



LITHUANIA

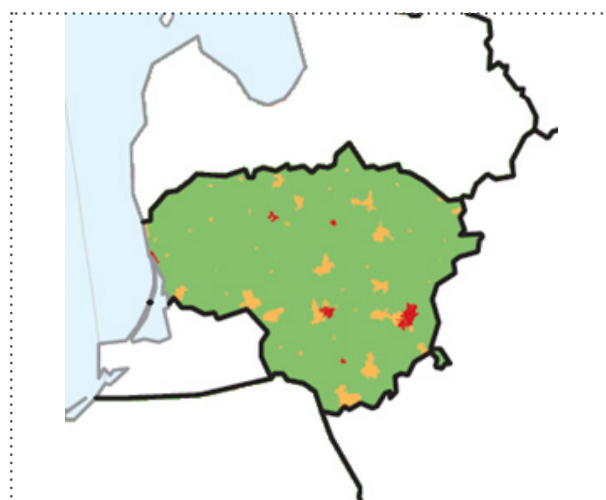
INSIGHT PAPER

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VECTOS

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RURALITY (1)

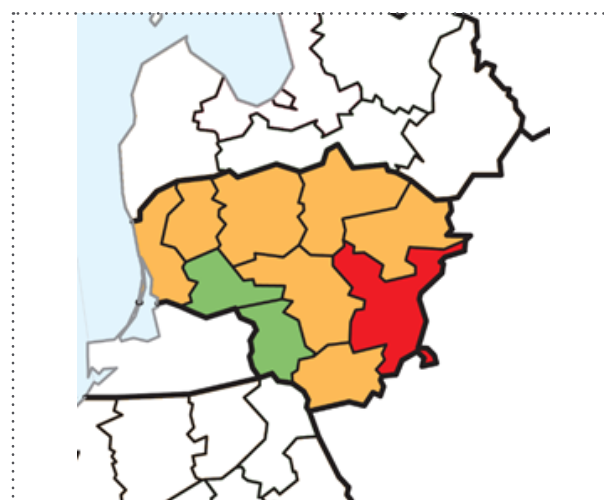
Degree of urbanisation for local administrative units level 2 (LAU2)



- Cities
- Towns and suburbs
- Rural Areas
- Data not available

Source: Eurostat, JRC and European Commission Directorate-General for Regional Policy, May 2016

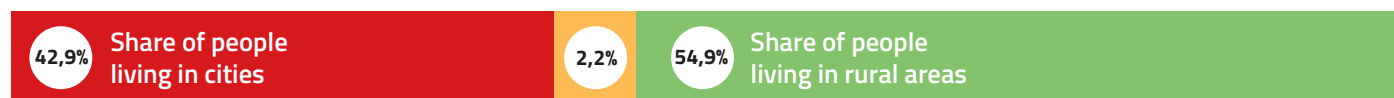
Urban-rural typology for NUTS level 3 regions



- Predominantly urban regions
(rural population is less than 20% of the total population)
- Intermediate regions
(rural population is between 20% and 50% of the total population)
- Predominantly rural regions
(rural population is 50% or more of the total population)
- Data not available

Source: Eurostat, JRC, EFGS, REGIO-GIS, December 2016

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION



Share of people living in towns and suburbs

Source: Eurostat, 2017

GEOGRAPHY

Lithuania (Lietuva) is a democratic republic with a population of 2 870 351 residents (as of 07/2018). Lithuania consists of two regions – the region of capital Vilnius and the region of Central and Western Lithuania. The region of capital Vilnius is Lithuania's most densely populated region with 82,8 residents per km², the density in the region of Central and Western Lithuania is 36,1 residents per km². Lithuania is bordered by Poland, Belarus, Latvia and Kaliningrad oblast (an exclave of the Russian Federation on the Baltic sea).

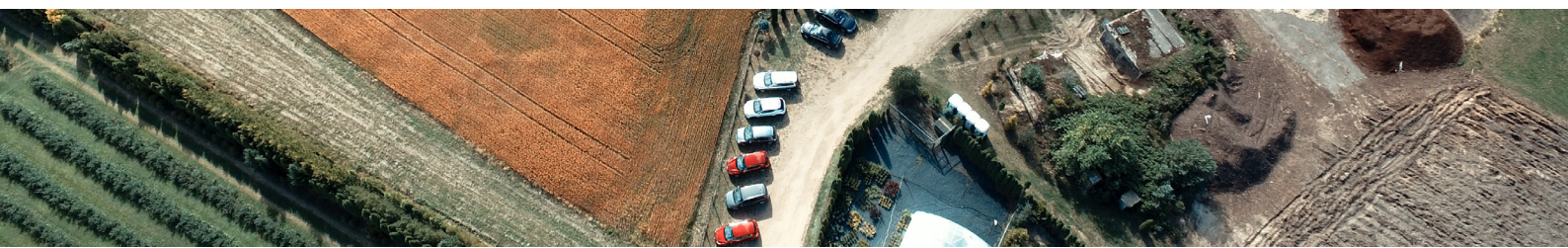
Administratively, Lithuania is divided into 10 counties and 60 municipalities.

At the beginning of the year 2018, 18,9 percent of the Lithuanian population was 65 years or older. Children and adolescents up to 17 years accounted for 17,9 percent

of the population. The share of working age population remained at 63.2 percent. The Lithuanian population has been decreasing due to negative population growth and emigration in the past two decades.

Lithuania covers an area of 65,000 km² of which 85% is rural. Farmland comprises 60% of the area. Most of the rest is forest (32%). 32,8 percent of Lithuanian residents live in the rural areas (as of 01/2018).

Rural depopulation is an increasing problem in Lithuania and regions are more and more facing the negative effects of this development. The unemployment rate in rural areas is 11,1 %, much higher than the country average. Although rural tourism is growing, there is still a lack of businesses and jobs in rural areas. Only 15% of the SMEs are in rural areas.



RURality (2)

37.2%

Share of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in rural areas, **2017**

1.5%

Share of people aged 16 and over who reported unmet needs for health care in the previous 12 months due to expense, distance to travel or length of waiting list in rural areas, **2017**

11.1%

Unemployment rate, persons aged 15–64, in rural areas, **2017**

17%

Share of young people aged 18–24 neither in employment nor in education or training (NEETs) in rural areas, **2017**

Source: Eurostat

NATIONAL POLICIES RELATING TO RURAL MOBILITY AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Specific policies on mobility and transport in rural areas are not implemented in Lithuania, but in strategic documents there are some objectives related to suburban and rural transport and mobility (mostly focusing on suburban problems).

In 2005, Lithuania adopted the **Long-Term (until 2025) Development Strategy of the Lithuanian Transport System**. The Strategy plans modernization and development of transport infrastructure to ensure quality, adoption and enforcement of environmental standards and safety regulations in the EU. The desire is to develop an efficient transport system: to coordinate the development of all transport modes, giving priority to those environmentally friendly, improving the consumption of alternative fuels and reducing environmental pollution. In the medium term it is planned to better organize and control the flows to reduce air pollution and noise.

strategic goal of the program is to create a sustainable, environmentally friendly, competitive and high value added Lithuanian transport system. The third objective of the Program is to promote the coherence of the local (urban and suburban) transport system. The program mentioned above states that Lithuanian local public transport systems no longer meet the needs of the current population and do not ensure the desired quality of service, therefore the use of private cars are growing. Private cars have become an attractive alternative to door-to-door travel due to the lack of integrated multimodal public transport and the inconvenient public transport network. There is no common information system for public transport routes covering all modes of transport at present, passengers are not able to find public transport information in one place, travel plans are planned using different modes of transport, and the public transport routes of different modes of transport are not mutually exclusive.



Photo by Carlo Verso on Unsplash

The long-term objectives of the strategy of sustainable transport are the following: coordinate the development of all modes of transport, giving priority to transport with less negative impact, increase transportation energetic efficiency to reduce environmental pollution and its impact on climate change and increase traffic safety.

In 2013, the Lithuanian Government adopted a middle term strategic planning document - **National Transport Development Program for year 2014-2022**. The

The problems of local transport systems are caused by limited urban development coordination, insufficient quality of suburban transport, low attractiveness of the public transport park, underdeveloped systems for promoting non-motorized transport (pedestrian and bicycle transport infrastructure). Suburban public transport does not meet the needs of the population: in Lithuania, with the increasing urbanization and expansion of large cities, the principles of sustainable development have not been maintained, the urban area has been expanding, and the areas of private houses

NATIONAL POLICIES RELATING TO RURAL MOBILITY AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

with relatively low population density have expanded (urban dispersion has increased). Ensuring accessibility of public transport services in such areas is extremely difficult due to low population density and improper road infrastructure (insufficiently wide roads for buses, no public transport stops). Residents of such districts are unable to get high-quality public transport services, prefer private cars, resulting in extra traffic during peak hours. In the absence of a single ticketing system, it is difficult to integrate urban and suburban transport, which further reduces the attractiveness of using public suburban transport.

Rural development in Lithuania is managed nationally through one 2014–2020 **Rural Development Programme** (RDP), funded under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and national contributions. The RDP sets out priority approaches and actions to meet the needs of the specific geographical area it covers. The main objectives of RDP are the modernisation and improvement of the economic performance of small and medium-sized farms (nearly 8 000 farms will be supported), the preservation of biodiversity (11% of farmland), better management of soil (8% of farmland), the promotion of organic farming, the creation of new jobs (nearly 2 000) and the development of rural areas and businesses.

Objective No 4.2.7. 07. of RDP is related to mobility and transport – it seeks to increase rural mobility through support for transport infrastructure and services accessibility enhancement projects. It is stated in RDP that The lack of services in rural areas forces rural people to go to the cities for health care, social services for public services, cultural and sporting events, workouts or shopping very often, and therefore it is necessary to improve the condition of local and regional roads, to ensure a flexible schedule for new ones installation of stops, etc.

The main strategic document in Lithuanian health care system is **Lithuanian Health Program 2014–2025**. One of its objectives is related to better access to services – In order to reduce the differences in the quality and accessibility of health care services in the country, to provide access to services closer to the place of residence.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania is the main institution, that coordinates the work of road, rail, air, water transport, postal and electronic communications sector and implements the strategy and politics of state government.

Intercity transportation by public transport is coordinated by the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

The public company “Lietuvos geležinkeliai” (Lithuanian railways) coordinates long-distance railway traffic. However passenger train routes are not very developed in Lithuania, for example, in 2016 only about 1 percent of the total number of passengers transported in Lithuania was carried by rail.

The Municipalities are responsible for planning and organizing public transport system in the territory of municipality. According to the Lithuanian law of Self-Government, the functions of Municipality in the field of transport are the organization of passenger transportation on local routes; the calculation and payment of preferential passenger transportation compensation; maintenance, repair, construction and traffic management of local roads and streets of local governments.

Some larger municipalities in Lithuania have founded **public enterprises for managing public transport** in their territory. Such public enterprises are Municipal Enterprise “Susisiekimo paslaugos” (Vilnius), Public Enterprise “Klaipėdos keleivinis transportas” (Klaipėda).

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Public transport in Lithuania is divided into **urban, suburban and long-distance (intercity) routes**.

The management and control of urban and suburban-type routes are taken care of by the self-government of the territory – the city or district municipality. The Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania is responsible for the organization of long-distance routes. The local municipality cares for the organization and maintenance of suburban routes. Preferably, there is a more liberal organization of work on suburban routes, and this type of route is served by a large number of different carriers (depending on the municipality – some have only one carrier).

The organization of suburban routes in larger cities is based on the principle of admission to the main city centers. Thus, from the district's towns and settlements, passengers are brought to the main city points (transport

hubs) by public transport, usually from the station. From here, the city tour continues through the city's shuttle service. In smaller towns, especially where the city's public transport system is poorly developed (or not at all), suburban routes run through all or most of the town. Thus suburban routes also perform the function of city routes.

The worst situation in terms of PT is in remote rural areas that are far from larger cities, PT runs rarely in such sparsely populated areas and people have problems accessing basic services. According to the order of Ministry of Education and Science, schools in rural area have yellow schoolbuses that are used to bring to school children who live in villages at least 3 km far from school. Elderly or disabled people are taken to the healthcare or other services by their family members, Municipal Social Care services of NGO's.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The legal basis for the organisation of public transport is the Lithuanian Law of Road Transport Code (Lietuvos Respublikos kelių transporto kodeksas). It regulates the organization of carriage of passengers, baggage and cargo, the state management and control of transport, liability for property damage. It is stated in the Code that state administration of road transport is carried out by the Ministry of Transport and Communications and municipal authorities. According to the Code municipal councils shall determine the specific rates for the carriage of passengers on scheduled domestic routes. These tariff rates shall be reviewed at least once a year, taking into account changes in transport costs, income received and obligations under public service contracts between municipalities and carriers. Different rates may be set for individual routes.

Law on the Fundamentals of Transport Activities of the Republic of Lithuania ascertain the government and municipal authorities ensure the provision of socially necessary transport services to the public. Losses incurred due to provision of these services to carriers are compensated by the government or municipalities.

Law of Transport Privileges establishes the categories of privileged persons, types of privileges, reimbursement of passenger transport costs and the procedure and sources of compensation (remuneration) for carriers' expenses (income loss) related to the application of preferences.

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

The main source of investment into sustainable mobility projects in Lithuania are European Structural Funds. In the field of sustainable mobility such measures will be funded in the 2014-2020 period: updating the local public transport fleet, preparation of Sustainable Mobility Plans, implementation of Sustainable Mobility Plans, creation of an electric vehicle charging access network, reconstruction and development of pedestrian and bicycle tracks.

The prices of public transport tickets in Lithuania are determined by the municipalities. In most Lithuanian municipalities, public transport is a subsidized sector with part of the revenues of the public transport companies coming from subsidies from the municipal budget. The remaining part of the revenues comes from the revenues from traffic tickets and from the revenues from the complementary services - advertisement on buses or rents of vehicles.

According to the Law of Transport Privileges, people with disabilities, elderly people, students and some other socially vulnerable groups receive discount on public transport tickets. The compensations for discounted tickets are paid to public transport companies from municipal budget.

OTHER INFORMATION

Lithuanian municipalities started cooperation in developing public transport in order to meet needs of the citizen and reduce costs.

Best practice example 01: Public Transport Development Cooperation in Klaipeda County

As in many European countries, the number of rural residents in Lithuania is decreasing. In the last two decades, population was growing only in three rural municipalities – Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipeda districts, that are ring municipalities to the largest cities – capital Vilnius, Kaunas and port city Klaipeda. Organizing public transport routes in sparsely populated suburban and rural areas is problematic due to economic reasons. Such transport routes do not receive enough passengers, are unprofitable and demand subsidy from municipalities that often do not have sufficient funding. The rural and suburban areas in Lithuania can be characterised by an extremely high individual motorization.

As long as there is no public entity responsible for public transport in the whole country, some municipalities started cooperation in organizing public transport routes together in order to fulfill needs of the residents, to maintain the system more efficiently and to reduce large transport flows. In Klaipeda county Public Enterprise “Klaipėdos keleivinis transportas” manages public transport routes within neighbouring municipalities – Klaipeda city, Klaipėda and Kretinga districts, Palanga municipality. Municipalities are developing uniformed transport ticket programme. Such cooperation is both beneficial for passengers, especially from more remote rural areas, because they as they receive a secured service and for municipalities, because it is cheaper and reduces transport flows.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND MINISTRIES ADDRESSING RURAL AREAS

TITLE	ROLE
LR SM	Lietuvos Respublikos susisiekimo ministerija (Ministry for Transport and Communication) - coordinates the work of road, rail, air, water, transport, postal and electronic communications sectors
LR ŽŪM	Lietuvos Respublikos žemės ūkio ministerija (Ministry of Agriculture) - its mission is to prosecute state policy realization and coordination in ranges of land, food, fishery, village development, and agriculture
LR VRM	Lietuvos Respublikos vidaus reikalų ministerija (Ministry of the Interior) - charged with the oversight of public safety, border protection, migration control, emergency response, public administration and governance, the civil service, and local and regional development initiatives
LR FM	Lietuvos Respublikos Finansų ministerija (Ministry of Finance) - its mission is to formulate and implement an effective policy of public finance in order to ensure the country's macroeconomic stability and economic development
LR AM	Lietuvos Respublikos Aplinkos ministerija (Ministry of Environment) – sets policy framework for environmental affairs
LSA	Lietuvos savivaldybių asociacija (Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania) – seeks to organize and coordinate activities of its members in the areas of investment attraction, development of municipal economies, improvement of legislature, business support, public security, culture, education, science, health care, social care and protection, improvement of local services, as well as relations with international organizations and municipalities abroad
LAKD	Lietuvos automobilių kelių direkcija prie Susisiekimo ministerijos (State Road Transport Inspectorate under the Ministry of Transport and Communications) - creating favourable conditions for free and safe transportation of passengers and goods
LKT	Lietuvos kaimo tinklas (Lithuanian Rural Network) – promotes participation in rural development
NVTKA	Nacionalinė viešojo transporto keleivių asociacija (National Association of Public Transport Passengers) - defend the interests of public transport passengers, to improve and promote public transport in Lithuania

LINKS TO WEBSITES

- Lietuvos Respublikos susisiekimo ministerija (Ministry for Transport and Communication)
<http://sumin.lrv.lt/en>
- Lietuvos Respublikos žemės ūkio ministerija (Ministry of Agriculture)
<https://zum.lrv.lt/en>
- Lietuvos Respublikos vidaus reikalų ministerija (Ministry of the Interior)
<https://vrm.lrv.lt/en>
- Lietuvos Respublikos Finansų ministerija (Ministry of Finance)
<https://finmin.lrv.lt/en>
- Lietuvos Respublikos Aplinkos ministerija (Ministry of Environment)
www.am.lt/VI/en/VI/index.php
- Lietuvos savivaldybių asociacija (Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania)
<http://www.lsa.lt/en>
- Lietuvos automobilių kelių direkcija prie Susisiekimo ministerijos (State Road Transport Inspectorate under the Ministry of Transport and Communications)
<http://lakd.lrv.lt/en>
- Lietuvos kaimo tinklas (Lithuanian Rural Network)
www.kaimotinklas.lt/en
- Nacionalinė viešojo transporto keleivių asociacija (National Association of Public Transport Passengers)
www.nvtka.lt