

## **HUMAN SETTLEMENT COUNTRY PROFILE**

### **LITHUANIA**

#### **Decision-Making**

#### **Programmes and Projects**

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- B. Improving Human Settlement Management
- C. Promoting Sustainable Land-Use Planning and Management
- D. Promoting the Integrated Provision of Environmental Infrastructure: water, sanitation, drainage and solid waste management
- E. Promoting Sustainable Energy and Transport Systems in Human Settlements
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#### **Status**

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#### **Information**

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**Decision-Making:** Lithuania is a lead party in two Sectors of Agenda 21: Forestry and Education. A National Commission on Sustainable Development, representing 10 ministries, was established and approved by the Government in July 2000. Several senior officials from the ministries are included in activities of the Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region - Baltic 21. The Forest Law adopted by Parliament (1994; amended in 2001) set a regulatory basis for sustainable forest management by taking into account the changes in ownership, economic aspects and ecological requirements. The Forest Law establishes rights and duties of all forest managers, owners and users in the Republic of Lithuania to utilize, reproduce, grow and protect forests, strikes a balance between the interests of forest owners and society, sets the main principles of forest management. All decisions for adopting and revising local land use plans by the Law on Territorial Planning were passed to the local authorities; preparation of comprehensive plans of counties is under responsibility of counties. Following the EU tradition of good farming the Ministry of Agriculture in co-operation with the Ministry of Environment by the end of the year 2000 has prepared the Code of Good Agricultural Practice for Lithuania. The main objective of the rules and recommendations of good farming (RRGF) according to the EU Nitrate directive is to reduce pollution by nitrates and ensure that for each farm the amount of livestock manure applied to the agricultural land each year, including the animals themselves, shall not exceed the amount of manure containing 170 kg/ha of nitrogen.

The Ministry of Environment has the leading role in coordinating and implementing the National Strategy. There are big rights given to the public in environmental protection policy in Lithuania. In the 7th article of the Law on Environmental Protection it is foreseen that public has right to information on environmental status and use of natural resources, information on impact to the environment by the planned activities. The main body responsible for public health care administration is the State Public Health Service. It manages the public health network including ten county public health centers with their local branches, nine specialized public health centers (in total 55 institutions). The State Public Health Service has subordinate bodies - specialized public health centers - to deal with prevention of communicable diseases, health education, environmental health, nutrition, information and other public health functions.

### **Programmes and Projects:**

A. Providing Adequate Shelter for All: Access to primary health care, clean water and sanitation, and primary education is rather sufficient with some exceptions.

B. Improving Human Settlement Management: According to the latest data available, approximately 600,000 Lithuanian people, or 16 % of the total population live in poverty. This poverty level is estimated using the relative poverty line and is the main indicator of poverty (According to the calculations of the Lithuanian Statistics Department, it represents 50 % of the monthly average expenditure). At least 30,000 people or almost 1 % of the Lithuanian population live in extreme poverty. The Poverty Reduction Strategy was elaborated through a consultative process and launched in the middle of 2000. It embraces two strategic goals: to eliminate extreme poverty in Lithuania by 2003, and to reduce relative poverty from 16.8 % in 1998 to below 10 % in 2005. The Government of Lithuania adopted Programme of Implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2002-2004. In 2000, there were about 800,000 dwellings in apartment buildings and about 500,000 single dwellings (private houses) in Lithuania. Housing infrastructure is quite well developed. Approximately 70 % of all dwellings are connected to the central water supply network. About 50 % of dwellings are connected to the central heating system. The largest part of household waste is collected in a centralized way in most of the cities and smaller towns. A waste collection system using containers is being implemented in the countryside. During the privatization of dwellings, people were given those apartments where they lived. Today approximately 95 % of all dwellings are under the ownership of people living there. In October 29, 2002, the Master Plan of the Republic of Lithuania was approved by the Resolution No IX-1154 of the Seimas (Parliament) of Lithuania. In 2003, Action Plan of Implementation of the Master Plan was adopted. The Construction

Sector is fast developed. Construction installation works increased 59 % during the last 3 years (2001-2003). Local authorities have created a number of programmes and action plans according to the recommendations of Agenda 21. Municipality of Kaunas-city was the first one in Lithuania, which started Local Agenda 21 process in 1998. Main results to date are Environmental Policy for Kaunas-city (approved in 1999) and Public Health Policy (approved in 2000). Cooperation with Tampere Municipality (Finland) provides opportunity to share ideas and experience to achieve significant result. Other big cities such as Klaipeda, Siauliai and Panevezys afterwards were involved in LA21 process as well. They also have had partners in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Ireland. Project "Local Agenda 21 for small and medium municipalities in Lithuania" was started in 1999 by the initiative of Environmental Center for Administration and Technology-Lithuania. 12 municipalities were involved (Alytus, Marijampole and Siauliai cities and Ignalina, Kaisiadorys, Kaunas, Radviliskis, Raseiniai, Rokiskis, Siauliai, Trakai and Varena districts). Workshops, supportive materials as well as individual consultations were provided to initiate development of local sustainable development strategy according to the needs of community. LA 21 activities in Visaginas were initiated in 2000. In 1997-2003, five conferences at the National level were organized for municipality representatives regarding sustainable development strategies and implementation. 30 per cent of Lithuanian municipalities are involved now in LA 21 activities. 400 representatives from 40 municipalities participated in training courses and discussions in 2003.

**C. Promoting Sustainable Land-Use Planning and Management:** Master Plan of the Republic of Lithuania approved by the Resolution No IX-1154 of the Parliament of Lithuania in October 29, 2002, is very important legal act promoting sustainable land-use planning and management. The Regulation on Public Participation in the Planning Process (the last one in 1996) improves utilization of public and private land and answers to political need of direct public participation in management and development of home and neighborhood. Abrupt changes from state control to practically full reliance on private initiative in housing issues introduced new trends in settlement development. Considering land management practices, two topics are dealt with, Forestry as a whole is under the control of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania. The Department of Forests and Protected Areas within the Ministry of Environment is primarily responsible for forest policy and legislation concerning forestry in Lithuania. The General Forest Enterprise has responsibility for state forest management and commercial activities of all 42 State Forest Enterprises. Rural Support Fund: In 1998 the Ministry of Agriculture launched an Ecological Farming Support Programme financed through the Rural Support Fund. Starting with the year 2001, the Ecological Farming Support Programme is still being continued and financed through the Special Rural Support Programme. The Programme in concern stipulates that the aid is to be provided to organic production farms in the form of direct payments per hectare of certified crop area during the first five years of their operation and in the form of partial compensation of the certification costs borne by the owner of ecological holding and enterprise. It involves design and construction of water cleaning equipment to protect the underground water from the pollution, application of other environmentally sound measures to improve the agro-environmental situation and proceeds with environmental monitoring in the region.

SAPARD (Special Pre-accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development) is by the EU initiated programme for the candidate countries to enhance structural changes in agriculture and proceed with the implementation of rural development policy. The total financial allocation for Lithuania out of the SAPARD fund is foreseen to amount up to 208.207 million EURO. Since the beginning of land reform the ownership rights were restored to more than 208.9 thousands forest owners and the share of private forests has reached 31.4 % of total forest area. The average area of private forest holding is 4.5 hectares. However, the process of restitution is still going on and after the completion of land reform, it is estimated that private forests will occupy about 40-45 % of the total forest area. According to the tree species composition, pine (36.6 %), spruce (23.1 %) and birch (20.0 %) stands prevail in Lithuanian forests. Growing stock in the country's forests totals 371.7 million m<sup>3</sup>. The forest area and growing stock per capita are 0.57 ha and 106 m<sup>3</sup> respectively.

D. Promoting the Integrated Provision of Environmental Infrastructure: water, sanitation, drainage and solid waste management: See under Sanitation and Freshwater Profiles.

E. Promoting Sustainable Energy and Transport Systems in Human Settlements: With the assistance provided by the Government of Sweden through STEM and technical assistance of Swedish companies, ten boiler houses in Lithuania were converted to use wood fuel. The Government of Denmark provided assistance to reconstruct five boilers to use straw as fuel. Currently the overall production of straw-fired boilers in the country is 10 MW. Last year a demonstrational project of peat usage was implemented with the assistance of the Government of Denmark at the boiler house of Sepeta settlement of Kupiskis district. The project is expected to speed up the usage of peat as fuel throughout the country. Ministry of Environment of Denmark provided assistance to implement a biogas usage project at the agricultural company "Vycia". The biogas plant of 0,3 MW capacity uses pig manure to produce biogas. Operation of the demonstrational geothermal plant of 40 MW capacities was started in Klaipeda. The Cleaner Production Programme (2000) includes the perspective industries, biotechnology, and the energy and transport sectors. Lithuania has been following the orientation towards implementation of the Environmental Management Systems standards, ISO 14001, and the Environmental Management and Audit Schemes (EMAS) in the Lithuanian industries. In 1997, the Ministries of Environment of Lithuania and Norway signed the Protocol on the cleaner production-training programme in Lithuania for 1997-2000. The main effort in this Programme was focused on training of the Lithuanian enterprises and experts. Around sixty industrial enterprises and organizations have participated in the training course and around 100 local experts have been trained. *About 80* Lithuanian enterprises have received certificates of the standard ISO 14001.

A. Promoting Human Settlement Planning and Management in Disaster-Prone Areas: No information available.

B. Promoting Sustainable Construction Activities: Projects to transfer EST's (environmental strategy technology) include the following: a Danish project on Implementation of Demonstration Projects in Cleaner Technology in the Lithuanian Galvanic Industry; A Norwegian project on Capacity Building Programme in Cleaner Production in Industry in the Baltic Region; and a Danish EPA project on Environmental Efficiency in the Lithuanian Food Processing Industry. The Project involved environmental auditing in seven companies from different food industry sectors of Lithuania.

H. Promoting Human Resource Development and Capacity-Building for Human Settlement Development: From 1994 to 2001, the percentage of women in the Government increased from 0 % to 15.4 % and in Parliament from 7.1 % to 10.6 %. The percentage of women at the local government level was 19.4% in 1996. Finally, the cooperation agreements have led to an increasing number of common projects. Currently there are a total of 80 Non Government environmental organizations of different levels (state, district, city, local), many of *them* participate actively in the process of implementing sustainable development.

**Status:** *Inventory of their land resources:* with a surface area of 65 301 km<sup>2</sup>, Lithuania is the largest of the three Baltic countries. The country forms part of the great North European Plain and the landscape alternates between hilly areas and flat plains. Forests cover 31.3 % of the territory. The forest cover has increased over the past 50 years, from 21.8 % in 1937 to 31.3 % in 2003. Agriculture uses 54 % of the land, two thirds is arable. Bogs and marshlands now cover 7 % of its territory. Most are in the west, the south and the east. Some 77 % of wetlands have been drained for agricultural purposes. Over the last few decades the intensification of large-scale agriculture, cutting of forests and draining of bogs have contributed to erosion and loss of soil productivity. At present, about 15 % of the country's farmland are severely eroded. Soil quality varies considerably. Good quality agricultural soil is found on only 34 % of

the agricultural area. Three main regions can be identified by soil productivity: the lowlands in central Lithuania have the most productive soils, followed by the low, deeply washed carbonate soils in west Lithuania. The wooded moraine hills and interspersed sandy plains in east Lithuania have a relatively low agricultural productivity. The most characteristic soils are turf podzolic loam and gley. The Karst Zone (Birzai and Pasvalys districts, Northern Lithuania), one of the most environmentally vulnerable areas of Lithuania, is known for both its water pollution and soil erosion problems. There is elaborated short reference list on land degradation issues, i.e. Soil erosion (wind, water) is detected mainly due to: loss of forests/vegetation, coastal erosion, aridity, inappropriate land use. Loss of Soil Fertility is detected mainly due to water logging and pollution/contamination of the soil (in some areas of the country). Sensitive tourism: Sustainable tourism is one of main principles of the National Tourism Development Programme for 1998-2002. Presently, several strategic plans covering sustainable tourism development are being developed such as the National Tourism Development Plan to the year 2010 with an Operational Plan for 1999-2003. Ecotourism and nature-based tourism is a part of the National Tourism Strategy and Plan. Based on the Agenda 21 for Baltic Sea Region Tourism, monitoring procedures are going to be worked out in the coming years. But no special programmes have been identified.

**Capacity Building, Education, Training and Awareness-Raising:** No information available.

**Information:** Web sites of the Ministry of Social Security and Labor (<http://www.socmin.lt>), Ministry of Interior (<http://www.vrm.lt>), Department of Statistics (<http://www.std.lt>), Lithuanian Institute of Philosophy and Sociology (<http://neris.mii.lt/LFSI/index.htm>).

Ministry of Finance (<http://www.finmin.lt>), Ministry of Economy (<http://www.ekm.lt>), Ministry of Transport and Communications (<http://www.transp.lt>), Ministry of Environment (<http://www.gamta.lt>).

Aspects linked to education are presented on the web site of the Ministry of Education and Science (<http://www.smm.lt>), Ministry of Health (<http://www.sam.lt>), the state Public Health service under the Ministry of Health (<http://www.vvspt.lt>).

**Research and Technologies:** No information available.

**Financing:** Investment grant support from the European Union through ISPA funds at about 50 million US\$ per year for 2001-2006. GEF granted 6.9 mill US\$ for Kretinga geothermal station, and 4.2 mill US\$ for implementation of new technologies decreasing ODS which were used in Lithuanian chemical and refrigerators industry. The major bilateral cooperation programmes or activities involving provision of financial resources for sustainable development are between Lithuania and EU, Denmark, and Scandinavian countries in the form of subsidies or soft loans and with some IFIs (loans). The EU PHARE programme granted 36.6 million EUR from 1993-1999. Funds were also granted for WWTP construction in three Lithuanian cities - Sweden granted 13.1 mill US\$, Finland granted 6.6 mill US\$, and Norway granted 1.5 mill US\$. Denmark assigned approximately 28 mill US\$ in form of soft loans for smaller WWTPs in Lithuania. In previous years about 9 % of expenditures on R&D were made in Higher Education and Government sectors. In 2000 expenditures on R&D in Business Enterprises sector increased and reached 21.5 % of Gross Domestic Expenditure on R&D (GERD). GERD was constantly growing from 1991 to 1998. As a percentage of Gross Domestic Product GERD was slightly varying during last several years: in 1996 it amounted to 0.52 %, in 1997 and 1998 - 0.57 %, in 1999 - 0.52 %, in 2000 - 0.60 %. It should to be noticed that fraction of State budget funds in GERD was higher than 70 % in 1996 - 1999, but it diminished to 57.9 % in 2000. The increase of GERD in 2000 was caused only by increase of Business Enterprises sector expenditures on R&D up to 0.18 % of GDP. Nevertheless, even at present business expenditures on R&D are too low to compare to such expenditures in EU countries. The situation is typical for all economies in transition; and it shows that links between Lithuanian researches are not strong enough.

**Cooperation:** Seminars and workshops on radioactive waste and spent fuel management were organized with assistance of Swedish Radiation Protection Authority in years 1994-2003. There are about 20 international agreements between Lithuania and other countries on collaboration in education, science and culture. At present Lithuania participates in the 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme as a full-fledged member.

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