in public and community life.

Youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues

The documentary film festival Ad Hoc: Inconvenient Films supported under the Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme is a huge success. Documentaries are shown in eleven Lithuanian cities and educational events highlighting the global issues and problems in developing countries. The website of the project

www.nepatoguskinas.lt is devoted to raising awareness on global issues among youth and general public.

Information providers

The database of Lithuanian non-governmental organisations working in the area of international development cooperation was created (www.pagalba.org/partnerships). Visitors can search the database looking for information about non-governmental organisations and descriptions of projects implemented by them.

Key initiatives

Global Citizens' Academy (GCA) was opened in 2014 with the aim to promote key values of active global citizenship and welfare among young people in Lithuania and abroad. It is a non-governmental organisation which contributes to making a difference in the global society by meeting the following objectives: 1) development of national, civic and cultural identities; 2) promoting respect for human dignity; 3) support to building capacities of young people in order to become active and responsible global citizens; 4) stimulating democratic dialogue among different actors in the society; 5) building capacity of civil society organisations. GCA was opened to provide non-formal education, awareness raising and campaigning activities for young people, training and capacity building for youth workers, youth leaders and educators and advocacy actions towards creating a just and sustainable world. Global Citizens' Academy is known as one of the ambassadors of global education in Lithuania. It actively works towards promoting the concept of global education in school, non-formal education and youth work environment all over the country. It runs several projects:

The project "[A Strengthened Network and an Integration Map for Refugees](#)" (I'MAPPY) is an ERASMUS + KA2 project funded by Turkish National Agency. It aims to enhance the active citizenship and empowerment of the young refugees, support the development of competences of NGOs working with young refugees, and strengthen the organisational capacity and overall professionalization of the structures through enhancing the coordination and unity of the NGOs dealing with refugees. The main idea of the project is to develop an application called I'MAPPY where this application will be an integration map especially for young refugees who do not have access to social and basic information about the asylum country or has no parents or families. Promoting empowerment, open to cross-sectorial cooperation, and active citizenship of young people are some of the essential goals of the project. In scope of the project, project website, application of I'MAPPY, user guide for NGOs, Survival Kit and a final report will be produced.

In order to broaden civic participation of young people and enable them to contribute to meeting global challenges, 4 organisations from Lithuania, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Spain joined into partnership to implement the project "[GloLab-2: Six Steps to Global Citizenship](#)". The project aims to improve the quality of youth work and join efforts of youth and educational bodies towards making young people promoters of global citizenship. The GloLab-2 project will be a laboratory for young people, where they will have an opportunity to think of the issues they face every day from the global perspective. It will allow them to find their own role in the global society, as well as stimulate their behavioural change in order to contribute to sustainable development both locally and globally. The project will also allow its participants to identify the effects of the global issues to their own lives and make them become more active and responsible by changing their own views, attitudes and daily habits. During 2 years of the project lifetime GloLab-2 will engage around 380 participants: young people, who will be provided with the opportunities to increase and apply their global citizenship competencies; youth workers and youth leaders who will be given the possibility to improve their professional competence and embed global citizenship into their daily work; educators and youth policy makers, who will inform the process of development of a common framework for active global citizenship in partner countries. The project will develop a number of outputs aimed to create, pilot and share good global citizenship education practices. They will include publications, joint educational frameworks, learning/teaching resources, ICT-based

learning tools, interactive resources summarizing good global citizenship practices in partner countries. The outputs will be piloted and embedded into youth work and non-formal education practices with the help of a number of national and international training and multiplier events.

Year 2015 was announced as the European Year for Development. This was a perfect opportunity to pay people's attention on how they could contribute to the efforts of the EU and national governments towards global development. For this reason, Global Citizens' Academy and Kaunas Youth Valley initiated a project "[Youth's Socialization in a Global Society](#)". The project aimed to foster young people's socialization in a global society by promoting the fundamental values of solidarity, tolerance, belief in making a difference, which are of crucial importance for development of a just and sustainable world.

The main activity of the project was the global education event for school students "[Challenge \(In\)equality!](#)" which took place on 20 November, 2015 in Kaunas, Vytautas Magnus University. It was a space for the youngsters to become aware and experience the meaning of global inequality and injustice, as well as to look for solutions to decrease it. The participants had an opportunity to look at the issue of inequality in different contexts: economic, social, political and environmental. One-day event offered its participants a variety of workshops: simulations, creative labs, interactive lectures, discussion groups, etc. Every participant had an opportunity to participate in 2 workshops throughout the day. The event engaged 188 school students of the age 13 to 19. They represented 13 different schools from 10 municipalities. The opportunity to participate in the event was also provided for youngsters with fewer opportunities – 17 participants out of the overall number were with hearing difficulties. The event had a very positive effect on the motivation of young people towards their active engagement into creating a just and sustainable world. This was achieved by implementing the following measures: 1) establishing close cooperation with school communities interested in promoting global citizenship among their learners; 2) active involvement of young volunteers; 3) offering a variety of activities for students, so everyone could find one according to their needs and expectations.

[GloLab](#) is an international youth exchange project, which brought together young people from 4 countries (Lithuania, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Slovak Republic) for joint activities. The project aimed to reinforce active global citizenship among young Europeans and make them become promoters of the fundamental values, such as solidarity, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality, justice and peace. The project expected to raise awareness among young Europeans on interconnectivity existing among people, countries and cultures across the globe; to explore the common issues existing in local, national and global level; to build their active global citizenship skills in order to make them active towards coping with the challenges in the global society; to foster civic actions of youngsters towards sustainable future of the communities in Europe and around the world. The project established a laboratory for young Europeans, where they were able to share their views and become aware of the realities of different communities in the context of globalization, to define their own roles in a global society, as well as to develop competencies necessary for contributing to sustainable changes in both local communities and globally. The activities of the youth exchange also stimulated their behavioral change in order to contribute to sustainable development both locally and globally.

9.5 Green volunteering, production and consumption

Green volunteering

The National Sustainable Development Education Programme for 2007-2015 approved by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania with the objective „[...] to improve educational activity of various public institutions and agencies so as to help the citizens, organisations, enterprises, agencies, communities and the society better understand the concept of Sustainable Development and its importance; to develop the abilities of all

members of the society, as well as their values and incentives for democratic and responsible activity: to contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development objectives; to enhance abilities of institutional structures to take active part in the sustainable development processes." This programme was more oriented toward local initiatives ensuring implementation of the Sustainable Development principles, and didn't have a strong global dimension; yet it was a good beginning in initiating global education activities and integrating them in various education and other public areas. Unfortunately, in 2011 the Sustainable Development Education Programme was repealed.

There is a lack of systematic information on green volunteering in Lithuania. Limited information is available at present from some voluntary organisations and NGOs. For example [Agency of International Youth Co-operation](#) in 2013 organized a training course to provide an overview of green project management skills for daily life and work, in the frame of Youth in Action programme. It aimed to create a space for 25 youth leaders and youth workers with different backgrounds, ages and experiences to learn, share, and develop projects and network. The aim of the training course was to provide an overview of green project management skills for daily life and work. During the course the participants were encouraged to reflect on personal green values, attitudes and experience in relation to daily work and life; share approaches about being green in participants community and country; gain the competences and confidence to start green projects and to bring ideas into action; exchange with other participants how to raise awareness of their relationship with the environment among people in their home countries; find strategies on how to be green in daily life and work; use knowledge of "Youth in Action" to fund projects.

Green production and consumption

Pursuant to the provisions of the Lithuanian Progress Strategy „Lithuania 2030“, it is necessary to develop creativity of the society and of all its members, and to put particular emphasis on the ideas which could help Lithuania become a modern, dynamic and open state.¹⁶ The Strategy is being developed pursuant to the provisions of solidarity with different social groups (ethnic, etc.) as well as tolerance, compassion, social responsibility and responsible consumption. The Strategy sets the objective to raise public environmental awareness, to promote sustainable consumption and responsible approach to economic development. The National Progress Strategy sets the task for education to strengthen historical selfawareness and self-esteem by promoting different cultural and artistic expression, by reviewing educational programmes as well as by ensuring reasonable application of national heritage objects for education needs. It is also important to retain Lithuania's educational ties with Lithuanians from all over the world, and preserve Lithuanian language teaching and inter-cultural literacy. The provisions of the national sustainable development strategy demonstrate that Lithuania seeks to educate active and responsible citizens able to build the future of Lithuania and of the entire world. This provides for the development of Global Education in Lithuania contributing to the sustainable progress of Lithuania and of the world.

In 2016 [The World Citizens' Academy](#) together with its partner "Kauno jaunimo slėnis" implemented the project "Kaunas Youth - for a Sustainable World!" He was directed to the active participation of young people in Kaunas City, the fight against global challenges. The partners wanted to contribute to Kaunas as an active city and strengthening the role of the youth in the city, meeting the needs of young people's knowledge and active participation and enabling them to engage in meaningful activities for the sake of a sustainable world. It was intended not only to improve the involvement of young people in Kaunas city, but also to encourage young people to look at their city in a wider context, to better understand the impact of global challenges such as global poverty, inequalities, military conflicts, climate change and so on, make the urban community. The event of global education for students of Kaunas city general education schools "Youth – for a harmonious world!" It took place in 2016 November 18 Vytautas Magnus University. The event was intended to improve young people's knowledge and active participation and enabling them to engage in meaningful activities for the sake of sustainable development.

9.6 Intercontinental youth work and development cooperation

Intercontinental youth work cooperation

Youth Career & Advising Center (YCAC) conducted a research “The Attitudes of Youth Organizations towards Global Issues and Global Learning in Lithuania”. The research aimed to explore the attitudes of youth organizations in Lithuania towards the global development issues and the role of youth organizations in coping with them. The research was also dedicated to explore the motivation, willingness and preparation of youth organisations to implement global learning and awareness raising activities for youth.

The research results helped YCAC to get a better understanding on perceptions and attitudes of youth organisations in Lithuania towards the global development issues, globalization and global connections between people, cultures and countries. The results also allowed identifying the learning needs of the youth organisations related with global learning and awareness raising applicable to youth work.

The research “The Attitudes of Youth Organizations towards Global Issues and Global Learning in Lithuania” was conducted in the frame of the project “Youth of the World! Mainstreaming Global Awareness In youth Work”, supported by the European Commission. The project is being implemented in 7 countries: Bulgaria, Lithuania, Estonia, Cyprus, Austria, Scotland and Ghana.

Read the full summary report [here](#)

Development cooperation activities

Lithuania’s [Democracy Promotion and Development Cooperation programme](#) is used to foster exchange between young people and policy-makers on issues of global relevance. In Lithuania, the Democracy Promotion and Development Cooperation programme (implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) provides funding for development cooperation projects which are implemented in cooperation with other governmental and non-governmental institutions in Lithuania and partner countries.

Lithuanian Law on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid was adopted in 2013. This law determined the goals of the Lithuanian development cooperation policy, formation, implementation, coordination and financing of the Lithuanian development cooperation, and ways of providing humanitarian aid. In 2016, the new edition of the law was adopted. This edition introduced important changes: strengthening the role of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs in coordination of the Lithuania development cooperation, expanding the number of institutions participating in the development cooperation, gathering the administration of development cooperation projects in a single agency, etc.

In September 2016 Lithuanian Government approved National Interinstitutional Development Cooperation Action Plan for the period 2017–2019. This Plan lays down development cooperation policy guidelines for 2017-2019 and sets out concrete measures in order to contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development goals set by the UN 2030 Agenda within the aid recipient countries. The Plan is based on the Lithuanian Law on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, Lithuania’s foreign policy priorities, taking into account relevant strategic documents of the UN and EU, and international commitments. The Plan will help to ensure continuous and efficient implementation and coordination of the development cooperation activities and to enhance Lithuania’s role as a reliable and responsible donor country in the international community.

Lithuania’s development cooperation policy is an integral part of Lithuania’s foreign policy aimed at these objectives:

1. Contribute to the global efforts to reduce poverty in developing countries, as well as to implementation of other Sustainable Development Goals declared by the United Nations;

2. Contribute to elaboration of sustainable development, democracy, security and stability in partner countries;
3. Contribute to elaboration of human rights and gender equality in partner countries;
4. Strengthen political, economic, social and cultural relations with developing countries;
5. Inform and raise awareness of Lithuanian society on UN's, EU's and Lithuanian development policies, their goals, challenges, achieved results, and to seek greater public approval and support for development cooperation.

Implementing the European Union's development cooperation policy, Lithuanian representatives participate in the activities of the European Union Council Working Parties on Development Cooperation (CODEV), the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, and Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFSA), cooperate with the European Commission's Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO), Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection. By participating in the European Development Fund and the Development Cooperation Instrument Committees, Lithuania, together with other EU Member States, adopts decisions on the implementation of the EU's development policy.

Inter-institutional Action Plan on Development Cooperation approved by the Government Resolution on 21 September 2016 sets Lithuanian development cooperation policy guidelines for the period 2017- 2019 as well as implementing measures. The Plan foresees geographical and sectorial Development Cooperation priorities. Sectorial priorities are related to the Lithuania's efforts to contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in partner countries, i.e. Lithuania will seek to contribute to the achievement of all of SDGs, however particular focus will be given to:

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere (SDG 1);
2. Ensure quality education (SDG 4);
3. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (SDG 5);
4. Take urgent action to combat climate change (SDG 13);
5. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (SDG 16);
6. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development (SDG 17).

The priority geographical areas of Lithuania's development cooperation are the region of Eastern Europe as well as countries of migration origin and transit. Considering the needs of developing countries and its own foreign policy priorities and financial capabilities, Lithuania shall also provide assistance to other countries that are included in the list of aid recipients of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Particular attention is paid to development cooperation activities with Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. Since the EU Association Agreements were signed with Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia on 27 June 2014, the relevance of assistance that helps implement these Agreements increased, therefore Lithuanian experts provide consultations and technical assistance for the purpose of properly implementing these Agreements.

Implementing its international commitments and seeking to ensure visibility of Lithuania's development cooperation policy within the international arena, Lithuania provides multilateral development assistance through obligatory and voluntary contributions and payments to the funds and international organisations carrying out or coordinating development cooperation activities. Taking into consideration the needs, foreign policy priorities of developing countries and its own financial capacities, Lithuania provides assistance to other states included into the list of ODA recipients of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Thus, Lithuania reinforces its role in the United Nations, the European Council, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the World Trade Organisation, and other international organisations and strengthens its political, economic and cultural relations with various countries.

The Department of Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the implementation and coordination of Lithuanian development cooperation policy.

Information on the submission of applications for development cooperation projects, selection procedures, implementation and information for providers as well as any other project-related information is available in:

- 1) Description of Procedure for the Implementation of Development Cooperation Activities and Provision of Humanitarian Assistance by State and Municipal Institutions and Agencies, approved by Lithuanian Government Resolution No 129 of the 22nd February 2017;
- 2) Description of Procedure of the Implementation of the Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme, established by Order No. V-63 of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania on 21st March 2017 (Valid summary from Sep 14, 2017).

Example of good practice: Youth projects carried out in Belarus

Based on the Law on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid projects carried out in Belarus in 2013 contributed to the raising the activity and empowerment of various social groups, promotion of youth initiatives and cooperation, bridging the social divide, protection and promotion of common historical and cultural heritage as well as institutional capacity building. In 2013, over 300 young people, including the youngest one aged just two, took part in civil society building and youth initiatives. One of such initiatives was the seventh congress of Belarusians studying in Belarus and other European countries. The congress saw the creation of the network of Global Belarus Leaders uniting young Belarusian professionals. The youth is also supported through the European Humanities University (EHU) established in Lithuania which continues the traditions of the Belarusian academic society and trains a new generation of Belarusian youth which upholds democratic values. It is the only university operating in exile and enabling its students and teachers to use the Belarusian language in their academic and daily lives. In 2013, 191 graduates of bachelor studies and 53 graduates of master studies graduated from the EHU. Most graduates of the university see their future in Belarus. Lithuania supports the EHU together with the European Commission, Nordic Council of Ministers, United States of America, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Poland and other countries. Projects aimed at reducing the divide between social groups and promoting tolerance have taken place in Belarus for several years lately. In 2013, 480 project participants, including the disabled, their parents and teachers as well as representatives of Belarusian non-governmental organisations specialising in these areas, were trained. Lithuania's projects in culture, education and science implemented in 2013 were aimed at strengthening cooperation between the representatives of both states. These projects attracted over 700 participants. The public was highly interested in the studies of synagogues which are part of the cultural and religious heritage of Belarusian Litvaks. The historians of both countries jointly published a book on the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Cossacks, publications promoting the cultural, historical and musical heritage of Duke Mykolas Kleopas Oginskis. A congress of Belarusian researchers "Belarus: The Northern Dimension" took place.

Example of good practice: Youth projects carried out in Palestine and Tunisia

Based on the Law on Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid in 2013, Lithuania implemented one project in Palestine and one in Tunisia in 2013. At the political school in Tunisia, experts from Lithuania and other countries shared their theoretical and practical knowledge of justice during the transitional period, presented the development and strengthening of the democratic political system and civil society to their Tunisian colleagues. In total, training sessions were attended by 25 Tunisian politicians. Lithuania supports the strengthening of public spirit skills of Palestine youth and encourages young Palestinians to play a more active role in their country's life building a democratic and knowledge-based society. Using non-formal education techniques, specialists from Lithuania hosted training at the Palestinian boys school Arab Institute (24 boys), Al Quds

University (18 students), non-governmental organisation Vision Alliance for Arts and Culture (17 participants). The training included the presentation of ideas for projects relevant to the youth and community (and the best ones were put into practice), preparation of their descriptions and planning for actions to help implement these projects. At the end of the visit, specialists from Lithuania took part in the collection of olives together with partners and trained youth groups, which served as a practical example public spirit building through non-formal education.

9.7 Current debates and reforms

Lithuanian universities still face a challenge of new thinking, understanding and presenting their self as a part of internationalisation process.

10. YOUTH WORK

10.1 General context

Historical developments

The role of open youth work in Lithuanian youth policy has increased over the last 15 years. Openwork with young people in Lithuania started to take effect around 2010 (when the 'Concept of Open Youth Centers and Spaces' (2010) and the '[Description of Open Youth Centres](#)' (2012) were approved by the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor, although the majority of youth organisations have been involved in youth work before. In the initial period, the youth policy framework and its funding mechanism and opportunities did not focus on flexible forms of work, i.e. they were mainly based on project funding and focused on more active youth. However, in 2019 amendments and additions to the Youth Policy Framework Law aimed to improve the conditions for youth work and established the basic principles of youth work and quality requirements for youth workers in open youth centers and open spaces. The role of open youth work in Lithuanian youth policy has increased over the last 15 years. Open work with young people in Lithuania started to take effect around 2010 (when the 'Concept of Open Youth Centers and Spaces' (2010) and the '[Description of Open Youth Centres](#)' (2012) were approved by the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor, although the majority of youth organisations have been involved in youth work before. In the initial period, the youth policy framework and its funding mechanism and opportunities did not focus on flexible forms of work, i.e. they were mainly based on project funding and focused on more active youth. However, in 2019 amendments and additions to the Youth Policy Framework Law aimed to improve the conditions for youth work and established the basic principles of youth work and quality requirements for youth workers in open youth centers and open spaces.

National definition or understanding of Youth Work

As stated in 'Concept of Open Youth Centers and Spaces' (2010) and '[Description of Open Youth Centres](#)' (2012) approved by the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor '**youth work**' means activities of a social, informational, educational, cultural or other nature, carried out with young people or groups of young people on the basis of their needs, in order to integrate, integrate young people his social environment and enable him to participate in conscious and active personal and social life. **Youth worker** in Lithuania is seen as a specialist who implements public policy rather than a representative of a certain profession). Youth worker is an adult who works with young people in their leisure time and encourages their personal and social development through work with individuals, groups or communities. Youth worker should have competences that are recognized in accordance with the procedure set by the Department

of Youth Affairs. Youth worker is paid for his qualified work with young people in accordance with the procedure laid down in the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania.

The recent 2019 [amendments and additions](#) to the [Youth Policy Framework Law](#) aimed to improve the conditions for youth work. Amendments and supplements to the law provide definitions of youth work, youth worker, open youth center, open space, non-formal education, establish basic principles of youth work and quality requirements for youth workers in open youth centers and open spaces. These types of youth work are distinguished: **a) open youth work** - work with young people in open youth centers and / or spaces with the principles of youth work; **b) working with youth on the street** - working with young people not in an institutional setting but directly in informal gatherings of young people (public spaces, streets, parks, cafes, sports fields, clubs, etc.); **c) mobile youth work** - youth work when moving to a residential area where there is no youth work infrastructure, taking into account the individual needs of young people living in the area; The detailed description on the types of youth work can be found [here](#).

10.2 Administration and governance of youth work

Governance

The main actors involved in policy-making on youth work at the national level include the **Commission for Youth and Sport Affairs** of the Seimas (the Parliament) which controls youth policy implementing institutions. This institution is responsible for the formulation of the national youth policy, promotion of youth rights and exercising parliamentary control of institutions that implement youth policy, listens to the announcements of ministries and other state institutions (Department of Youth Affairs) and evaluates the information.

The coordination and implementation of policy measures on youth work is delegated to [the Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#). It supervises the implementation of the [Youth Policy Framework Law](#) (with amendments in 2019) which has provisions on youth work as well as implementation of youth policy measures adopted by the European Commission. The **Department of Youth Affairs** under the [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) implements the objectives of the state youth policy, supervises the implementation of the [Law on Youth Policy Framework](#). It acts as a state institution that works out and implements the national youth policy programs and measures, coordinates the activities of the state and municipal institutions in the of youth work, performs other activities relevant to youth, youth organizations, and organizations working with youth. The Department of Youth Affairs implements the objectives of the state youth policy through application of measures to encourage youth to acquire education, get work, and engage in active social life; takes part in solution of youth related problems; develops non-formal education.

The Ministry of Education is the main coordinating authority concerning to implementation of non-formal education policy and other Ministries (the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Agriculture) have their particular measures related to youth work due to horizontal priority of youth policy and cross-governmental responsibility in its implementation in Lithuania. The **Council of Youth Affairs** is a collegial advisory institution, functioning under the Department of Youth Affairs on social grounds, constituted on the basis of equal partnership from the representatives, delegated by the state institutions and the **Lithuanian Youth Council** (LiJOT). The task of the Council of Youth Affairs is to deal with the fundamental youth policy problems and give suggestions to the Department of Youth Affairs on the implementation of youth policy that meets the needs of youth and youth organizations. The decisions of the Council of Youth Affairs for the Department of Youth Affairs are of advisory nature. The **Lithuanian Youth Council** (LiJOT) provides suggestions to governmental institutions which work with youth problems and youth organizations. LiJOT is the biggest non-governmental, non-profit umbrella

structure for Lithuanian national youth organizations and regional unions of youth organizations. LIJOT has 62 members (non-governmental youth organizations) and represents more than 200 000 young people in Lithuania. LIJOT is a full member of the European Youth Forum and coordinates EURODESK Lithuania. The main purpose of the **Agency of International Youth Co-operation** is to ensure the development of international youth cooperation and successful participation of Lithuanian youth in European Union programs for young people (through financial grants for project implementation).

The Youth Work Council under the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor is an advisory body of the Department operating on a public basis, advising the Department on youth work issues. The main tasks of the Youth Work Council are to analyze and monitor the implementation of youth work in Lithuania, to consult and provide conclusions to the Department, to disseminate information to the public about the significance and importance of youth work for the development of society.

The Youth Work Council

1. analyses the challenges of youth work;
2. examines the youth work activities, the training of staff working with youth and/or submits recommendations and suggestions regarding the application, use and/or amendment of the existing legal acts regulating youth work;
3. makes recommendations on the priorities for youth work (eg when considering funding competitions, forms of youth work, or other issues);
4. analyses the issues of the state social policy related to the performance of youth work and its quality, and submits proposals to the Department of Youth Affairs;
5. considers other strategic social policy issues related to the development of youth work;
6. 6. prepares and presents conclusions on the issues formulated by the Department of Youth Affairs on the topic of youth work.

The Youth Work Council takes the form of meetings at which the members meet at least once every four months. The term of office of the Youth Work Council is 3 years.

The responsibilities of implementing policy measures related to youth work are divided between top-level and regional/local authorities. At the local level, municipalities are the main institutions responsible for the formulation and implementation of youth policy including policy measures on youth work. Councils for youth affairs at the municipal level are established on the principle of parity involving the representatives of municipal institutions and youth organizations by the decision of Municipal Councils. Regional youth councils can delegate representatives of youth organizations to municipal councils for youth affairs. Different committees of Municipal Council, as well as departments, institutions of Municipality Administration (educational institutions, psychological services, institutions of non-formal education (music and art schools, sports centers, youth centers, cultural centers, museums, libraries, etc.) formulate and implement youth policy in municipalities. A coordinator of youth affairs assists the municipal institutions to formulate and implement a municipal youth policy. A coordinator of youth affairs serves as a mediator between the politicians of the municipality, officers, and youth. A coordinator of youth affairs supervises and initiates measures, necessary for the performance of youth policy including policy measures on youth work. They provide institutions and persons with information on the implementation of youth policy in the municipality, cooperates with the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, the Department of Youth Affairs, and other institutions, youth organisations, non-formal youth groups, as well as take part in developing cooperation with the municipalities of foreign countries in the field of youth work.

Cross-sectoral cooperation

The [Ministry of Social Security and Labour](#) is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the youth policy measures related to youth work. The Ministry is

implementing the [National youth policy development program for 2011-2019](#) through Action Plan for the periods of 2017-2019. In the action plans specific objectives, actions, terms of implementation, budget allocations, and responsible institutions for its implementation are indicated. Responsible institutions for the implementation of the Action Plan measures are the [Ministry of Environment](#), [Ministry of Culture](#), [Ministry of Defence](#), the [Ministry of Health](#), [Ministry of Education and Science](#), [Ministry of Justice](#), [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#), [Ministry of Economy](#), [Ministry of Interior](#), [Ministry of Agriculture](#), the [Drug Control Department under the Government of Lithuania](#), [Lithuanian Labour Exchange](#), and [Council of Youth Affairs](#). There is no special body for cross-sectorial collaboration, however these institutions report to [The Ministry of Social Security and Labor](#) about implementation of the action plan measures related to youth policy every year.

The [Methodology of Quality Improvement of Youth Organisations Performance](#) has been developed to strengthen youth cross-sectorial cooperation and performance of youth organisations and provide a tool that would enable youth organisations to apply systematic evaluation of their efficiency and consistently seek for the improvement of quality. According to this methodology, the [level of performance quality and problematic areas](#) are being identified. Based on it, long-term and short-term recommendations for performance quality improvement and annual action plans are being submitted.

10.3 Support to youth work

Policy legal framework

The main objectives of youth work are described in the 2019 order No. A1-614 of Social Security Minister and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania on '[The Approval of the Description of the Procedure for Work with Street Youth, the Procedure for Mobile Work with Youth, the Description of Open Work with Youth](#)'.

The main principles of youth work include:

- Understanding - perceives a young person as an emerging personality, is able to empathize with his or her experiences, experiences, and perceives the young person's environment and engages with it in his or her activities;
- Respect - understands and respects the young person and the decisions of the young person that do not harm the young person and those around him / her;
- Exemplarity - is aware of the influence a young person exerts on his or her actions and example and behaves accordingly, taking into account the needs and maturity of the young person;
- Confidentiality and justice - in the performance of their functions, they shall observe the principle of confidentiality, unless this is contrary to law or regulation;
- Professionalism - clearly defines his / her role in working with young people, respectful and constructive relationships with young people, colleagues and others in the young person's environment.

Youth work can take place in institutions and organizations in different fields, work themes are defined according to the needs of young people, so youth work is based on the principles of non-formal education, but not on an integral basis.

To sum up, youth work is an activity designed to enable young people to engage in personal, professional and social activities and to develop and develop their competencies. In simple terms, youth work is the process of educating young people according to their needs, in order to enable young people to work. Youth work is based on the principles of non-formal education, but not all forms of youth work and all target groups are suitable and / or necessary for non-formal education. Youth work is an integral part of youth policy but can also be implemented in other public policies.

The youth work providers are identified and defined and principles of youth workers' profession are described in the 2013 order No. A1-208 of Social Security Minister and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania on '[The Approval of the Youth Workers' Job Description](#)'. In Lithuania, the concept of youth workers has not yet been defined, however youth policy experts describe youth workers as those who work in the youth field having a relevant education in social work, social education, psychology or education related qualification. For example, youth workers who work in municipal educational, cultural, sport, social institutions and can be referred to as teachers (leading a school circle), social educators, cultural workers etc.

The domains to which youth work pertains and the principles of youth work in open youth centres are described in the 2012 order No. A1-570 of Social Security Minister and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania on '[Description of Open Youth Centres](#)'. The main forms of youth work are: 1) Open Youth Work is a form of youth work based on the principles of youth work and applied in open youth centers and spaces; 2) Mobile youth work - youth work when moving to a residential area where there is no youth work infrastructure, taking into account the individual needs of young people living in the area; and 3) Working with youth on the street - working with young people not in an institutional setting but directly in informal youth gatherings (public spaces, streets, parks, cafes, sports fields, clubs etc. [The Description of differences between the main forms of youth work](#) is provided by the Department of Youth Affairs.

These groups in the youth population are identified as primary targets of youth work: 1) young people out of the family, 2) young people out of school; and 3) young people out of work.

Funding

The main sources of public funding include national budget allocations and grant programmes. Youth work providers have to satisfy certain conditions and requirements to benefit from public funding, and the funding framework identifies the type of activities and/or specific target groups to be supported each year. For example the conditions of funding application for 2019 are described in the 2018 order No. 2V-175 (1.4) of Social Security Minister and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania on '[The Approval of the Terms and Conditions for the 2019 Mobile and Youth Street Work Projects Funding and the Selection Committee Composition](#)'.

Cooperation

Implementation of youth work is outsourced to municipalities. According to the [Law of Local Governance](#) organizations of pre-school education, non-formal education for children and adults, organizations of children and youth services are the autonomous function of the municipality. The municipalities are responsible for implementing and coordinating the activities of these organisations. The municipalities have also established the following structures for implementing youth work policy measures: **Councils for youth affairs** at the municipal level are established on the principle of parity involving the representatives of municipal institutions and youth organizations by the decision of Municipal Councils. **Regional youth councils** can delegate representatives of youth organizations to municipal councils for youth affairs. Different committees of Municipal Council, as well as departments, institutions of Municipality Administration (educational institutions, psychological services, institutions of non-formal education (music and art schools, sports centers, youth centers, cultural centers, museums, libraries, etc.) formulate and implement youth policy in municipalities. A **coordinator of youth affairs** assists the municipal institutions to formulate and implement a municipal youth policy. A coordinator of youth affairs serves as a mediator between the politicians of municipality, schools, NGOs, community organizations, social services, employment agencies, educators, volunteers, youth leaders etc. and youth. A coordinator of youth affairs supervises and initiates measures, necessary for performance of youth policy including policy measures on youth work. They provide institutions and persons with information on the implementation of youth policy in the municipality, cooperates with the Ministry of Social

Security and Labour, the Department of Youth Affairs, and other institutions, youth organisations, non-formal youth groups, as well as take part in developing cooperation with the municipalities of foreign countries in the field of youth work.

10.4 Quality and innovation in youth work

Quality assurance

The principles of youth work are described in the 2018 order No2V-77 (1.4) of Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania on '[The Recommendations for Quality Assurance in Open Youth Centers and Open Youth Spaces](#)'. According to these recommendations operational planning is based on qualitative and quantitative outcomes to be achieved. The results to be achieved must be clearly measurable and the activities are planned for three years.

The main principal states that a self-assessment of the current situation of the Open Youth Center / Space must be performed prior external evaluation. The self-assessment identifies the current status and progress of the organization, analyzes key performance indicators (presented below), analyses feedback from visitors and their parents and aspects that need improvement. The external evaluation discusses the self-assessment carried out by the Center / Space and the agreed objectives and purpose with the Municipal Youth Coordinator.

The main purpose of the Center / Space Evaluation is to improve the Center / Space and open-ended youth work and to ensure that Center / Space evaluation is transparent, open and self-critical, it is not used to predict Center / Space funding. Taking into account the assessment of the current situation of the Center / Space, a Center / Space activity plan (hereinafter referred to as the Activity Plan) must be drawn up in accordance with the form provided (Annex 1 of '[The Recommendations for Quality Assurance in Open Youth Centers and Open Youth Spaces](#)'). The action plan sets out the results to be achieved, the achievement targets and their values at the end of each calendar year, the actions to be taken to achieve the results, the deadline for implementing the actions and the human and financial resources required. The Center / Space director coordinates the action plan with the Municipal Youth Coordinator.

At the end of each year, the Annual Activity Report is prepared, which evaluates the implementation of the Action Plan and the achievement of its outputs, and reviews the Center / Space Key Performance and Indicators. The revised Action Plan shall be revised as necessary. After reviewing the Action Plan, the plan and any changes to it must be agreed with the Municipal Youth Coordinator, who provides methodological assistance in planning the activity. Regular meetings of the Center / Space youth staff, supervisors, etc., to discuss emerging challenges and plan activities (at least once a month);

'[The Recommendations for Quality Assurance in Open Youth Centers and Open Youth Spaces](#)' also include recommended (not compulsory) performance indicators such as total number of visitors; number of unique visitors; number of visitors with fewer opportunities (eg number of visitors at social risk, number of disadvantaged visitors, etc.); number of individual visitor consultations; number of visitors by age (age group) and gender; number of meetings with parents; number of activities initiated / organized by the youth; the total number of educational activities carried out; number of non-formal education programs; the number of publicity activities (publications, promotions, articles) organized; number of projects implemented with youth; number of projects completed; youth work methods; the amount and sources of funds raised; the number of young people recruited; number of individually consulted visitors; the total number of educational activities carried out; the number of publicity activities (publications, promotions, articles) organized etc.

Research and evidence supporting Youth Work

National authorities support better knowledge and understanding of youth work to ensure that it is relevant and responsive to the needs of young people. [Youth Research Network](#) is

established. It is a national advisory group made up of higher education institutions, researchers, young people, youth policy practitioners, youth NGOs, representatives of the authorities responsible for implementing youth policy. The aim of the Youth Research Network is to cooperate with youth policy-making and implementing institutions in Lithuania at national level, to provide evidence-based and knowledge-based suggestions to youth policy makers. Participation in the activities of the Youth Researchers Network is non-remunerated, but activities organized by the Youth Researchers Network may be co-financed by legislative means from the Department of Youth Affairs budget allocations to support the Youth Researchers Network. In the framework of the [Youth Research Network](#) the [Analysis of the implementation of youth work in Lithuania](#) was commissioned in 2015 by the Department of Youth Affairs under the Department of Social Security and Social Security at the request of the Ministry of Labor and funded from the state budget. [Practical Guide of Work with Youth in the Street](#) commissioned by the Department of Youth Affairs under the Department of Social Security and Social Security has been prepared by research team in 2015. The [Youth Research Network](#) also organizes conferences in order to discuss and address various youth issues.

Participate Youth Work

National authorities are striving to foster the participation of young people in the design of youth work programmes and initiatives by addressing the need to attract more young people to organized activities by: a) disseminating information relevant to young people through the channels and forms that they accept; b) sharing information on activities and events organized by the institutions; c) planning activities in consultations with youth organisations. However, this is a great challenge, as the levels of youth participation is rather low, and this has implications for their involvement in the youth work. The challenge to attract excluded young people and to involve young people from different contexts (e.g. migrants) persists. [Mapping and analysis as well as guidelines and dissemination of best practices on Open Youth Work](#) is continuously carried out and the situation is monitored by the Department of Youth Affairs. [Standards of Mobile Youth Work](#) with established performance indicators and guidelines of situation analysis are in place since 2019 (see: [‘The Approval of the Description of the Procedure for Work with Street Youth, the Procedure for Mobile Work with Youth, the Description of Open Work with Youth’](#)).

Smart youth work: youth work in the digital world

Smart youth work is considered as one of the priorities, but the implementation of smart work is at the development phase. In 2012 [Lithuanian-Lithuanian Council of Youth Organizations](#) (LiJOT) became a member of the [European Youth Information and Counseling Agency](#) (ERYICA). LiJOT is responsible for the operation of 28 youth information points, youth information centers in Vilnius and Utena, staff certification and system development. In October 2017 youth information workers were trained to explore digital tools and their use in youth information and counseling. These training courses were implemented jointly with the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor.

As stated in [The Handbook for youth information and counseling](#) (published by the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor in 2013) in order to ensure the quality of smart youth work and to guarantee added value and credibility ERYICA principles should be followed: a) information provided to young people at a distance must be accurate, up-to-date and verifiable; b) date when information provided or updated must be explicitly mentioned; c) content content should meet the needs of young people which need to be constantly redefined and evaluated; d) the content should consist of up-to-date and free information that will give a broad picture of the various possibilities; e) the criteria used to collect the information should be made public in a language that can be understood; f) information should be understandable to young people and presented in attractive ways; g) information should be provided to all, with special attention to special needs existing users and their groups; h) when young people are given the opportunity to ask questions online, information should be clearly

displayed, within what period they will be given an answer; i) when young people are involved in content development, the responsibility for the final accuracy of the content rests with the youth information organization; j) promoting youth feedback should be a continuous integrated youth information service part of the development; k) the objectives and author of the outreach to young people should be clear and visible; l) for third-party content, its source must be clearly identified, it must be clear to consumers who is providing youth information services and what the motives are; m) sources of financial support should also be made clear and transparently; n) remote youth information services should provide methods and guidance to assist young people to increase competencies in information literacy and Internet use; o) remote youth information services should inform and teach how to behave safely and responsibly in a virtual environment; p) remote youth information services should be a safe space for young people; q) remote youth information respects and protects the privacy of users and allows them to modify or delete their own personal material; r) remote youth information services respect third party copyrights and are aware of their copyrights; s) youth information workers should be knowledgeable in the use of the Internet and have appropriate facilities information literacy skills, and they should be familiar with recent developments, relevant legislation and keep an eye on young people's internet trends and online practices.

10.5 Youth workers

Status in national legislation

As stated in 'Concept of Open Youth Centers and Spaces' (2010) and the '[Description of Open Youth Centres](#)' (2012) approved by the Department of Youth Affairs under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor '**youth work**' means activities of a social, informational, educational, cultural or other nature, carried out with young people or groups of young people on the basis of their needs, in order to integrate, integrate young people his social environment and enable him to participate in conscious and active personal and social life. **Youth worker** in Lithuania is seen as a specialist who is 21 years of age or older and implements youth policy rather than a representative of a certain profession. Youth worker is an adult who works with young people in their leisure time and encourages their personal and social development through work with individuals, groups or communities. Youth worker should have competences that are recognized in accordance with the procedure set by the Department of Youth Affairs. Youth worker is paid for his qualified work with young people in accordance with the procedure laid down in the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania. The youth work providers are identified and defined and **principles of youth workers' profession** are described in the 2013 order No. A1-208 of Social Security Minister and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania on '[The Approval of the Youth Workers' Job Description](#)'. In Lithuania, the concept of youth workers' profession has not yet been defined, however youth policy experts describe youth workers as those who work in the youth field having a relevant education in social work, general teachers' or social education, psychology or other educational and/or social sciences related qualification.

The **domains to which youth work pertains and the principles of youth work** in open youth centres are described in the 2012 order No. A1-570 of Social Security Minister and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania on '[Description of Open Youth Centres](#)'. The **main objectives of youth work** are described in the 2019 order No. A1-614 of Social Security Minister and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania on '[The Approval of the Description of the Procedure for Work with Street Youth, the Procedure for Mobile Work with Youth, the Description of Open Work with Youth](#)'.

Education, training and skills recognition

The youth work providers are identified and defined and principles of youth workers' profession are described in the 2013 order No. A1-208 of Social Security Minister and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania on '[The Approval of the Youth Workers' Job Description](#)'

In Lithuania, the concept of youth workers' profession has not yet been defined, however youth policy experts describe youth workers as those who work in the youth field having a relevant education in social work, general teachers' or social education, psychology or other educational and/or social sciences related qualification. For example, youth workers who work in municipal educational, cultural, sport, social institutions and can be referred to as teachers (leading a school circle), social educators, cultural workers etc.

In order to systematically support youth workers, the [Department of Youth Affairs](#) organizes a) continuous and ad hoc training; b) consulting (counseling); and c) staff meetings every year, as well as meetings with representatives of organizations, youth coordinators etc.

The aim of the training is to improve the knowledge of different forms of youth work. The training programs include theoretical and / or practical training in youth work (forms, youth work organization, competencies and qualifications required by staff, common dilemmas and challenges in youth work). Since 2018 The Department also organizes [continuous 5 module youth work training](#). The aim of the training is to provide youth workers with the knowledge of youth non-formal education, psychology, social work necessary for youth work, to familiarize them with the basic principles and psychological regularities of youth work, to describe educational and training opportunities in different education in situations. The curriculum consists of 5 modules: youth work, psychology, social work, youth non-formal education and youth policy. The scope of the training program is 168 academic hours (108 contact academic hours and 60 independent academic hours). Priority is given to participants working in open youth centers and spaces or youth organizations for up to 6 months and has no previous education in social work, social pedagogy, or psychology.

Consultations are designed for employees, managers, teams and organizations who want to improve and work more efficiently. Possible consultation topics include: team building, time management, staff motivation, promoting youth responsibility, active feedback, volunteering, work with NEETs, quality of youth work, self-evaluation, developing interdepartmental cooperation and opportunities, responding to young people's needs and aspirations, developing learning opportunities for young people, mobile youth work, youth work on the street etc. The Department of Youth Affairs **twice a year** holds **meetings** among employees of Open Youth Centers and Open Youth Spaces, and youth organizations. Meetings with youth workers are organized not only to share youth policy issues in youth work, to gain new knowledge, to receive departmental specialist advice, but also to test existing knowledge in youth work field and to discuss common youth issues in the country.

Mobility of youth workers

Activities for the professional development of youth workers - learning, networking and networking are offered by [Erasmus+ in the framework of KA1 - Mobility for Learning Actions programme](#). The activities are aimed to contribute to the exchange of experience among youth workers, encourage international cooperation and partnerships, develop training strategies and tools and exchange valuable youth experiences at international level. In 2020 call for applications, given that youth work, non-formal learning and volunteering can make a significant contribution to addressing and / or raising awareness of the needs of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in local communities, particular attention is given to project support, which involve or focus on **refugees, asylum seekers or migrants**. The potential applicants can be non-profit organizations, associations, NGOs, European youth NGOs, social enterprises, state agencies, informal groups of young people (a support organization is required) as well as public bodies at regional or national level or even a for-profit organization active in the field of corporate social responsibility. The duration of mobility of youth workers is from 3 to 24 months.

10.6 Recognition and validation of skills acquired through youth work

Existing arrangements

An updated youth worker certification system is in place. In 2010-2015 the Department of Youth Affairs under the implemented project no. VP1-4.1-VRM-07-V-01-002 'Development of an Integrated Youth Policy' financed by the European Social Fund and the State Budget, activity no. 2.1.2. 'Implementation of the Youth Worker Certification Scheme'. According to the information provided in 2019 on the Department of Youth Affairs website 182 persons have been awarded youth worker certificates (see the [list](#) of certified youth workers who have agreed to make their data public).

Skills

The youth work providers are identified and defined and principles of youth workers' profession are described in the 2013 order No. A1-208 of Social Security Minister and Labor of the Republic of Lithuania on '[The Approval of the Youth Workers' Job Description](#)'. In Lithuania, the concept of youth workers' profession has not yet been defined, however youth policy experts describe youth workers as those who work in the youth field having a relevant education in social work, general teachers' or social education, psychology or other educational and/or social sciences related qualification. For example, youth workers who work in municipal educational, cultural, sport, social institutions and can be referred to as teachers (leading a school circle), social educators, cultural workers etc.

Certification and skills recognition. In 2010-2015 the Department of Youth Affairs implemented project no. VP1-4.1-VRM-07-V-01-002 'Development of an Integrated Youth Policy' financed by the European Social Fund and the State Budget, activity no. 2.1.2. 'Implementation of the Youth Worker Certification Scheme'. As a result of the project, an updated certification system was established i.e. competences required by youth workers are assessed and recognized in accordance with the criteria and procedures established by the Department of Youth Affairs and youth worker certificates can be awarded. According to the information provided in 2019 on the Department of Youth Affairs website 182 persons have been awarded youth worker certificates (see the [list](#) of certified youth workers who have agreed to make their data public).

[Lithuanian Non-formal Education Association](#) develops and coordinates motivation and recognition systems for achievements and uses the global [Digital Open Badges](#) standards to capture, measure, and recognize achievements. It cooperates with the Department of Youth Affairs in order to develop tailor-made systems for assessing and recognizing non-formal education achievements including youth work.

10.7 Raising awareness about youth work

Information providers

The Department of Youth Affairs disseminates [information about youth work](#) on their website where the information is divided into main three sections on 1) Open Youth Work; 2) Mobile youth work; and 3) Working with youth on the street. Each section provides actual and up to date information, including documents, and links to documents, studies, guidelines and descriptions related to each type of youth work, for example, [The Description of differences between the main forms of youth work](#).

Key initiatives

[Lithuanian Non-formal Education Association](#) has a dedicated [website](#) with information about youth work that complements [information about youth work](#) provided by The Department of Youth Affairs. The Association develops and coordinates motivation and recognition systems for achievements and uses the global [Digital Open Badges](#) standards

to capture, measure, and recognize achievements. It cooperates with the Department of Youth Affairs in order to develop tailor-made systems for assessing and recognizing non-formal education achievements including non-formal learning, recognition of volunteering and youth work.

10.8 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

The need for revising existing measures is continuously addressed. As stated in the [Analysis of the implementation of youth work in Lithuania](#) it becomes extremely important to have qualified youth workers capable of working with and working with disorganized youth, youth staff with strong civic/active participation/representation in the municipalities, and to meet the needs of young people outside youth organizations as well as to communicate the needs them to youth policy decision-makers. Therefore, there is a need for better mechanisms for involving youth workers in youth-related decision-making. Legal regulation of youth work falls within the sphere of youth policy, education, social security, public order, and other public policies. There is a need for better inter-institutional cooperation to address the interdisciplinary nature of youth and youth-related issues and to meet the challenges by combining the efforts of professionals and decision-makers in different fields.

Ongoing debates

As stated in the [Analysis of the implementation of youth work in Lithuania](#) youth work is part of social policy, which is mainly funded by the state or EU or other international funds i.e. the organisations which apply for funding must comply with top-down requirements, topics, etc. and are dependent on this funding. There is a need to promote a model of self-sustaining youth work organizations that are not solely dependent on-budget funding but are able to generate income themselves (e.g. providing services, establishing social businesses, etc.).

Discussion is taking place on implementing equal opportunities and non-discrimination principles.

GLOSSARY

International volunteer programme - the programme implemented in compliance with the international obligations assumed by the Republic of Lithuania and specifying the conditions for volunteer participation, organising and financing of voluntary activities.

Host organization is a non-profit legal entity registered in the Republic of Lithuania (an organizer of a voluntary service) that is capable of facilitating the development of volunteers in a personal or professional area and ensuring their support.

Lithuanian Qualifications Framework – a system of levels of qualifications set in the Republic of Lithuania and based on the competences necessary for person’s activities.

Lithuanian youth council - a youth organisation the principal purpose whereof is to unite youth organisations of Lithuania and to represent them.

National youth council - a youth organisation the principal purpose whereof is to unite youth organisations of Lithuania and to represent them.

Organization providing voluntary services (SVO, savanorystės organizacija) is an accredited non-governmental organization operating in the Republic of Lithuania, which can provide volunteer participation in volunteering activities, co-operation with the Host

Organizations, provide methodological support to the Host Organizations for the assessment and evaluation of competencies acquired by the volunteer during volunteering.

Organisation working with youth - a public legal person one of the purposes whereof is youth-oriented activity which meets their needs.

Regional youth council - a youth organisation the principal purpose whereof is to unite the youth organisations functioning in a territorial administrative unit of the Republic of Lithuania and to represent them.

Socially excluded young people – young persons from families, that are socially vulnerable; young persons from families whose parental rights are limited; from orphanages or living in rural areas; young persons who are children of migrant workers and immigrants; young persons who are children of ethnic minorities; young people with any physical or mental disabilities; young persons who are not in education and not employed.

The nascent entrepreneurship rate - the proportion of the adult population (age 18 to 64) that are actively involved in setting up a business they will own or co-own; this business has not paid salaries, wages or any other payments to the owners for more than three months (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor)

The new business ownership rate - the proportion of the adult population that are currently an owner-manager of a new business that has paid salaries, wages or any other payments to the owners for more than three months, but not more than 42 months (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor).

Volunteer is a young person who performs gratis activities for the benefit of society in the host organization.

Volunteering - socially useful activities carried out by a volunteer free of charge, the conditions whereof are set by an agreement between the volunteer and volunteer organiser.

Young person - a person between the ages of 14 and 29.

Youth entrepreneurship – activities of youth related with identification and implementation of new opportunities in the labour market.

Youth initiative - youth activity designed to meet youth needs.

Youth organization -a public organisation or association registered in the manner prescribed by laws and other legal acts, in which young people or public youth organisations or associations comprise not less than 2/3 of its members.

Youth policy - a purposeful activity intended to resolve youth problems and to seek to create favourable conditions for the formation of the personality of a young person and his integration into public life, as well as an activity which has the purpose of achieving understanding and tolerance of society and individual groups thereof towards young people.

Youth project - a purposeful activity of a group of young people or a youth organisation which is determined by the time limits of preparation and implementation, purposes, sources of financing, authors and the persons responsible for the implementation of the project.

Youth-friendly health care services – a set health care services satisfying the needs of youth, which covers the services of treatment and prevention (including monitoring) of diseases and consulting services (also on social matters), including health education and training adapted to the needs of youth, and complies with the criteria defined by the World Health Organisation (free or affordable, with easy registration or without registration, short waiting time; non-discriminating; guaranteeing confidentiality and privacy; meeting the needs of physical, social and psychological health and development of each young person;

services should be rendered by competent staff; vsafe environment meeting the needs of young people).

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ARCHIVE

Information from previous years can be accessed and freely downloaded through the PDF files below.

2020

[Lithuania 2020.pdf](#)

2019

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2018

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2017

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