



Structures of Education,
Vocational Training
and Adult Education
Systems in Europe

LITHUANIA

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If you wish to have more detailed information on education systems in Europe, we warmly recommend that you consult the EURYBASE database (<http://www.eurydice.org>) and the CEDEFOP monographs (<http://www.cedefop.eu.int>)

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INTRODUCTION

Europe is characterised by a very wide variety of education and training systems. In order that this diversity should be fully appreciated, EURYDICE, the information network on education in Europe, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) and the European Training Foundation (ETF) regularly update a set of national monographs entitled *Structures of Education, Vocational Training and Adult Education Systems in Europe*.

Descriptions relating to individual countries in turn include basic information on the administration and structure of their systems of education and initial vocational training at all levels (from pre-primary to tertiary). Also included are descriptions of initial vocational education and training in alternance and adult education and training within provision for lifelong learning. The initial and in-service training of teachers and their status are also considered.

The information is set out in accordance with a common structure to facilitate inter-country comparisons while ensuring that special features peculiar to each system are duly emphasised.

The description for each country is preceded by a diagram of its education system. Here again, the way the diagrams are presented has, as far as possible, been standardised so that common – and differing – features of the various systems can be more easily identified and compared.

The first chapter within each country section is devoted to a short presentation of the country concerned, together with the basic principles governing its education and training, the division of responsibilities and then more specific information (relating to administration, inspection, financing, private schooling and advisory bodies). The major reforms of education systems are also considered.

The other chapters deal in turn with pre-primary education, compulsory and post-compulsory education (general, technical and vocational provision entirely within schools). The way these chapters are structured depends on each national context. Where pre-primary education is not in reality separate from primary education, or where compulsory education spans different levels, no artificial division has been created. In the case of all countries, a brief description of the aims and structure of the level of education concerned is followed by further headings devoted to the curriculum, assessment, teachers and statistics.

Initial vocational education and training in alternance is the subject of a chapter in its own right. It includes all education and training for young people that is not essentially school-based, and thus covers for example apprenticeships based on the 'dual system' pattern, sandwich course training and any other initiatives and experiments with major elements of 'on-the-job' experience.

This is followed by a chapter on tertiary education, in which a summary description is supplemented by sections on admission, tuition fees, the academic year, courses, qualifications and assessment. The chapter includes any initiatives implemented as part of the Bologna process.

The last chapter deals with continuing education and training for adults (whether in or outside the labour market, employed or unemployed). It provides information on the political, legislative and financial framework of this kind of education, on the authorities concerned and their responsibilities, as well as on the general organisation of training for adults (types of institution, access requirements, programme objectives, the curriculum and quality assurance). There is also a brief description of guidance/counselling services, as well as of questions relating to assessment and accreditation including the recognition of non-formal kinds of learning.

The situation regarding teachers is dealt with in a specific section for each level of education discussed. Also provided are national statistics on the number of pupils, students, teachers and educational institutions and, where figures are available, on pupil or student/teacher ratios, attendance and attainment rates or, yet again, on the choice of branches of study or areas of specialisation.

The National Units in the EURYDICE Network have drafted the descriptions for their countries, each using the same proposed outline of content as a common framework. The information on initial vocational education and training in alternance, and on adult education has been prepared in close collaboration with members of the CEDEFOP REFER Network (in the case of the European Union and EFTA/EEA countries) and the National Observatories of the European Training Foundation (ETF) in the case of the 12 candidate countries. We are extremely grateful to them and to all those who were involved in this project in the EURYDICE European Unit in Brussels, CEDEFOP in Thessaloniki, and the ETF in Turin for their invaluable contribution to this fundamental source of information which is vital to a better understanding of education and training systems in Europe.

Given the number of countries now covered⁽¹⁾ and the amount of data available, the description of each system of education and training may be consulted solely electronically on the website of the EURYDICE Network (<http://www.eurydice.org>), which brings it to the attention of the largest possible number of people and enables it to be updated on a more regular basis.

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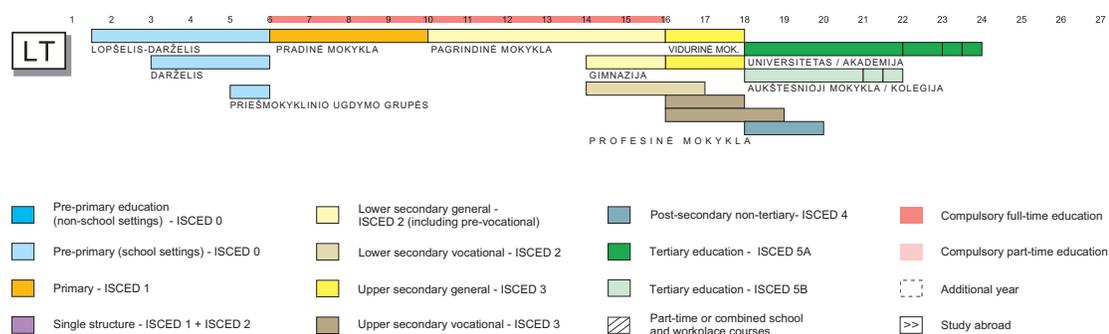
Johan van Rens
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⁽¹⁾ The 30 European countries taking part in the EU Education Programme, Socrates.

Organisation of the education system in Lithuania, 2003/04



Source: Eurydice.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Background

With an area of 65 300 km², Lithuania is a part of the economic region known as the Baltic Republics, which is situated along the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea. Autonomous since 1918, the Lithuanian State came under Soviet occupation in 1940. Although its independence was proclaimed on 11 March 1990, it was more than a year before the State achieved international recognition.

In January 2003, the population of Lithuania was 3,462,6 million with a density of 53,2 inhabitants per square kilometre. The largest city is the capital, Vilnius, with a population of 542.287. Lithuania's ethnic composition is relatively homogeneous with more than 83,5% Lithuanians, 6,3% Russians and 6,7% Poles. The remaining are Belorussians (1,2%), Ukrainians (0,7%), Jews (0.1%), Tartars (0.1%) and other nationalities (0,2%).

Before the Second World War, Lithuania was predominantly an agricultural country. This situation is slowly changing, with industry assuming a more prominent role. The main industrial sectors include electrical engineering (with one of the largest nuclear power plants in Europe), petroleum, machinery, chemicals, forestry, paper and pulp manufacturing, and food production.

In 2001, about 17,7% of the working population was engaged in agriculture, 17,9% in manufacturing industry, 15,4% in trade and services and 10,7% in education. In January 2003, officially registered unemployment amounted to 10,9%. Lithuania is a parliamentary republic governed by a democratically elected parliament, the Seimas. The Government is headed by a Prime Minister. Government jurisdiction is divided between central and municipal governments. Municipal government has undergone significant reform with the creation of regional governments for ten counties, under whose jurisdiction have been placed a total of 60 municipalities.

The official language is Lithuanian, but many Lithuanians speak one or more foreign languages, most commonly Russian and one western European language. At the outset, education in Lithuania was closely linked to

the spread of Christianity. During the periods of Russian sovereignty (1795-1914 and 1940-1990) the education system was restructured along the lines of the Russian and the Soviet education systems, respectively. In 1988, with the emergence of the Lithuanian Reform Union, Sąjūdis, Lithuanian teachers and educators publicly announced their desire to develop an education system different from that of the Soviet Union, with the concept of a *tautinė mokykla* (national school). Thus, 1988 marks the beginning of Lithuanian educational reform.

1998 opens up the second phase of reform.

In the 2002/03 school year, for every 10 000 inhabitants there were 2 330 students in all educational institutions, 1 716 students at schools for general education (*bendrojo lavinimo mokyklos*), 128 students at vocational schools (*profesinės mokyklos*), 65 in vocational colleges (*aukštesniosios mokyklos*), 76 in higher education non-university institutions (*kolegijos*) and 345 in higher education university-level institutions (*aukštosios universitetinės mokyklos*).

Overall, there are 28 denominations registered in Lithuania. Nine of them are regarded as traditional religious communities, namely the Roman Catholics, the Church of Old Rite, the Orthodox Church, Evangelical Lutherans, Evangelical Reformists, Greek Catholics, Moslems, Judaists, and Karaites.

Roman Catholics constitute the largest denomination, comprising some 79% of the country's religious population. The majority of the former are of Lithuanian and Polish nationality, though they include some Belorussians. Old Rite believers (comprising more than 0,8% of the religious population) are normally of Russian nationality, and Eastern Orthodox worshippers (4,1%) of Russian, Belorussian or Ukrainian nationality. Whereas the majority of Evangelical Reformists (0,2%) live in northern Lithuania, Evangelical Lutherans (0,6%) generally live in the south-west.

National minorities are able to teach their children their mother tongue and national history, and to foster their culture. In 2001/02, a language of instruction of a national minority was used at 201 schools of general education. These schools taught 55 240 national minority pupils (7,1% of all pupils). In Schools with national minorities follow the

common core curriculum for general education approved by the Ministry of Education and Science, and may supplement it with ethno-cultural elements.

1.2 Basis of the education system: principles – legislation

After the restoration of statehood, new educational legislation became a priority for the Seimas. The new 1991 Law on education provided for substantial changes in its aims, content, and structure. The aims meant that individuals should acquire knowledge and understanding of the principles of a democratic, pluralistic society, accept humanism and tolerance as basic values, develop independent decision-making skills and acquire professional expertise. They also implied substantial changes in teaching methods, the preparation of new textbooks, and reformed structures for more flexible secondary education. In 1992, the Government published a document entitled The General Concept of Education in Lithuania, stating that “the educational system is based on European cultural values: the absolute value of the individual, neighbourly love, innate equality among men, freedom of conscience, tolerance, the affirmation of democratic social relations”. The main principles of Lithuanian education expressed in this document are humanism, democracy, renewal, and commitment to Lithuanian culture together with the preservation of its identity and historic continuity.

The General Concept of Education in Lithuania sets out fundamental guidelines for the reform of the education system. Following its approval by the Government and Seimas, it was the basis for a new law in 1991, and has inspired the implementation of reform since then. In 1992 the document was released to the public.

The November 1998 Resolution of the Collegium (Board) of the Ministry of Education and Science establishes three priorities of the 2nd phase of educational reform:

- Modernisation of education and studies;
- Improvement of social and teaching conditions of education and studies;
- Harmonisation of the education system.

The three priorities are further itemised into 34 priority tasks, among them introduction of disciplinary streaming in upper secondary education (forms 11-12), development of

higher education into a binary system of university- and non-university levels, creation of an ICT network in education.

A new Law on Education (as revised) came into force in June 2003. It determines the goals of education, establishes principles underlying the system of education, foundations underpinning the structure of the system as well as responsibilities of the state in the field of education. The law sets out renewed educational objectives: openness, systemic coherence/consistency, accessibility and quality, life-long learning, equal start opportunities to acquire quality education, etc.

1.3 Distribution of responsibilities for the organisation and administration of the education and training system

Education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science. However, each of the ten counties has a department of education to which certain ministerial duties are delegated. The main task of these county departments is organising school inspection. Indeed, responsibility for education is, to some extent, shared between central government, the counties and municipalities, as well as the governing bodies of educational institutions.

At present, education is regulated by the Laws on Education, Science and Studies, Vocational Education and Training, Special Education, Higher Education, and subsequent legislation. The activity of regional and local educational establishments is governed by the Laws on the Governing of the County and on Local Self-government.

Educational institutions directly responsible to the central authorities (essentially vocational schools *profesinės mokyklos* and colleges *aukštesniosios mokyklos*) are established, reorganised or closed by the Ministry of Education and Science, or other ministries or government bodies.

Schools under the county authorities (boarding schools and schools for special education) are similarly maintained by the county governor.

Schools under local authorities (pre-schools and schools of general education) are administered by the local government councils, following the approval of the Ministry of Education and Science and the county governor.

Authorities able to set up and maintain institutions as described above are known as their founding bodies or “founders”. The institutions themselves are legal entities registered in compliance with government regulations. With the exception of higher education institutions which enjoy considerable autonomy, they are responsible to their founding bodies. They have rights and duties stipulated in the regulations governing their activity or, in the case of higher education institutions, in their statutes.

Education is administered by the Government and ends with examinations and the award of government-recognised diplomas or certificates. Education-related laws, government resolutions and orders of the Minister of Education and Science are legal acts that regulate standards for general education, professions and fields of specialisation, and stipulate general requirements for curricula, including their constituent modules and qualification requirements. The documents drawn up pursuant to the legal acts are then classified into a number of national education-related registers, each concerned with different issues, such as the National Register of Education, Science and Study Institutions, the National Register of Study and Training Programmes, the National Register of Licences and the Register of Education Certificates.

Except in the case of higher education, educational institutions work in accordance with teaching plans, the common core curriculum and study programmes directly or indirectly approved by the Ministry of Education and Science. Responsibility for curriculum implementation lies with the deputy school head, while extra-curricular activities and those of optional subjects are drawn up by teachers and approved by the head of the school. Institutions are the joint responsibility of their heads, or directors, and the founders who appoint, on a competitive selection basis, and dismiss them. The task of pupil or student assessment lies with teachers themselves who can exercise considerable discretion in their use of teaching methods, textbooks and other materials. Pupils and students who have satisfactorily completed whole courses – or recognised parts of courses – at public or non-state educational institutions receive an official certificate testifying to their attainment, in compliance with Ministry of Education and Science norms. The general secondary school system is administered at two levels, namely the education departments of local government councils, and the county authorities on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Science. The departments have to prepare and implement regional education programmes, and create

optimal conditions for institutions. The foregoing programmes are usually part of regional development programmes, but may also be specific thematic programmes.

Although founders have general responsibility for the financial resources of their schools, individual institutions may have some scope for self-management in this area. While, therefore, basic salary levels are set by the Government, school heads may award bonuses to staff members in accordance with government norms, provided the money is available.

Vocational education and training institutions comprising vocational schools and colleges are the responsibility of several ministries, including the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.

In the counties, representatives from all county vocational schools and colleges, the county administrative authorities, and the social partners (including trade unions, regional chambers of trade and commerce, and firms), take part in the activities of vocational education and training boards. One of the tasks of the boards is to analyse the demand for different forms of specialist training in their regions. Financial management of vocational institutions is undertaken by their heads under the supervision of the founders.

Institutions of university-level higher education are placed under the authority of the Research and Higher Education Department at the Ministry of Education and Science, and the newly established sector of non-university higher education (*Kolegijos*) (following the new 2000 Law on Higher Education) are regulated by the Ministry of Education and Science. And, as already pointed out, the State grants universities considerable autonomy.

The Ministry’s advisory body on strategic issues of the development of non-university and university-level higher education is the Higher Education Council (*Aukštojo mokslo taryba*).

The statutes of university-level institutions are approved by the Seimas. The Government may regulate activities in higher education institution through subsidies, the allocation of state-financed student places, and by other means. Institutions prepare and update their study programmes and submit them and apply for registration to the Research and Higher Education Department. The Ministry of Education and Science registers the programmes within the National Register of Study and Training Programmes (*Studijų ir mokymo programų registras*).

The supreme authority of an institution is its Senate (Council) which elects the chief administrator, the Rector. The Rectors' Conference (*Lietuvos rektorių konferencija*) is a joint meeting of rectors to discuss draft legislation prepared by the Research and Higher Education Department, as well as more general issues, and to take decisions regarding the registration of new higher education institutions.

All teaching staff is elected at the Faculty Councils (the main decision-making bodies in the faculties).

The supreme academic self-governing institution of the *Kolegija* is the Academic Council (*akademine taryba*), its activity is governed by the *Kolegija* statute. Members of the Academic Council include *Kolegija* teachers and students as well as members of other higher education and research institutions.

The *Kolegija* Council (*kolegijos taryba*) is the body of public supervision of the *Kolegija* concerned. The Council is composed of representatives appointed by the Academic Council, members from outside the *Kolegija* who are appointed by the Minister of Education and Science, and a still further third of members appointed by a joint approval of the *Kolegija* and the Minister of Education and Science. The *Kolegija* Council then elects the head of the *Kolegija*, called *direktorius*.

The *Kolegija* Direktors' Conference (*Lietuvos kolegijų direktorių konferencija*) coordinates mutual relationships of *Kolegijos* as well as *Kolegijos'* relations with central and local government.

1.4 Quality assurance

Inspection and supervision of teaching activity are not carried out by a formally independent legal entity. Instead, they are co-ordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science at different administrative levels – central, county or local – depending on the kind of educational institution concerned. It is worth noting that, although schools responsible to local government are inspected by the local body established for that purpose, they may also be inspected at the level of the county under whose jurisdiction the same local authority falls. Furthermore, the county inspectorates (as well as the central authorities) also have a right to inspect centrally-maintained schools within their geographical administrative area.

Inspection and supervision are carried out in accordance with the Supervision Plan of the Implementation of the General Policy of Education drawn up by the Ministry. The main objectives and tasks of the Plan are as follows:

- to ensure that the activities of the state inspectorates of the county governor administrations are consistent with those pursued by the Ministry;
- to collect, analyse and circulate information concerning the development of educational reform, with conclusions and proposals for the directors of institutions, county education departments and the Ministry of Education and Science;
- to explain national education policy, and provide information and guidance to institutions in implementing it.

Supervision of implementation of the general policy of education occurs as follows:

On the basis of the Plan, the Ministry of Education and Science requires county administrative authorities to supervise the area within their jurisdiction (comprising several municipalities).

When supervision by county and local administrations has been completed, the former submit their findings to the Ministry by way of feedback.

These results are analysed by the Ministry, and may provide the basis for new regulations.

1.5 Financing

The main sources of financing for public educational establishments are the state and local administration budgets. Up until the year 2002, pre-schools and schools of general education were financed from the municipal budgets on a scale that varied from one municipality to the next. School salary levels, however, were established by the central Government.

The year 2002 sees an introduction of a new system of financing general education schools which is based on a *per capita* model (whereby money follows the pupil).

The new system of financing to be implemented in three stages during 2002-2004 provides that the budget of general education schools shall be drawn on the basis of pupil baskets (*per capita*), in addition to funds for education environment, targeted

funds for implementation of programmes and projects, funds of sponsors, etc.

Pupil basket funds shall be allocated to municipalities as targeted grants. Each year the Seimas shall establish the basic allocations for pupil education *per capita*, and the total amount of pupil baskets in the school budget will depend on the number of pupils at a school concerned. The funds of pupil baskets shall be used for implementation of the education plan approved by the Minister of Education and Science, i.e. teaching and non-teaching staff remuneration, acquiring textbooks and other teaching aids, teacher in-service training, school administration, school library maintenance, and social and psychological assistance.

Operational resources and capital assets (movables and immovable) will remain within municipal/local educational budgets.

The school budget itself is managed by the founder (the local authority) which controls the financial activity of the schools together with departments subordinate to the State Control – the supreme state institution for economic and financial control, responsible to the Seimas. Vocational schools and colleges are financed from the state (government) budget, with the budget of each individual institution administered by its head who is responsible to the central authorities, the latter again sharing control of the financial activity of schools with the appropriate departments of the State Control.

Higher education institutions, though financed from the state budget, enjoy considerable autonomy in relation to their courses and activity, and their resources are managed in accordance with their statutes.

Pupils and students at schools of general education, or vocational schools and colleges do not pay for tuition. However, university-level higher education institutions may establish places for students who pay tuition fees, alongside the limited quota of state-funded places. Such fees constitute extra income for these institutions, in addition to their public budgetary allocation. In 2002/03, the number of Bachelor students was 96 535, and 37 645 of them (45%) were willing to pay for their tuition; the number of Master students was 19349, and 8474 (43,8%) of them were tuition-paying students. The newly-established non-university higher education institutions (*kolegijos*) may also establish places for students who pay tuition fees. In 2002/03, out of 26210 students at *kolegijos*, 11 844 were tuition-paying students (49,1%).

In schools for general education, certain items, such as textbooks and teaching

materials are provided for pupils by the State, but others they have to buy themselves, including exercise books, dictionaries and atlases. Students at vocational schools and colleges can obtain textbooks from their school libraries, although they normally work with materials prepared by the teachers themselves.

Students in higher education institutions are responsible for securing their own teaching materials.

Orphans or pupils from families receiving social assistance benefit from free school meals.

1.6 Advisory and consultative bodies

There are quite a lot of advisory and consultative bodies at central level in Lithuania: Education strategy group (*Švietimo strategijos grupė*), General Education Council (*Bendrojo ugdymo taryba*), Lithuanian Education Council (*Lietuvos švietimo taryba*), Non-formal Adult Education Council (*Neformaliojo suaugusiųjų švietimo taryba*), Distance Education Council (*Distancinio švietimo taryba*), Vocational Training Council (*Profesinio mokymo taryba*), Gymnasia Council (*Gimnazijų taryba*), Science Council of Lithuania (*Lietuvos mokslo taryba*), and Higher Education Council (*Aukštojo mokslo taryba*). The Education strategy group and Lithuanian Education Council as well as Distance Education Council and Vocational Training Council are consultative bodies and composed of representatives of various groups: social partners, representatives of educational institutions, local organisations, and the General Education Council, Non-formal Adult Education Council, Gymnasia Council, Science Council and Higher Education Council are advisory bodies composed of experts.

At regional level, consulted are educational councils in counties (*apskričių švietimo tarybos*). They are consultative bodies composed of representatives of various groups: social partners, representatives of educational institutions, local organisations.

Municipal educational councils (*savivaldybių švietimo tarybos*) and school councils (*mokyklų tarybos*) are consultative bodies at local level, i.e. local government and school level respectively. Municipal educational councils may be composed of social partners, press representatives, local organisations, as well as school heads and educational professionals. School councils

are normally composed of school staff, parents and pupils, and may include also representatives of local organisations.

Consultative and advisory bodies at central level normally deal with national-scale educational issues, deliberate on strategic matters and set priorities for future development. Educational councils in counties tackle education-related regional matters, and municipal educational councils deal with specific issues of the municipal area concerned. School consultative councils normally address internal issues of the school concerned.

All the consultative and advisory bodies officially participate in the decision-making process.

1.7 Private sector

Non-state institutions providing formal education may be established, reorganised and closed by private persons or recognised legal entities, with the approval of the Ministry of Education and Science. However, in 2001/02 there were only 42 such institutions (19 general education schools, one vocational school, 9 vocational colleges, 9 non-university higher education institutions and 4 universities) compared to 2 386 public ones.

Non-state educational institutions are maintained by their founders. They may offer education whose standard is formally approved by the State, along with their certificates, curricula and teaching activity.

Alternatively, there are non-state institutions offering a variety of courses in areas such as cookery, handicraft and foreign languages, whose content and standards are not subject to formal state approval, although the centres have to register themselves at central or municipal governmental departments as institutions providing, among other activities, non-formal education.

Graduates of non-state institutions are awarded a certificate recognised by the Ministry provided their education is of the state-approved standard.

To finance curricula to this standard, institutions receive (state or municipal) budgetary funds in the same way as public institutions under central and municipal government, and on a similar scale in line with the estimated expenditure per pupil in the public sector.

Tuition fees at non-state educational institutions are paid subject to agreement between those who pay (usually parents) and the school.

2. PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Pre-primary education forms the foundation for subsequent education and future personal activity. It is part of general education placed under the Minister of Education and Science which determines its curriculum and aims.

Pre-primary education answers three central needs of children, namely security, activity and self-expression. Its task is to boost their self-reliance, initiative and creativity, and look after their health. Above all, it is meant to help families take care of and educate their children skillfully. Attendance at day nurseries and kindergartens is not compulsory. But it is recommended that, from the age of four or five, children attend the kindergarten to start to mix with adults and other children outside the family, and prepare for subsequent schooling. Pre-primary institutions are becoming more varied with, at present, state and non-state schools, kindergartens run by religious communities, Montessori establishments and full- and part-time kindergartens. Day nurseries are for children aged up to three, kindergartens for those aged up to six or seven, and primary-school-type kindergartens for children who may be as old as ten.

With a view to fostering children's school maturity, pre-primary preparatory groups (*priešmokyklinio ugdymo grupės*) for children not attending pre-school institutions as well as children from disadvantaged social backgrounds and ethnic/regional minority families, are established in kindergartens, school-type kindergartens, and lower and upper secondary schools of general education.

Although pre-primary institutions may offer different methods, programmes or extra-curricular activities, they do not generally determine the kind of subsequent education children receive (except in the case of those sent to special schools).

All kindergartens are administered in the same basic way. However, administration of a primary-school-type kindergarten depends on the location of its premises. On kindergarten premises, it is managed by its own head, although a deputy head for primary education may be appointed. On the premises of a school for general education, it is managed by the administration of that school.

2.1 Organisation

Children in pre-primary institutions are grouped according to age, or in mixed age-groups. The maximum number of children together when they are aged between one-and-a-half and three, is 10. When the age-range is 3-7, the limit is 15. The minimum number of children in the institution is determined by its founder.

Although the school year begins on 1 September, provision in pre-school institutions is very loosely structured with no formally defined schooldays, terms or even lessons. Conditions encourage the communicative, artistic and cognitive potential of children, in both play and work. During these activities, educational, developmental and training considerations are all naturally taken into account. Schools are open throughout the year except on national holidays and at weekends.

A January 2000 Government Resolution set the terms now regulating payment for children who attend state pre-school institutions. The Resolution stipulates that the cost of the children's sustenance in pre-school institutions is established by the founder (though there are exemptions, or a 50% reduction to take account of limited means in cases where, for example, only one parent is bringing up a child, the father is doing military service, or there are three or more children in the family).

The State will also provide support in the form of compensatory payments when children of pre-school age are brought up at home. Additional support for children in pre-school institutions may be funded from municipal budgets, as well as from the resources of institutions themselves, enterprises or other organisations. These resources are distributed to the schools.

2.2 Programme of activities

The basic aim of pre-school education is to assist in the development of a child's

personality and impart the fundamental skills needed for life in society.

For this purpose, it follows two state programmes, The Guidelines of Pre-school Education – a Curriculum for Teachers and Parents (1993) and the 1993 kindergarten programme *Vėrinėlis* (The String). While both pursue the same goals, their methods differ. The Guidelines of Pre-school Education uses integrated education, whereas The String is based on a creative method inspired by the principles of holistic education. Instead of a curriculum divided into separate subjects, various activities conducive to a child's development are integrated, including language, general awareness, art, music, games, crafts and acting. There is also a state-approved Guide for Early Education targeted at children of the age-group of 1,5 to 3 years.

Certain pre-school groups are based on the principles of M. Montessori and R. Steiner. Institutions may also provide additional artistic, linguistic and musical education, at the request of parents.

Only special education pre-schools or specialised institutions at pre-school level (for example, in art) prepare for specific kinds of primary education that are different from the mainstream. In other cases, children may be admitted to any kind of primary school irrespective of their pre-primary institution.

Pre-school education has been supported by two international projects, namely the Democratisation of the Pre-school Education System launched by the Open Society Fund-Lithuania and Egmont Peterson (Denmark) in 1992, and Step by Step, another Open Society Fund project started in 1994. The first involves 60 pre-school establishments and primary-school-type kindergartens, and the second 62 pre-school and primary education institutions. Provision in all of them follows The Guidelines of Pre-school Education, with emphasis on the principles of a humanistic education, and use of a distinctive methodology.

In 2000, the Democratisation of the Pre-school Education System project reorganised into the Educational Studies Development Centre (*Pedagoginių studijų kaitos centras*), and the Step by Step project, into the Education Innovation Centre (*Ugdymo inovacijų centras*). These two centres have been further supporting developments in pre-school and primary education with special attention being focused on modernisation of educational studies, and publishing of literature targeted at pre-school and primary education teachers.

With a view to disseminating project ideas, in 1998 Childhood Education Centres

(*Vaikystės pedagogikos centrai*) were opened and now are operational in 14 kindergartens and school-type kindergartens. The centres maintain close relations with teacher training institutions, receive students for teaching practice, organise teacher in-service training, conferences, and take up new reform initiatives.

2.3 Assessment

Although pre-school children are not subject to regular assessment, primary schools admit children aged 6 or 7 who conform to The School Maturity Criteria established by an expert commission and approved by the Minister of Education and Science in 1996. According to the criteria, child maturity includes socio-emotional maturity (exemplified by self-awareness, self-esteem and elementary self-control, ability to mix and co-operate and a sense of responsibility), intellectual maturity (including general awareness and sensitivity, good memory skills, signs of logical reasoning, imagination and creativity), and a natural disposition towards schooling (including willingness to attend school and an interest in reading, writing and elementary mathematics).

On the basis of observation rather than formal tests, kindergarten advisers or parents (if a child has not attended pre-school) normally decide whether children should attend primary school. However, psychological testing may be used in exceptional cases. Parents may also decide which primary school their children should attend and at what age. If they want them to be taught in a language other than Lithuanian, they have to choose an appropriate school for that purpose. In regions with a sizeable linguistic minority, this is not usually a problem, although the real needs of the area concerned are taken into consideration.

2.4 Teachers

Pre-school teachers may be trained at either university-level higher education institutions or teacher training colleges. In fact, whereas the former train for any level of education, colleges prepare teachers for pre-school, primary or lower secondary work only. College courses may last three years or four (if an additional specialisation is involved),

whereas those in higher education institutions entail courses for a Bachelor's degree lasting four years or five years (if more than one subject of specialisation is studied), with a further one-and-a-half to two years for a Master's qualification.

In the case of pre-school training, teachers are trained for all aspects of their future activity but without reference to specialised subjects. College courses for pre-school teachers last just three years. Some pre-school institutions employ specialists to teach music, dance and foreign languages, and also make their facilities available for teaching practice.

2.5 Statistics

At the end of 2001, there were 699 pre-school establishments (495 in urban areas, and 204 in rural areas) attended by 89 841 children (80 308 in urban areas and 9 533 in rural ones). These schools employed 12 263 teaching staff (10 934 in urban areas and 1 329 in rural areas), including school heads, music teachers, special teachers, psychologists and other staff, of which 9 670 were group and senior teachers in regular daily contact with children. On the basis of this latter figure, the national pupil/teacher ratio was 9 (9 in urban areas and 11 in rural areas), while the average number of children in a group was 16,7 (16,9 in urban areas and 15,2 in rural areas). In 2001/02, there were 1 602 pre-primary preparatory groups (*priešmokyklinio ugdymo grupės*) attended by 25 370 children (17 921 in urban areas, and 7 449 in rural areas).

3. COMPULSORY EDUCATION

The Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania stipulates that education is compulsory for all pupils up to the age of 16 (inclusive). The Law (as revised), which came into force on 29 July 1998, established that basic (lower secondary) school should last six years (replacing the former five-year basic school). Thus, compulsory education now involves four years of primary education followed by six years of basic (lower secondary) education (ten years in all). Compulsory education is provided not only in publicly-maintained schools of general education, but in private schools that get state support if they adopt the state curriculum. However, enrolment in the latter is still limited.

3A Primary education

Schooling in Lithuania has inherited a Soviet, and even partly tsarist Russian, structure. As a result, primary schools are often not separated from basic or secondary schools and even some gymnasiums operate both primary and basic school classes.

Primary schools constitute the first level of schooling from first to fourth forms, and initially admit children aged between six and seven. Primary education is part of the statutory period of education, and is free.

The general aim of schools is to prepare for the development of an educated, independent and active personality. It seeks to do so by the following means:

- creating conditions conducive to the growth of each child's individuality;
- imparting the basics of culture (intellectual, aesthetic, ethical);
- imparting knowledge and fostering the ability to analyse and interpret it;
- developing all ways of acquiring it that are relevant to a person's life, and his or her relations with society at large.

The primary level may be classified as follows:

- Primary-school-type kindergartens incorporating forms 1 to 4, each

sometimes comprising several classes in the same year;

- sets of primary-level forms 1 to 4 in general secondary schools and basic schools;
- primary schools;
- small-set primary schools (set up in rural areas).

All primary schools follow a common state-approved core curriculum and plan for teaching. However, primary education at fine arts gymnasiums and special schools is normally followed by the same kind of training in the school concerned. Schools are not classified according to their size.

3A.1 Organisation of the school

Primary schools are coeducational and, in villages, have small sets of up to 25 children grouped into classes which each combine different ages and school years. Elsewhere, schools can be attended by 50 to 500 children depending on the size of their premises. The maximum number of pupils in a single class is 24.

Primary schools operate on the basis of either one set of pupils each day or, where there are many pupils, two sets (shifts). Classes are based on the age of pupils. The school council decides whether to divide the school year into terms or semesters. The primary school year is a minimum 170 days of school attendance. Pupils in forms 1-4 attend school five days a week throughout the year which finishes no earlier than 31 May.

In the first year, the number of lessons a week is 22, in the second to fourth years, 23. The daily teaching workload is four or five lessons. Lessons may also be given outside the formal curriculum.

Pupils receive free textbooks, but have to buy their exercise books. A variety of contrasting textbooks on mathematics, music, fine arts have been published and were available already in 1999/2000. Prior to each school year, the Ministry of Education and Science presents schools with sets of

recommended textbooks from which teachers are free to select those they prefer.

3A.2 Curriculum

Provision of primary education follows the 1992 General Curriculum Framework for Primary School approved by the Ministry of Education and Science. The curriculum of compulsory subjects includes moral education (parents may choose whether their children receive religious instruction relevant to a given denomination, or lessons in ethics), the Lithuanian language, perception and understanding of the world, mathematics, fine arts and crafts, music, physical training.

A foreign language is compulsory from the fourth year. Pupils choose one foreign language from the languages offered by the school concerned (English, German or French).

Educational provision is based on the selection by each school of one of four teaching plans proposed by the Ministry. The Curriculum Framework does not prescribe the weekly number of lessons (periods) per subject, but this is listed in the plans. In the first year of primary education, lessons last 35 minutes. In the second to fourth forms, they may last 35, 40 or 45 minutes, depending on the teaching plan chosen.

The weekly number of lessons is determined by the Ministry, their precise schedule is at the discretion of the school where, in several subjects, teachers themselves have some say in establishing the schedule. In the second and third years of primary education, a school may allocate, at its own discretion, one lesson period to a subject, and two lesson periods in the fourth year of primary education.

The weekly distribution of lessons for compulsory subjects at primary school level (2002/03) is shown below:

Forms	1	2	3	4
Subjects				
Moral education (religion or ethics)	1	1	1	1
Lithuanian language	8	7-8	7-8	7-8
Perception and understanding of the world	2	1-2	1-2	2
Foreign language	-	-	-	2-3
Mathematics	4	4-5	4-5	4-5
Fine arts and Crafts	2	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2	2
Physical training	2	2-3	2-3	2-3
Maximum number of compulsory periods	22	23	23	23
Number of periods distributed at the school's discretion*	-	1	1	2

From 2000-2001, with the implementation of strengthened subject provision, offered are: early foreign language teaching, purposive artistic education, and deepened/extended teaching of some other subjects.

Purposive artistic (music, fine arts) education can be organised from the first or some further year onwards in accordance with a programme individually prepared by a teacher (*individualioji programa*) which has to be approved by methodological societies of art and primary school teachers, and after receipt of consent of the founder of the institution concerned. On receipt of consent of the founder, the programme is confirmed by the school head.

In schools with a medium of instruction of an ethnic/regional minority language (Russian, Polish, etc.), a deepened/extended teaching of a State (Lithuanian) language can be offered from the second year. Such teaching can be organised according to a programme individually prepared by a teacher (*individualioji programa*) or a thematic plan (*teminis planas*) worked out following the General Curriculum Framework (*Bendrosios programas*) and approved in the methodological societies of primary school teachers and then confirmed by the school head.

Early foreign language (English, German, French) teaching can be offered also from the second year. Teaching is organised in accordance with the General Curriculum Framework for Early Foreign Language Teaching on the basis of which a teacher prepares an annual thematic plan or an individual programme which has to be approved by methodological societies of foreign language and primary school teachers.

Purposive artistic education and early foreign language teaching are provided on the basis of lesson periods allocated at the school's own discretion or extra-curricular education periods.

Pupils following the general curriculum are normally taught to the same level. Pupils who are integrated into mainstream education, but have special educational needs, are offered specifically adapted programmes, subject to professional recommendations from educational psychologists. Adapted programmes are drawn up by the class teacher, approved by the school group on methodology, and confirmed by the school head. Programmes for special schools are approved and confirmed by the Ministry of Education and Science. Teachers are free to choose their teaching methods. Indeed, the former teacher-centred, approach is being superseded by a new, pupil-centred ethos with an emphasis on humanistic co-operative pedagogy, active teaching and group work.

3A.3 Assessment/certification

Although primary school pupils do not take any examinations, their progress is assessed on a continuous basis, and reported to their parents. From 1 September 2001 onwards at primary school level, assessment in marks is superseded by ideographic recording of assessment.

Responsibility for assessment lies with the teacher, so pupils move on to a higher class following a decision by the teachers' council of their school.

3A.4 Progression/guidance/transition arrangements

Only pupils with a satisfactory end-of-year assessment in their subjects can continue into the next class. If the performance of pupils in some subjects is unsatisfactory, they may ask for additional assignments whose duration is determined by the teachers' council. But pupils whose attainment in certain subjects is sub-standard may sometimes move on to the following class at their parents' request. By contrast, exceptional pupils in terms of their performance may be allowed to skip one class after their knowledge of subjects taught in that class has been tested. Pupils with

learning difficulties at special schools, or in mainstream schools for general education, may be denied entry to the next class only if this is recommended by their parents or a special school commission.

Progress from primary to secondary school normally occurs on the basis of the official primary-school leaving certificate (*pradinio išsilavinimo pažymėjimas*).

3A.5 Teachers

As already mentioned under 2.4 (above), primary teachers are trained to teach all necessary subjects at university-level institutions or teacher training colleges.

Information on in-service training is given in section 3B.5.

3A.6 Statistics

In the 2002/03 school year, there were 146 public and 2 non-State primary-school-type kindergartens, and 681 public and 3 non-State primary schools. These establishments (state) were attended by 48 001 pupils. Overall, in 2002/03 at primary education level of mainstream schools, provision was offered to 180 634 pupils (87 875 of them were girls (48,6%).) They were taught by 11 069 teachers, giving a 16,3 pupil/teacher ratio. Out of the overall number of teachers at primary education level, 182 were male teachers, giving a percentage of 1,6 of all the teachers at this level.

3B Compulsory secondary education

On completion of primary education (forms 1 to 4), pupils move on to basic school (*pagrindinė mokykla*) for their lower secondary education corresponding to forms 5 to 10. Basic schools thus normally cover the 10-16 age-group. They may be autonomous, operate in conjunction with a primary school, or be part of a secondary school catering for both upper and lower levels.

When pupils complete this level of education, they are awarded a basic school-leaving certificate (*pagrindinio išsilavinimo*

pažymėjimas). A test of attainment of lower secondary education (*pagrindinio ugdymo pasiekimų patikrinimas*) is governed by Ministry of Education and Science criteria, and may be noted in the certificate. However, after four years, when aged 14 or 15, pupils may choose to enter a gymnasium (see Section 4). Pupils aged 14 who want to get a vocational qualification and find employment may also leave the *pagrindinė mokykla* and go to vocational schools to complete their basic school course.

On completion of basic school, pupils may enter upper secondary education, a vocational school, or go to work (provided they are aged 16).

Pupils unsuited to mainstream general education (generally because they lack motivation) may, at the age of 12, after just one year of basic school, go to youth schools. These separate institutions offer pupils an opportunity to acquire lower secondary education over a 10-year period or more, but also, if appropriate, to re-enter the mainstream.

Pupils from families officially in need of social welfare support can finish their compulsory education in boarding schools.

Pupils with special needs are educated and trained in various schools of special education depending on their impairment and specific requirements. Their provision approved by the Ministry of Education and Science includes general teaching programmes, as well as special courses that may be adapted to the needs of individual pupils. Pupils receive certificates when they complete special education, or at the end of its separate stages (modules). After completion of their schooling, pupils with special needs may also enter vocational schools.

The aim of all types of general education is to cater for the needs of pupils of different ages, abilities and aptitudes, while creating favourable conditions for the education of young people whose motivation also differs.

As a rule, compulsory education ends with completion of basic schooling at the age of 16.

3B.1 Organisation of the school

In all public-sector schools of general education, education is free. Private schools charge their own fees.

Although most schools of general education schools are coeducational, certain special institutions in this category are single-sex schools.

While schools may cater for as many as 2 500 pupils, the establishment of a school is authorised when there are no more than three. Small schools are common in eastern Lithuania where the population consists of several nationalities, as well as in rural areas, whereas large ones operate in the big cities. The vast majority of all institutions aim to cater for one daily set, or shift, of pupils, but 10.1% have a daily two-shift intake.

Where this occurs, pupils in forms 5 and 10 (the first and last years of basic school) are taught during the first shift, and those in forms 6 to 9 during the second, which normally ends no later than 7 p.m. Every effort is made to ensure that regular schooling is offered during the day, whereas extra-curricular activity generally occurs in the evening.

Rather than depending on the availability of school premises, the hours of the school day are arranged by each institution with due regard for a general regulation established by the Ministry of Education and Science.

The three-term school year for forms 6 to 9 lasts 195 school days. While schools may choose to organise their work over two halves of the year, the semester system is not commonly adopted until upper secondary level.

Textbooks and teaching materials are approved by ministerial expert commissions. Authors are urged to write integrated books comprising textbooks, exercises and a teacher's manual. Where more than one form of teaching support is available, teachers may choose between them. Use is also made of support in forms such as computer software, works of fiction and the mass media.

3B.2 Curriculum

The teaching plans set out both the compulsory (core) subjects and optional subjects, as well as the number of lessons per subject a week. At basic school level, the total number of lessons per 5-day school week is 27 to 31 (forms 5 to 8) and 32 (forms 9 and 10). The 17 compulsory subjects are moral education (religion or ethics), the Lithuanian language, two foreign languages (the second from form 6), mathematics, nature and man (forms 5 and 6), biology,

physics (from form 7), chemistry (from form 8), computer science (from form 9), history, civics (from form 8), geography (from form 6), art, music, crafts and physical training. These subjects are studied by all pupils, but may be allocated a variable number of lessons.

In basic schools, instruction is normally offered at one level. At the decision of each school, students can be offered a more intensive programme in foreign languages, fine arts, music and physical education. Normally, schools develop their own individual syllabus, which is approved by the head of the school. During the last two years of compulsory education, all the students are given the possibility of choosing several modules on different subjects to compensate for possible gaps in their knowledge and skills. More advanced modules can be offered to further develop skills or to satisfy future professional needs. These modules are aimed at preparing the students for choosing their further studies in upper secondary school.

The weekly distribution of lessons for compulsory subjects at basic school level (2002/03): is shown below

Form subject	5	6	7	8	Overall, in forms 5 to 8
1. Curriculum subjects					
Moral education (religion or ethics)	1	1	1	1	4
A. Languages					
Lithuanian language	5-6	5-6	5-6	5	20
Foreign language (1 st)	3-4	3	3	3	12
Foreign language (2 nd)	-	2-3	2-3	2-3	6
Elective subjects	-	-	-	-	-
B. NATURAL SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS					
Mathematics	4-5	4-5	4-5	4	16
Nature and man	2	2	-	-	4
Biology	-	-	2	1	3
Physics	-	-	1	2	3
Chemistry	-	-	-	2	2
Elective subjects	-	-	-	-	-
C. Social sciences					
History	2	2	2	2	8
Basics of civic society	-	-	-	1	1
Geography	-	2	2	2	6
Elective subjects	-	-	-	-	-
D. Fine arts and crafts, physical training					
Fine arts	1	1	1	1	4
Music	1	1	1	1	4
Crafts	2	2	2	1-2	7
Physical training	2-3	2-3	2-3	2-3	8
Civil safety, traffic safety	-	-	-	-	-
Elective subjects	-	-	-	-	-
Overall: for a 5-day school week	23	27	28	30	
Number of lessons distributed at the school's discretion*	4	2	2	1	9
Maximum number of compulsory lessons	for a 5-day school week	27	29	30	31

Form subject	9	10	Overall in forms 9-10	
1. Curriculum subjects				
Moral education (religion or ethics)	1	1	2	
A. Languages				
Lithuanian language	5-4	5-4	9+ module	
Foreign language (1 st)	3	3	6	
Foreign language (2 nd)	2-3	2-3	4	
Elective subjects, subject modules	-	-	-	
B. Natural sciences and mathematics				
Mathematics	4-3	4-3	7+ modules	
Nature and man	-	-	-	
Biology	1-2	1-2	3	
Physics	2	2	4	
Chemistry	2	2	4	
Computer science	1-2	1-2	2	
Elective subjects, subject modules	-	-	-	
C. Social sciences				
History	2	2	4	
Basics of civic society	-	1	1	
Geography	2	1-2	3	
Economics	1*	-	1	
Elective subjects, subject modules	-	-	-	
D. Fine arts and crafts, physical training				
Fine arts	1	1	2	
Music	1	1	2	
Crafts	1-2	1-2	2	
Physical training	2-3	2-3	4	
Civil safety	-	-	-	
Elective subjects, subject modules	-	-	-	
Overall: for a 5-day school week	29	28	56	
Number of lessons distributed at the school's discretion*	3	4	8	
Maximum number of compulsory lessons	for a 5-day school week	32	32	64

As in primary schools, teachers are free to choose their teaching methods. Among the more common methods are discussions, team work, modelling, "brain storming", project design, experimentation, interviewing, analysis and research, and out-of-school assignments. Integrated instruction, and methods geared to the needs of individual pupils are all actively promoted.

3B.3 Assessment/certification

Assessment distinguishes three levels:

- an individual level concerned with the progress of a particular pupil as viewed personally by the teacher;
- a group level reflecting the teacher's perception of the class as a whole;
- the official national level with its natural concern for transmitting and upholding sound standards throughout the school.

In all end-of-term and end-of-year assessments in basic schools, the attainment of pupils is measured by means of a 10-point system even though teachers may use other systems with the approval of the school. Teachers may also choose whether

assessment should be based on written or oral tests, ongoing credits or projects, and how often they should be assigned.

The results are assessed by specialist commissions of teachers from the same school in the subjects concerned.

On completion of basic school, a test of attainment of lower secondary education may be held.

On successful completion of lower secondary education and satisfactory assessment of attainment results, pupils are awarded a leaving certificate (*pagrindinio išsilavinimo pažymėjimas*) showing their assessment based on the 10-point system in all the subjects.

3B.4 Progression/guidance/transition arrangements

Pupils with a satisfactory end-of-year assessment in all compulsory subjects can continue into the next class.

On successful completion of lower secondary education and satisfactory assessment of attainment results, pupils are awarded a leaving certificate (*pagrindinio išsilavinimo pažymėjimas*). The certificate entitles them to go on with their education at general upper secondary school or enter a vocational school.

3B.5 Teachers

Lower and upper secondary teachers receive training as subject specialists. Graduates of university-level teacher training institutions are awarded the Diploma of Higher Education (the Bachelor's Diploma) entitling them to teach at all levels of secondary school, including gymnasiums. Their studies may involve a course for a Bachelor's degree lasting four to five years (five if an additional specialisation is acquired), as well as a study programme for a Master's degree lasting a further one-and-a-half to two years. Some university-level higher education institutions, Vilnius University among them, offer one-year teacher training programmes to holders of the Bachelor's diploma, upon completion of which the Certificate of Teaching Qualification is awarded.

Those who graduate from teacher training colleges are awarded the Diploma of College Education, entitling them to teach their subject(s) in basic school. Courses last four years if they specialise in more than one subject. Otherwise they last for three.

With the implementation of the National Programme of Teacher Training Restructuring, a concept of teacher training restructuring is currently under preparation. The draft concept provides for a gradual transition of teacher training to exclusively higher education (university and non-university) provision; changing of the teacher training model; to strike the right balance between the academic studies and practical training/teaching practice.

Under the new law on Civil Service (with effect from 1 July 2002), teachers do not have civil servants status. They are recruited by the school head. They are tenured and may work either full-time or part-time.

At present in Lithuania, there are 45 teacher education centres, and seven institutions of in-service teacher training at various institutes and universities.

According to two Ministry Resolutions of 1995 and 1998 respectively, all teachers are entitled to a maximum of 50 and a minimum of 15 paid days of in-service training over a five-year period, with official assessment "at the expense of an educational institution". In order to acquire a higher teaching qualification, teachers have to undergo an appraisal following qualification requirements. Also, requirements for his/her teaching performance are taken into account. There are four categories of teaching qualification (teacher status): teacher (*mokytojas*), senior teacher (*vyresnysis mokytojas*), teacher methodologist (*mokytojas metodininkas*) and expert teacher (*mokytojas ekspertas*).

In-service training may be either compulsory (necessary for the implementation of the State educational programme, or teacher assessment in the case of poor teaching performance), or voluntary. Training at the wish of teachers is encouraged by institutions and supported by the State, provided its content corresponds to the interests of the educational system.

Furthermore, training may be continuous or occasional. Ideally, occasional training lasts one to three working days comprising a single session, while its maximum length is ten. Teachers who undergo training for which they have to account, receive certificates from in-service training institutions. Continuous training, on the other hand, is organised in the form of several such sessions. Teachers choose either the whole

of a proposed training programme or the parts of relevance to them. Training is considered preferable when pupils are on holiday.

There is a shortage of teachers, not so much in terms of particular levels of secondary education, as in certain subjects in places where there are no teacher training institutions.

The Ministry of Education and Science is attempting to remedy this by organising retraining for non-specialists in institutions of higher education, and vocational colleges. Priority for admission to such courses goes to teachers who are unemployed or likely to become so. As a result, they get a chance to qualify. They are given an opportunity to qualify as teachers of subjects for which there is considerable demand, especially foreign languages, and ICT.

3B.6 Statistics

In 2001/02, 7619 pupils were offered provision in 65 schools of special education.

In 2002/03 there were 639 basic schools existing as autonomous educational institutions catering for 117 875 pupils.

In 2002, a total of 316139 pupils were offered provision in forms 5 to 10 of general education schools and forms 1 and 2 of *gimnazija* (i.e., at the lower secondary education level of the institution).

Number of male educational staff in general education schools, and their percentage within the whole educational staff in general education schools, 2001/02

		Of them male educational staff	Percentage of male educational staff within the educational staff concerned
Total number of teaching and school management staff	49843	7066	14,2
of them school heads	261	22	8,4
of primary schools and primary-school-type kindergartens	644	275	42,7
of youth and basic schools	521	306	58,7
of secondary schools	83	50	60,2
of <i>gimnazija</i> deputy school heads for education	2203	240	10,9
Teachers minus school management staff	45390	6169	13,6
at primary school level	11841	206	1,7
at lower and upper secondary level	33549	5963	17,8

4. POST-COMPULSORY GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

4.A. General secondary education

Students leaving compulsory school can continue their studies in one of the following institutions: secondary schools, gymnasia, vocational schools, some boarding and special education schools.

With the transition from the five-year to six-year basic school over, upper secondary education is currently offered in the last two years of schooling (forms 11-12). At public educational institutions, it is free of charge.

To enter an upper secondary school, pupils must have a certificate testifying to the completion of lower secondary education (*pagrindinio išsilavinimo pažymėjimas*). However, in Lithuania, no schools offer exclusively upper secondary education. Instead, they normally cover at least lower and upper secondary levels, and quite often primary level too. Consequently, school premises for general education usually accommodate large numbers of pupils, especially in the cities. Overall, there are 478 secondary schools, 62% of them in cities. 82,8% operating one daily shift of pupils, and the remainder, two. The first daily shift accounts for 90,7% of all pupils in cities, while the second shift accounts for 9,3%. The average number of pupils in a public secondary school for general education is 267.

4.A.1 Organisation of the school

The beginning of the school year is 1 September, while the year in the last (12th) form ends on 1 May. It is organised over three terms (or in some gymnasia and secondary schools, two semesters), and lasts 195 days.

As at primary schools, regular schooling usually takes place in the daytime, whereas extra-curricular activity may be outside school hours or in the evening. For optional or extra-curricular subjects, pupils from

different classes of the same year may be brought together.

Textbooks are selected from a ministerially approved list, and schools get money to buy both books and teaching material.

4.A.2 Curriculum

From the school year 2000/01, all general schools at upper secondary level began offering disciplinary diversification by way of 4 subject streams: humanitarian (*humanitarinis profilis*), mathematics and natural sciences (*realinis profilis*), fine arts (*menų profilis*) and technological (*technologinis profilis*). Subject streams (*profilis*) may further be diversified into sub-streams (*pakraipa*). 60% of the curriculum is made up of the core curriculum, 25%, of compulsory options (constituting the compulsory curriculum of the disciplinary stream concerned), and 15% of compulsory options determining the sub-stream, of options pupils are free to choose.

The maximum number of weekly lessons for pupils choosing the humanitarian stream or that of mathematics and natural sciences is 32 in a five-school-day week;

for those choosing fine arts and technological streams, the maximum number is 34.

The minimum number of weekly lessons is 28.

Overall, pupils have to learn not less than 10 subjects in two years (11th and 12th forms), whereas the maximum number of subjects pupils may choose to study may not exceed 12.

Pupils choosing fine arts and technological streams, may follow courses of not more than 10 subjects of general education.

The core curriculum and compulsory curriculum for the four curricular areas (2002/03) is shown below:

Subject/Subject block	Core curriculum	Compulsory curriculum			
		Streams			
		Humanitarian	Mathematics and natural sciences	Fine arts	Technological
Moral education	2*	2*	2*	2*	2*
Religion		c.o.	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.
Ethics		c.o.	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.
Lithuanian language	7	7	7	7	7
Foreign language	6	6	6	6	6
Foreign language		4	4		
Social sciences	4*	4	4*	4*	4*
History and political sciences		4	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.
Geography and political sciences		-	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.
Integrated course of social sciences		-	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.
Mathematics	5	5	5	5	5
ICT	2	2	2	2	2
Natural sciences	4*	4	12	4*	4*
Biology		c.o.	4	c.o.	c.o.
Physics and astronomy		c.o.	4	c.o.	c.o.
Chemistry		c.o.	4	c.o.	c.o.
Integrated course of natural science		c.o.		c.o.	c.o.
Art	2*	2*	2*	2*	2*
Fine arts		c.o.	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.
Music		c.o.	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.
Theatre		c.o.	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.
Choreography		c.o.	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.
Artistic expression	1*	3*	1*	3*	1*
Physical training	4*	4-6*	4-6*	4-6*	4-6*
General physical training		c.o.	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.
Sports branch chosen		c.o.	c.o.	c.o.	c.o.

c.o. – compulsory option

Pupils in humanitarian classes have to learn not less than two foreign languages, whereas in the remaining three streams, at least one.

Pupils in **humanitarian and fine arts streams** have to learn history and political sciences, whereas pupils of the other streams choose either a programme of history and political sciences or that of

geography and political sciences or an integrated course of social sciences.

Pupils in **classes of mathematics and natural sciences** have to learn (with a few exceptions) 3 subjects of natural sciences: biology, chemistry and physics.

Pupils in **humanitarian, fine arts and technological classes** have to choose one of the subjects of natural sciences: either biology, physics or chemistry or an integrated course of natural sciences. Also, they may choose more than one such subject provided the overall number of subjects studied in two years (11th and 12th forms) does not exceed 12.

Pupils are offered courses at two different levels: general (*bendrasis*) and extended (*išplėstinis*).

Pupils have to learn 2 subjects of the stream chosen at the extended level.

Pupils in **humanitarian classes** may choose such 2 subjects from the following: the Lithuanian language, the mother tongue, history, foreign languages and technological subjects.

Pupils in **classes of mathematics and natural sciences** choose the 2 subjects from mathematics, ITC, biology, chemistry, and physics and technological subjects.

Following the extended level, pupils may be taught not more than 5 subjects.

Once again, teachers are free to choose their methods which include discussion, projects, interviewing and the other kinds of approach to which reference has already been made at the end of section 3B.2.

4.A.3 Assessment/certification

At upper secondary level, pupil assessment is once again essentially based on a 10-point system, as described for basic education in section 3B.3.

Until 1999, most universities required prospective students to take university entrance exams. The results of these, together with the student's average mark from the school leaving exams were used for selection purposes. To improve the system of admission to higher education, partly with a view to reconciling the secondary school leaving examinations and entrance examinations to higher education, in 1999, national secondary school leaving examinations were started to be offered whereby examination administration was

carried out and assessment made on a centralised basis which are administered and assessment is made on a centralised basis).

To be awarded the upper secondary school leaving certificate, pupils have to successfully pass four **upper secondary school-leaving examinations** in total, yet there is one compulsory exam, the Lithuanian language for all (this may be as the mother tongue or as the State language).

Three subjects have to be chosen from the curriculum followed. Two additional subjects from outside the curriculum followed may also be chosen. Yet to get the upper secondary school leaving certificate, three examinations in subjects of the individually followed curriculum, have to be successfully passed (alongside the one in the Lithuanian language). If out of the set of examinations taken, four are successfully passed, yet one of the four is not from the individually followed curriculum, the pupil is not entitled to the award of the school leaving certificate.

On completion of the full 12 years of secondary school, a school-leaving (maturity) certificate (*Brandos atestatas*) is awarded, stipulating the examinations passed, their level and points assessment, as well as giving similar information on all subjects for the end of the 12th school year or the year the course in a subject has been completed.

4.A.4 Progression/guidance/ transition arrangements

Pupils with a satisfactory end-of-year assessment in all their subjects can continue into the next class.

The school-leaving certificate (*brandos atestatas*) entitles their holders to enter any Lithuanian higher education institution, or vocational school. Yet precisely which kind of institution they attend will be determined by their marks in the maturity certificate, as well as their all-round knowledge and ability. And higher education institutions establish their own criteria to help them decide which young people they are going to admit.

Those unable to enroll in higher education institutions, vocational schools may be trained to practise a trade in adult education centres.

4.A.5 Teachers

Upper secondary school teachers have to hold the (Bachelor's) Diploma of Higher Education, entitling them to teach at all levels of secondary school (including gymnasiums). The period of study involved has already been noted at the start of section 2.4 Information on in-service training is given in section 3B.5.

4.A.6 Statistics

In 2002/03, 478 secondary schools in urban areas catered for 324 638 pupils. The average number of pupils in a class in 2002 was 19.6 (12,2 in rural areas, and 24,4 in urban ones). In 2001/02, 40 950 school leavers were awarded school leaving certificates (*brandos atestatats*).

In 2002, higher education institutions enrolled some 63,4% of all upper secondary school-leavers, vocational colleges, 11,8%, and vocational schools, 9,3%.

4.B. Vocational secondary education

Like most other educational activity, initial vocational education comes under the Ministry of Education and Science which inherited the network of vocational technical schools in the former Soviet Union. With the transition to a market economy and discontinuation of the compulsory transfer of pupils of poor learning performance to these schools, there was an urgent need to reform the system so that training responded better to the wishes of young people and the needs of the labour market.

Although reform started in 1990, it has really gathered pace since 1994. While initiatives under the PHARE programme have been especially significant in this respect, several vocational institutions have also been founded, including the Lithuanian Council of Vocational Training, the Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training, the National Standards Group, the County Vocational Education and Training Boards, the Centre for Vocational Education and Research at Vyautas Magnus University, and the National Resource Centre.

The October 1997 Law on Vocational Education and Training sets out a full reform of the system, defining its key institutions, responsibilities and processes. The main institutions are the Ministry of Education and Science (responsible for national policy), and the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (concerned with labour market vocational training policy), as well as other ministries, institutions of local administration, the Lithuanian Vocational Education and Training Council and the social partners.

The Lithuanian Council of Vocational Education and Training has the role of an advisory body. In line with government policy for involving the social partners, the Council is formed from equal numbers of participants from state authorities and organisations representing the interests of both employers and employees.

The state shares the right to found vocational schools and colleges with private interests.

Co-operation with the social partners is conducted in the following main areas:

- initiation of training in new trades and skills;
- the development of new curricula;
- trainee placements for practical training;
- the establishment of national standards for vocational education and training;
- setting of, and participation in, the final examinations needed to qualify;
- participation in the expert commissions of the Ministry of Education and Science;
- renovation and modernisation of school facilities for practical training.

General principles for funding and quality control are established on a centralised basis. In the area of initial vocational training, responsibility for these matters lies with the Ministry of Education and Science, but training within the labour market system comes under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. However, as the latter is not considered a part of initial vocational education and training, information on it is not included here.

State orders for training are made in co-operation with the administrative and employers' organisations of the regions concerned.

4.B.1 Organisation of the school

Four options of vocational school (*profesinė mokykla*) training have been introduced since 1990/91.

The first is aimed at young people who have not finished basic school. By undergoing this option, they may do so, and also acquire very simple qualifications. There are two types of teaching programmes, one lasting 2 years (when provision of only vocational education is offered), the other lasting 3 years (when provision of both vocational and general lower secondary education is offered).

Those wishing to embark on the second option have to finish basic school. While pupils who attend this option obtain professional qualifications, essential economic training, and general cultural instruction, they are not awarded a secondary school certificate. Studies last for two years.

The third option is aimed at those who have finished basic school. As a result of this option, they can acquire both professional qualifications and a secondary school certificate. Here, courses last for three years.

Finally, the fourth option is aimed at those who have finished their upper secondary schooling but are not academically inclined, and prefer to be trained as workers. Depending on the complexity of the prospective occupation, the duration of studies will be between one and two years.

Initial vocational training institutions enroll pupils aged at least 14. The order and conditions of admission are determined by the founder of the institution. Tuition at vocational schools is free, and pupils making good progress receive grants.

4.B.2. Curriculum

The curricular content of training in state-recognised vocational sectors consists of a core part, for which the Ministry of Education and Science is responsible, and an optional part administered directly by the individual schools.

Only the main guidelines for restructuring curricular content have been laid down. They reject narrow specialisation, emphasising that all students should have a basic knowledge

of economics, and that curricula should correspond to labour market needs.

The curricula are basically designed by the schools themselves, in accordance with general ministerial requirements. New teaching programmes are revised by panels of experts, including employer representatives, and approved by the Minister of Education and Science. Vocational schools have to review their curricula every five years and, in practice, this happens more frequently still.

Designing of the curricular content of training is based on the assumption that the curriculum should aim at consistent objectives of training (which are regulated by the Vocational Training Standards (*Profesinio rengimo standartai*) as well as supplementary objectives (which are within the school's discretion to choose). The consistent training objectives determine the core of the qualifications, and the supplementary objectives specify a specialisation. In the case where a training standard has not yet been created, schools draw up a training programme on the basis of the National Register of Study and Training Programmes (*Studijų ir mokymo programų registras*) and other documents governing the development of the curricular content.

In designing curricula, the need for practical training to account for around 70% of the total time allotted to subjects is emphasised. Work safety and environmental issues are being integrated into the overall package of subjects. The number of teaching hours in general education subjects, in the above-mentioned third option of the curriculum, should correspond to the number in the secondary school general curriculum. Courses in foreign languages and information technologies are optional in the first, second and fourth options, and compulsory in the third option. In the first option, 59 hours a year are assigned to these courses, in the second option 120 hours, and in the fourth, 80.

In vocational schools, the textbooks used for general education are the same as those in secondary schools. The books used in vocational training itself are either approved by Lithuanian experts, or translations of recommended foreign textbooks. However, the main support has consisted of training packages prepared by the instructors themselves, on the basis of advice from EU experts under the PHARE Programme. All such material is stored in the National Resource Centre, in order to relay experience gained in the field.

4.B.3.Assessment/certification

The knowledge and professional skills of vocational school students are, once again, assessed within the 10-point system. Teaching of theoretical subjects concludes with an evaluation of what students have learnt, using a credit system or an examination, in accordance with the teaching plans. Achievements in the course of practical training are recorded as "accomplished" or "unaccomplished" in the student notebook. A professional qualification is awarded to students who have followed the whole of the theoretical and practical course of training, and passed the final examination consisting of a comprehensive theoretical part and a demonstration of practical skills.

To conduct exams, an impartial qualification commission of employers, which is approved by the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, is set up. Practical assignments are undertaken only after the theoretical part of the examination has been passed.

The state-approved qualifications are the certificate of qualification, and the diploma of a qualified worker. Trainees who have completed the first option of initial vocational training and passed the examinations involved, are awarded the certificate *Kvalifikacijos pažymėjimas*. Those who have completed training in the second, third and fourth options, and passed the examinations for a qualified worker, are awarded the diploma *Profesinio mokymo diplomas*.

4.B.4.Progression/guidance/transition arrangements

Vocational guidance in Lithuania in initial vocational training is offered by vocational guidance and counselling divisions of supplementary/extra-curricular education institutions under the Ministry of Education and Science and by the territorial services of the Lithuanian Labour Market Training Authority (which is under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour) in the counties.

Today there are 6 vocational guidance and counselling centres within the system of the Lithuanian Labour Market Training Authority, all of them located in larger cities of the country. It is planned to establish similar centres in all the 10 counties of Lithuania by the year 2005.

An information system of vocational education and training is currently being created and will be integrated into the general information system of Lithuanian education. The system of vocational education consists of training and information components. The main elements in the information component of the system are databases of training institutions, training programmes, qualification certificates and vocational training licences. This subsystem will offer information on:

- professions and qualification requirements for the professions;
- education and training pathways (general and vocational education, higher education and research institutions, study and training programmes, education and training licences, qualification certificates), as well as enterprises offering training services;
- labour market situation and its development trends.

A number of items of this type of information are already accessible on the Internet. Plans are to integrate this information system into information systems of the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) and the European Union.

4.B.5. Teachers

Qualification requirements for teachers are determined by the Ministry of Education and Science, and they equally apply both to teachers engaged in the initial VET, and to the teachers engaged in labour market training. The general requirements are as follows:

- at least 3 years studies at a higher education school or college;
- successful completion of the study programme of a specific subject;
- teaching qualification.

A college diploma confers the right to work in an institution offering education not higher than lower secondary. A higher education diploma confers the right to work in all types of educational institutions. A person who has completed a non-pedagogical higher education or college-type study programme may be employed as a teacher only upon acquiring a qualification of a teacher. Pursuant to the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania, the graduates of vocational schools may also be engaged in VET institutions as vocational teachers, if

they possess an obligatory certificate of the minimal course in pedagogy and psychology.

In fact, there are no trainers as such, with qualifications especially geared to vocational schools. Instead, the activity is performed by teachers of general education and vocational subjects respectively, as well as instructors, known as foremen, who help students acquire practical skills in firms.

Staff in all three groups should ideally be adequately qualified to work with trainees in terms of the appropriate discipline, teaching methods and psychology. Yet this is not always the case. Teachers in general education are often graduates from the teacher training colleges or universities, whereas those who teach vocational subjects invariably have only a qualification in a technical/vocational discipline.

The issue of appropriate qualifications for teachers of vocational schools is now being addressed through in-service training. Vocational teachers may upgrade their qualification through the formal or non-formal structures of VET. Non-formal upgrading of qualification is supported as long as the contents thereof meets the interests of VET. The main organiser of the qualification upgrading activities is the Centre of Professional Development of Teachers.

Since 1994, four kinds of qualification have been introduced. In vocational schools, these are vocational teacher (*profesijos mokytojas*), senior vocational teacher (*vyresnysis profesijos mokytojas*), vocational teacher-methodologist (*profesijos mokytojas-metodininkas*) and vocational teacher-expert (*profesijos mokytojas-ekspertas*). Teacher methodologists and experts at vocational schools are assessed by the chief/general commission for vocational teacher certification/appraisal (*vyriausioji profesijos mokytojų atestacijos komisija*) at the Ministry of Education and Science, while those concentrating on the qualification of senior vocational teacher are evaluated by the qualification commission (*kvalifikacijos komisija*) at the Teacher Professional Development Centre (*Pedagogų profesinės raidos centras*)..

4.B.6.Statistics

VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

School year	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002
Number of schools, of which private ones	105 2	107 1	104 1	104 1	841	811
Number of students	51651	53670	56442	51962	47005	45057
Entrants	20740	20507	21448	15473	14968	18782
Graduates	14314	13566	13726	14645	14875	14878
Drop-out-rate	9,1	9,0	9,1		4,3	

4.C. Post-secondary education

4.C.1.Organisation of the school

Vocational Colleges (*aukštesnioji mokykla*) provide students of any age who have completed upper secondary school, or third- and fourth-option vocational schools, with opportunities for free specialised training. Students displaying noteworthy progress are eligible for grants.

Full-time training courses last three school years. The duration of extra-mural (part-time/distance) studies (adult training) is usually one year longer.

Currently, vocational colleges are undergoing a transitional reform period with those meeting eligibility requirements being accredited as non-university higher education institutions and those not meeting the requirements, as vocational schools. The reorganisation of vocational colleges is to be finished by the end of 2003.

4.C.2.Curriculum

In vocational colleges, the school year lasts 42 weeks (including examinations).

Generally, it falls into two terms (autumn and spring) of similar length. The Register of Study and Training Programmes lists approximately 140 study programmes at college level. As with vocational schools, college study programmes are designed by colleges themselves, subject to revision by Ministry of Education and Science experts and the approval of the Minister. As also in the case of vocational schools, colleges place considerable emphasis on practical training which accounts for no less than 30% of all study time. Theoretical subjects are normally of an applied nature.

4.C.3.Assessment/certification

In vocational colleges, each term concludes with a set of no more than four examinations, with a 10-point system for assessment. Courses as a whole are completed with a final examination, or a diploma project. Students who pass are awarded a Diploma of College Graduation indicating the college, the study programme and the qualification acquired for a specific occupation that its holder can enter.

4.C.4.Progression/guidance/transition arrangements

For guidance arrangements, see 4.b.4.

4.C.5.Teachers

College teachers are graduates from university-level higher education institutions. Teachers who, at the most, have just a technical/vocational qualification have to acquire an additional qualification over the first year of their teaching career. Efforts are made for vocational subjects to be taught by persons with research, practical or creative experience.

In vocational colleges, the categories of teacher qualification are assistant teacher (*dėstytojas asistentas*), teacher (*dėstytojas*), senior teacher (*vyresnysis dėstytojas*) and expert teacher (*dėstytojas ekspertas*).

In vocational colleges, entrants to the lower categories of assistant teacher and teacher

are approved by commissions at the colleges themselves, while senior and expert teachers are assessed, on recommendation of the college concerned, by the General Commission for Assessment of College Teachers at the Ministry of Education and Science. The general regulations for assessment are drawn up by the Ministry, and the responsibility for supervision lies with the county education departments.

4.C.6.Statistics

VOCATIONAL COLLEGES

School year	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002
Number of vocational colleges of which private ones	68 15	70 17	70 18	69 18	57 14	42 9
Number of students, total	26492	30329	33881	38397	37378	31964
full time courses	21956	24386	26087	27632	25051	21203
part-time courses	99	153	120	142	98	19
correspondence courses	4437	5790	7674	10623	12229	10742
Entrants, total	10957	12202	13169	14611	11896	8200
full time courses	8987	9860	9920	10217	8028	6050
part-time courses	0	41	35	95	34	1
correspondence courses	1950	2301	3214	4299	3834	2149
Graduates, total	6306	5746	6091	7202	8100	8666
full time courses	5587	5361	5438	6139	6812	6991
part-time courses	0	12	47	50	-	-
correspondence courses	719	373	606	1013	1288	1675
Drop-out-rate	10,9	13,4	8,8		6,3	

5. INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN ALTERNANCE

In Lithuania, this type of training does not exist. Vocational education is mainly school-based. There is, however, a distinction between the general and vocational branches.

6. TERTIARY EDUCATION

6A Non-university higher education

The sector of non-university higher education was established in 2000 following the passing of the Law on Higher Education. The first non-university higher education institutions with the name of *Kolegija* were established on the basis of the former *Aukštesniosios mokyklos* (vocational colleges). With a view to developing the non-university higher education sector, *Kolegijos* are to be further established mainly on the basis of the *Aukštesniosios mokyklos*.

6A.1 Admission requirements

The main admission requirement is for entrants to hold an upper secondary certificate (*brandos atestatas*) or an equivalent document. Admission is based on selection on the basis of the results of upper secondary school leaving examinations. A test can also be held. *Kolegijos* may lay down specific institutional admission requirements.

6A.2 Fees/Financial support for students

At public *Kolegijos*, 58,7% of students are financed by the State. Students at non-State *Kolegijos* pay tuition fees which are set by the *Kolegija* concerned.

6A.3 Academic year

The academic year normally lasts from September 1 till July 1 and falls into two semesters, autumn and spring.

6A.4 Courses

Kolegijos offer courses of teacher training and education, law, business and administration, arts, humanities, computing, engineering and engineering trades, manufacturing and processing, agriculture, forestry and fishery, veterinary, health, social services, personal services, transport services. On completion of the courses, graduates acquire qualifications of a lawyer, teacher, manager, administrator, financier, nurse, and engineer, etc.. Requirements for the knowledge, skills and abilities a student should acquire during the courses, are laid down by the designer of the study programme concerned on the basis of the regulation of the study trend/curriculum area, national standard of vocational education and training, and other regulatory documents.

Kolegijos offer both full- and part-time (evening and extramural) courses. Full-time courses normally last three years. Some courses (e.g., those of rehabilitation and care) last up to three and a half years. Part-time (evening and extramural) courses last four to four and a half years.

Employed are a variety of teaching and learning methods, with a special emphasis being placed on students' individual work and vocational practice. Educational material available at *Kolegija* libraries are free of charge.

6A.5 Assessment/Qualifications

Courses of each subject are completed by an examination or a student's individual work (project) or a credit test with the assessment pass/fail. Each course programme is concluded by leaving examinations and/or defending of a final work (project). During the final assessment, a student is to demonstrate that he/she has acquired the knowledge, skills and abilities defined/set by the course programme.

6A.6 Teachers

The teaching positions at the *Kolegija* are assistant (*asistentas*), lecturer (*lektorius*) and docent or associated professor (*docentas*). An *asistentas* and *lektorius* are required to hold a Master's degree or a professional qualification equivalent to the degree. A *docentas* should hold a scientific Doctor's degree. Sometimes, the position of a *docentas* may be taken up by a Master's degree-holder. Which subjects a teacher with a scientific degree or experience of practical work at an enterprise should teach, is established by the regulation of the study trend/curriculum area concerned. Teachers may hold primary and non-primary positions. The internal system of study assurance at *Kolegijos* provides for sustained teacher in-service training.

6A.7 Statistics

In 2001/02, provision was offered by 16 non-university higher education institutions (*Kolegija*), 9 of them were non-state. These institutions catered for a total of 10 377 students, 1914 of them were offered provision by non-state institutions. In the autumn of 2002, the number of the teaching staff at *Kolegija* was 2820 teachers (2006 of them worked as primary staff).

Educational background of entrants of *Kolegija* in 2001/02 (%):

Secondary education	64,7
Vocational education	9,4
<i>Aukštesnioji mokykla</i>	24,8

6B University-level Higher Education

In March 2000, a new Law on Higher Education was passed. In 2003, the university-level higher education system in the public sector consisted of 15 university-level higher education institutions comprising 10 universities and five academies which provide higher education at three academic levels (basic, specialised and doctoral) discussed further in Section 6B.5 below. At present, there are five private university-level higher education institutions in Lithuania.

6B.1 Admission requirements

Institutional admission requirements are to be approved by the Ministry of Education and Science.

A secondary school leaving certificate (*brandos atestatas*) or its equivalent (which includes the International Baccalaureate) is required for admission to higher education institutions. Admission to state-funded places is based on competitive selection.

The conditions governing admission for Lithuanian applicants are the results of the school leaving examinations recorded in the school leaving certificate, and the results of entrance examinations, if required (with a view to ascertaining a student's special abilities, higher education establishments may organise not more than two entrance examinations or tests). Regulations for such examinations are set by the individual institutions themselves.

To ascertain a student's specific abilities, a higher education institution may organise not more than two examinations or tests.

The entrant has a right to apply for admission to more than one higher education institution.

Foreign applicants are admitted, either by signing an agreement with the institution concerned, or as exchange students within the framework of international programmes and bilateral agreements. Students from abroad are required to enrol in a one- or two-year introductory Lithuanian language programme, so as to attend courses given in the language in the second or third year of studies at the latest.

Admission is administered by the individual institutions. The deadline for application varies from one institution to the next. Generally, complete applications should be submitted from the beginning of June until 31 August at the latest.

6B.2 Fees/Financial support for students

Foreign students are charged tuition fees varying between 1,300 USD and 3,000 USD a year. The amount which, again, is set by the individual institutions includes the cost of using libraries, laboratories, medical services and, sometimes, accommodation. A provision regarding the free movement of students and equal treatment, in accordance

with the case law of the European Court of Justice, is stipulated in the new Law on Higher Education. According to a 1996 government resolution, a system of state scholarships has been established to support Lithuanian citizens pursuing study or research abroad, as well as foreigners studying or doing research in Lithuania. Scholarships for exchange students are granted for one to ten months, under the terms of bilateral agreements with the Czech Republic, Denmark, Poland, Spain and other countries.

The Government has required that a certain number of state-maintained student places should be available at higher education institutions. Students who secure one do not have to pay tuition fees and usually get grants. Alongside state-maintained places, higher education institutions are entitled to establish a certain number of additional places for students who do pay fees. Higher education institutions may apply a rotation principle, whereby state- and self-financed students may be redistributed, on a competitive selection basis, every year. At public higher education institutions, students admitted to state-funded places do not pay tuition fees, the remaining students pay a tuition fee of a relatively small size (1000 LTL) irrespective of the study programme followed. Each semester higher education institutions apply a rotation scheme under which state-funded and self-paying students are redistributed depending on the students' performance. These institutions may admit a certain number of additional self-financing students for evening and extramural mode of studies.

The Research and Higher Education Fund (*Mokslo ir studijų fondas*) may award loans to partly cover students' subsistence expenses. Also, self-financed students, on a competitive selection basis, may be awarded Research and Higher Education Fund loans to cover study costs.

6B.3 Academic year

The academic year is divided into two semesters, Autumn (usually from September to January), and Spring (February to June). The last four weeks of each semester are normally set aside for examinations. All higher education institutions have Christmas holidays which usually start on 25 December and end after the New Year. Winter holidays start at the end of the autumn semester after the winter examination period (most often, at the end of January – beginning of February).

Winter holidays last one to two weeks. Summer holidays start at the end of the spring semester and may last two months.

6B.4 Courses

Students in higher education can follow either full-time, part-time (or evening) and extramural (or distance) courses. Major fields of study offered are education, humanities, theology, fine and applied arts, law, social sciences, economics and business administration, natural sciences, engineering, architecture, medical sciences, agriculture and forestry.

Teaching methods are varied, but lectures and seminars are the approach most often employed. Experimental and research work, projects, and written papers are also sometimes adopted, in addition to practical activity for students.

6B.5 Assessment/Qualifications

Three levels of university-level higher education may be distinguished. The first, or basic, level consists of a four-year Bachelor's degree (*bakalauras laipsnis*), or a professional qualification equivalent to the degree depending on the kind of curriculum followed. A few universities award both the degree and a professional teaching qualification, following successful completion of the basic degree course and then a further year of professional studies. Students are formally recognised as having higher education upon satisfactory completion of four-year basic studies (*pagrindinės studijos*).

This basic level may be followed by the second level comprising a one-and-a-half to two-year Master's degree (*magistro laipsnis*) (see section 2.3.), or specialised professional qualification – which, here again, may be equivalent to the degree, depending on the curriculum selected – for occupations such as economist, sociologist, or engineer.

Furthermore, so-called single-stage programmes may include both basic and specialised professional studies (*specialiosios studijos*). For example, a professional qualification in medicine is awarded upon completion of a single-stage programme lasting six years. Other fields covered by these programmes include veterinary medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, law

(in Vilnius University) and agriculture. In the case of students who undertake single-stage programmes, their higher education is only recognised on satisfactory completion of the entire programme

A two- or three-week examination period is usually arranged at the end of each semester. During this period, students prepare for and take the examinations prescribed for that session. Forms of examination (oral, written, or other) are decided by the teacher, and students also have to write a course paper during the school year.

Final examinations for Bachelor's and Master's degrees are taken in accordance with government requirements. Student performance in them is assessed by a special commission set up by decision of the Dean (*dekanas*) (head of administration) of the faculty concerned.

The third level of higher education is that of doctoral studies. Doctorates are usually awarded after candidates have already obtained a Master's degree or a specialised professional qualification equivalent to it. A doctorate takes no more than four years, of which up to one-and-a-half or two years are spent attending doctoral courses. On their completion, a thesis has to be prepared and satisfactorily defended. Doctoral studies may be organised jointly by higher education and research institutions.

6B.6 Teachers

All teaching staff are elected at the Faculty Councils of higher education institutions.

The lowest teaching position is that of assistant (*asistentas*). Applicants are required to hold a Master's degree with, preferably, some experience in some professional sector. These teachers mainly provide practical training.

The position of lecturer (*lektorius*) requires applicants to hold a Master's degree. In the case of those intending to teach certain subjects, 3 years of experience in the corresponding professional sector. These teachers mainly give lectures and carry out methodological work.

A docent or associated professor (*docentas*) should hold a scientific degree or be awarded the academic title of *docentas* for significant commitment to teaching. Docents normally publish articles on the basis of original research, and teach Master's students.

A professor (*profesorius*) is the highest teaching position. Professors are normally holders of the highest possible academic degree. A significant publications record is required, along with a prominent contribution to departmental faculty research. Professors are also usually involved in training young scientists.

All teaching positions can be occupied for up to five years renewable subject to satisfactory professional performance. During that time, it is expected that staff achieve a certain minimum output of scientific and teaching publications.

Teachers may, if they wish, take a year's leave once in every five-year period to update their professional knowledge.

Study visits abroad are widespread, as a result of participation in international teacher and student exchange programmes.

According to the plan approved by the Rector of specialised higher education institutions (such as Law University), teachers may also update their expertise in appropriate – and normally university-level – institutions, depending on the subject or sector concerned.

6B.7 Statistics

Students in higher education institutions, by type of course, 2001/2002

Types of course	Number of students (all levels)
Full-time	72969
Part-time (evening)	7489
Part-time (extramural)	26455

Students in higher education institutions, by level of study, 2001-2002 (beginning of the academic year)

	All levels of study	Bachelor's or equivalent	Master's or equivalent specialised	Doctoral
Students	106913	86045	18756	2112
of which male	43448	34985	7558	905
female	63465	51060	11198	1207
Percentage				
of male students	40,6	40,7	40,3	42,9
of female students	59,4	59,3	59,7	57,1

Educational background of entrants to higher educational institutions, 2001/02

Students matriculated	28468	%
Of which were graduates of		
Secondary schools	23467	82,4
Vocational colleges	648	11,7
Vocational schools	3324	2,3
Schools of higher education	1029	3,6

In 2002/03, 8937 teachers at the 15 university-level institutions offered higher education to 106913 students (giving a student/teacher ratio of 12,5).

In the same year, 6227 of the teachers constituted the main body of academic staff, while 2710 worked as "non-primary" staff; 57 foreign teachers were also employed. Out of the teachers constituting the main body of academic staff, 3106 held a doctorate, and 497 a habilitated doctor's degree, while 2197 were docents, and 545 full professors.

7. CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS

7.1. Policy and legislative framework

The significance of Lifelong Learning was understood at the very beginning of education reform that started after the restoration of statehood in 1990. The General Concept of Education in Lithuania (1992), a document setting out fundamental guidelines for the reform of the education system, when establishing objectives for youth education, places emphasis on the principle of Lifelong Learning. It states that *"at this phase general education meeting modern requirements will be provided for youth and development of a person for Lifelong Learning will be promoted"*.

Article 1 of the Law on Non-formal Adult Education (1998) commits the providers of non-formal adult education and their social partners *"to provide assistance in implementing the inborn right of a person to lifelong development of his/her personality"*. The Law on Non-formal Adult Education covers a broad sector of adult education including continuous professional education and training covering different areas of personal development and leading to a non-governmentally approved certificate. Recognition of such a certificate, however, is within the discretion of employers or professional bodies.

Several sectors of formal adult education, e. g., the state language, work safety, farmers training, driving, are regulated by laws concerning the relevant fields of activity.

The White Paper on Vocational Education and Training (1999) states that "The objective of vocational education and training is to foster the development of a person who is conscious, independent, active, mature vis-à-vis the needs of the nation and state, and engaged in Lifelong Learning";

The White Paper on Higher Education (1999), among other responsibilities of higher education establishments, emphasises promotion of the idea of Lifelong Learning in society and provision of Lifelong Learning opportunities.

Also, LLL has a very important part in these documents: Programme for Increasing

Employment (2001-2004), National Development Plan 2002-2004, Joint Assessment of Employment Policy Priorities (JAP), Country Monograph.

A new Law on Education (as revised) came into force in June 2003. It determines the goals of education, establishes principles underlying the system of education, foundations underpinning the structure of the system as well as responsibilities of the state in the field of education. It also states that educational activities in different sectors are regulated by separate laws: *the Law on VET, the Law on Higher Education, the Law on Non-formal Adult Education, etc.*

At present under discussion is a draft of an important document with the title *Guidelines for Education for the period 2003-2012*. *Guidelines for Education* has been drafted by the Task Force set up by the President of the Republic of Lithuania. It is an exhaustive document built up of 4 chapters:

- Educational reform - a necessity of the present time (in the international and national context);
- Effective and coherent system (a vision of the development of education system);
- Ensuring access, social fairness and sustainability;
- Quality assurance.

At present this document is open for public debate (published and accessible on the Internet).

Both of the above mentioned documents integrate the concept of LLL. Also based on the ideas of Lifelong Learning in education are other education strategic documents: Strategy for Introducing Information and Communication Technologies into Education (2002), White Paper on Science and Technologies (2001), Higher Education System Development Plan for 2002 –2006.

7.2. Management/Organizations involved

In Lithuania, the following institutions are responsible for the management and supervision of education:

- Ministry of Education and Science (MES) which develops, implements and supervises national education policy in pre-school education, general education, special education, vocational education and training, adult education and higher education sectors;
- Ministry of Social Security and Labour (MSSL) is the main institution responsible for the issues related to employment at national level. Responsibility for organisation and implementation of continuing vocational training lies with the Labour Market Training Authority (LMTA) under the MSSL;
- LMTA implements labour market training policy and organises provision of information and counselling services related to vocational training. LMTA has 6 divisions – territorial Labour Market Training and Counselling Authorities (in the cities of Alytus, Klaipėda, Panevėžys, Šiauliai, Kaunas and Vilnius);
- There are also other ministries and departments that are responsible for a considerable part of adult vocational training: they are the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Co-ordination in relation to non-formal adult education is based on the Law on Nonformal Adult Education. The main co-ordinating body is the National Board of Nonformal Adult Education established pursuant to the Law on Non-formal Adult Education. The Minister of Education and Science nominates members to the Board chosen from the experts in adult education mainly employed by governmental institutions, and approves the statute of the Board. The Ministry together with the Board establishes priorities, presents proposals for state financing as well as the development of the system.

Social partners and professional bodies according to the Law on Vocational Education and Training have broad participatory and advisory rights in initial and labour market vocational training.

7.3. Funding

General lower and upper secondary adult education is fully funded from the state and municipal budgets (responsible body – the Ministry of Education and Science). Labour market training is fully funded from the Employment Fund (responsible body – the Ministry of Social Security and Labour). Higher education including distance (part-time) studies for adults is partly financed from the state budget, partly by the students who pay tuition fees. The responsible body for state funding and regulation of the number of state-funded and self-paying students is the Ministry of Education and Science. Vocational and professional continuous education and training under the Law of Nonformal Adult Education is funded mainly by beneficiaries (employers or employees). Some programmes of nonformal adult education are financed from the state and municipal budgets.

The private sector is involved in the funding of adult education via input into the Employment Fund, funding of private education institutions, supporting vocational and professional continuous education and training of employees.

From the year 2002 the Ministry of Education and Science announces calls for proposals for nonformal adult education projects and programmes financed from the state budget. Proposals may be submitted by different organizations: NGO's, private institutions, schools, adult education centres, etc. The projects are to reflect the priorities which are defined by the Board of Nonformal Adult Education.

7.4. Human resources

There are no teacher training courses developed for vocational teachers and teachers for adults. At present there is a concept and a standard developed for vocational teacher training, and training of specialists in andragogy is introduced.

Teacher professional development in general is given proper consideration. In Vilnius, a National Teacher Professional Development Centre has been established, there are also regional teacher education centres. Also involved in the area of professional development of teachers are NGOs. In 2001, a total of 120 vocational teachers participated in different teacher in-service training events.

Teachers at higher education schools and colleges also have opportunity to participate in teacher in-service training activities. Unfortunately, all of those events are devoted to the development of educational rather than general subject delivery-related competencies. No training events are organised to develop technological competencies of vocational teachers. Teachers themselves are responsible for the development of these competencies. There is no coherent teacher training system in the area of labour market training either.

7.5. Organization

7.5.1. Types of training institutions

In general, adult education is provided in adult secondary schools, adult education centres, secondary schools (separate classes for adults), higher education institutions (distance studies). The aim is to meet the needs of adults who for various reasons have not completed general secondary or higher education. The main target group is employed persons.

Vocational and professional education and training is offered by tertiary level vocational colleges (distance learning), higher education institutions (distance and evening professional studies). The aim and target group is the same as in the previous paragraph in a relevant field of education.

Labour market training is offered by labour market vocational training institutions, vocational schools, adult education centres. The target group is the unemployed. Close co-operation with employers and social partners is established at the participatory decision-making level and operational (participation in examinations) level.

7.5.2. Access requirements

For non-formal learning, there are no access requirements. For formal education, to enter an adult education centre or adult secondary school, and a vocational school, a school certificate of the previously studied programme is required; to enter a college or higher education school, a secondary school

leaving certificate (*brandos atestatas*) is required.

Recognition of foreign qualifications is within the perview of the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education.

7.5.3. Objectives of the programmes

In non-formal education, the objectives are qualification upgrading, entry/re-entry to employment, fulfilment of different interests of adults, e.g. in the fields of music, culture, folk arts, etc.

In formal education, the objectives are to provide primary, secondary, vocational, and higher education.

7.5.4. Main principles of the organization of time and venue

The main principles are as follows: evening classes, modular teaching, distance (correspondence) education with several short face-to-face sessions. Distance education can be provided in work places, distance learning classes, adult education centres, adult secondary schools, universities, colleges, etc.

In labour market training, the main principles are short time (up to 10 months) face-to-face courses.

7.5.5. Curriculum

Curriculum for adult secondary education is the same as in mainstream secondary schools. It is developed by experts and approved by the Ministry of Education and Science and then adopted by the adult education institutions.

In the labour market training system, the curriculum is developed by the vocational schools and approved by the Labour market training authority (LMTA). The curriculum may include, among other things, ICT, languages, social skills, etc.

Teaching/learning methods are adjusted to adults: they are group work, brainstorming, active learning methods, etc.

The draft Strategy of Lifelong Learning and its implementation action plan foresee development of vocational training programmes for different target groups with specific needs, e.g. the long-term unemployed, disabled, former soldiers of regular military service, ethnic minorities, etc.

7.5.6. Quality assurance

A methodology of internal audit is currently being implemented in the general education sector. A Manual of Quality Assurance in Vocational Schools was developed in 2000. With the help of this manual some vocational schools started to carry out internal audit. However no external evaluation visits have been implemented. It is envisaged to start external evaluation in 2003.

Despite the above mentioned developments, the issue of quality in initial and continuous VET has not yet been elaborated enough. There are no criteria and no external evaluation system. There is no clear understanding of the quality of vocational training programmes and their value for the labour market. Links of the training institutions with employers are weak. The employers' involvement in the development of training programmes is not significant, whereas employer organisations should play a crucial role in the quality assurance system.

As there is no system for monitoring of vocational training and no clear quality assessment criteria, there is a great concern that the system of vocational education and training does not satisfy the actual labour market needs. Statistics of unemployment clearly shows it. Although there are attempts to involve employers into the development and approval of occupational and educational standards, the influence of social partners in the management and quality assurance of vocational education and training system remains insignificant.

7.6. Guidance/counselling services

In Lithuania, only 12,1% of the unemployed and 10% of pupils of senior classes are provided career counselling. To increase access to career guidance services, the Internet database (www.darborinka.lt) and job search information system of the labour exchange have been created. Only a small

number of the unemployed participate in specialised counselling activities on job search. Not enough attention is paid to career information and counselling of adults according to different target groups and according to aptitude for the labour market. Career guidance is not integrated into the process of vocational education and training. The needs for career information and counselling of different target groups of adults (newcomers to the labour market, those on the labour market, persons with special needs and the unemployed) have not been identified; there are only initial attempts to determine functions and define competencies for a career counsellor required to satisfy the needs for career guidance and counselling of adults.

7.7. Assessment, accreditation and recognition

Creation of the system and methods for recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Lithuania has not yet started. Setting of the framework of occupational standards is not yet finished. Such a framework for university sector has not yet been started.

Adults without basic education but having professional competencies acquired at work and in independent learning are being assessed following the formal rules created for assessment of young people. Their experience is not valued and recognised. Absence of a system for recognition of non-formal and informal learning undermines the prestige of learning, makes relationship between employers and employees rather complicated, decreases competitiveness of those with non-formal and informal learning on the labour market. The aim of this system would be to assess achievements of an individual and to encourage him/her to seek new qualifications.

Adults cannot take school and state examinations if they are not accepted to formal institutions. Thus their skills to learn independently or to acquire knowledge in non-formal education institutions are not recognised.

There are limited possibilities for adults who have not acquired higher education to participate in full-time continuing education or retraining studies in universities.

7.8. Statistics

General lower and upper secondary education (2002/03 school year):

Number of institutions: 27 adult education centres and adult secondary schools, additionally 43 adult classes at secondary schools. Number of teachers: 557. Sizes of groups: from 12 to 30. Number of beneficiaries: 17318. The age of beneficiaries: mainly from 18 to 35 and more. The sex of beneficiaries: 41,7% are women.

Tertiary level vocational colleges, distance (correspondence) education (1999/2000 school year):

Number of institutions, providing distance (correspondence) education: 44.

Number of beneficiaries: 10,765, 63% of them are women.

Higher education institutions, providing distance (correspondence) education (2000/2001 academic year):

Number of institutions, providing distance (correspondence) and evening studies: 10.

Number of beneficiaries: 16 455, 60% of them are women.

Labour market training (2002):

Number of institutions: 14 labour market training centres and a variable number of other educational institutions.

Number of beneficiaries (unemployed): 18 582, 60% of them are women.